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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Stibnite Gold EIS Scoping Comment

I've enjoyed the Warm Lake area for most of my adult life. As a cabin owner there, I feel a deep appreciation and responsibility as a steward of the area to ensure its survival for future generations.

After weighing both sides of the issue, I am strongly opposed to the Stibnite Gold Mining Project for multiple reasons.

Financial: Yes, reopening the Stibnite Mine would provide some jobs for a short period of time, and some local & state tax revenue. However, when weighed against the damage and long term costs to the economy: replacing damaged roads, the exorbitant cleanup costs of just a single accidental spill, etc., the equation does not make sense for the citizens of Idaho. Even bonding for final clean-up costs can't anticipate the level of damage we may be left with. The financial equation makes great sense for an outside Canadian mining company, but not for the state, citizens, or environment of Idaho.

Environmental Impact: This area is the headwaters and critical spawning habitat for multiple threatened or endangered species. Even without any accidents or problems, the risks are heartbreaking. The potential contamination from heavy metals or mine acids, or the damage from a single chemical or fuel spill from one of the many trucks traveling along side our sensitive waterways could do untold damage for decades. Midas Gold has made promises to take great care, but the risks are great and accidents are just that - not included in the plan, but inherently part of doing business. I formerly worked in P.R. for another company that always had careful plans in place and made promises of protection - British Petroleum - but I also witnessed horrifying, intentional decisions that further damaged the environment when accidents occurred, so I'm understandably skeptical. Promises mean nothing. One must eliminate or greatly reduce the risk in the first place. The Forest Service has a sacred responsibility to protect this habitat by eliminating the risk that mining would inherently cause.

Road Issues: The road systems, both up to the mine, and the Warm Lake Highway to Cascade are not designed to carry the excessive amount of traffic currently projected. With well over 100 one-way trips each day on narrow twisting roads, there will be accidents, not only contaminating the nearby river, but also causing loss of human life.. The many recreationalists using the highway, which has no turnouts or passing zones, eventually will get frustrated at the constant slow truck traffic and attempt to pass a large Midas truck resulting in deadly head-on crashes. Although this issue has been expressed to Midas at multiple Warm Lake users meetings, it has been ignored and there have been no proposals to mitigate the conflict with existing traffic. A business that has a likelihood of causing death or serious injuries to our citizens owes us more.

I understand there are benefits to this project as well, however, the negatives far outweigh any gains and should lead to this project being halted.