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First name: Paula

Last name: Schappacher

Organization:

Title:

Comments: I am writing in complete opposition to the Stibnite Gold Mining Project for the following reasons:

Environmental-open pit or strip mining has been historically detrimental to surrounding areas. Surrounding valleys will be filled with mine waste rock and tailings and its pits will be turned into open pit lakes instead of being backfilled. No matter what assurances are made by Midas Gold, mining companies have time and again come up short on fulfilling their promises of restoration. Accidents invariably happen (oops!) causing irreparable damage to streams, air, wildlife and humans.

* Traffic-the proposed traffic between Cascade and Stibnite (130 truck/car trips per day) will be catastrophic to the Warm Lake area. The existing narrow highway was never meant for such excessive traffic. The roadway will be irreparably damaged, accidents will happen due to no passing lanes or turn out areas, and the noise of 130 trucks and cars ascending and descending the Warm Lake summit from 6 am until 8 pm will be echoed throughout the Warm Lake Basin, even during the time of day when no motor boats making a wake are allowed on the lake (6 pm until 11 am.) Trucking proceeds along Highway 55 is also a terrible plan. The most dangerous highway in the state will become a death trap. Traveling Highway 55 is already taking your life in your hands. Spillage into our beautiful Payette River is inevitable.

* Noise and Nuisance-the area around Warm Lake has seen a huge increase in camping and recreating during the last decade or so. The campgrounds are currently full most of the time(having to be reserved 6 months in advance) and the lake overrun by watercraft. Mining traffic will go within feet of the Warm Lake Campground making it virtually uninhabitable. An increase in population brought about by the addition of 750-1000 new people will be devastating. My family alone has jumped through hoops for over 75 years following Forest Service regulations meant to keep the simple, quiet and pristine area it is. We can't remove a branch from a tree or a bush without previous forest service approval. Now with the advent of the Idaho Historical Preservation Commission involvement, we can't paint or replace an existing rotting board on our cabins with the exact material without going through a grueling years-long process seeking approval. All of a sudden it is permissible to run 130 trucks and cars past our doorsteps. Is that keeping our area simple, untouched and pristine as has been the Forest Service's intent for the last century? The cabins at Warm Lake have been relatively immune to break-ins and thievery because of their remoteness. Now being exposed and accessible 12 months a year, they will be prime targets for vandalism and thievery. According to a mining official in the business for over 30 years, the blasting from the mine will be heard around the lake!

If this proposal goes through, please consider the following actions that could mitigate the negative effects on all concerned:

* Environmental--If the EIS shows that the project poses a risk to the water quality of the South Fork Salmon drainage system, the the project should be denied.

If the project traffic shows a risk to the streams and rivers (Johnson Creek, Payette River, etc) along its path, the project should be denied.

If the project goes forward, the Forest Service needs to examine alternative ways of storing tailings and waste rock so that spawning habitat is protected.

The Forest Service should find ways to assure the public that there are viable ways to restore the site if Midas Gold is unable to fulfill the mission, as has happened in the past.

* Traffic-The Warm Lake Highway should be improved with passing lanes and turnouts to insure that passenger cars and recreational vehicles can safely pass slow moving trucks and require Midas Gold to repair and maintain the highway due to the damage that such excessive traffic will cause.

Midas Gold should REQUIRE its personnel to take buses to the site as mentioned in one part of their proposal,

not merely ENCOURAGE bus transportation as is mentioned in another part of their proposal. 130 trips per day {{11 /1 hr. or 1 /5 mins) will completely destroy the atmosphere of this area. If the winter weather limits work to May through November (as is suggested in Midas Gold's proposal), those daily trips will double!!

Hours of traffic should be shortened so to not disturb residents of cabins and campgrounds during their sleep and quiet and fishing times as required by Valley County Ordinances.

I am suggesting 8am to 6 pm, Monday through Friday. Commercial trucks with "Jack" or air brakes should not be allowed.

* Noise and Nuisance-If the influx of 750-1000 workers to the area requires additional accommodations for seasonal and residing families, Midas Gold should develop campgrounds or other facilities on private property near the mining operations. All efforts should be made to protect the existing residences and atmosphere which have existed for close to a century. Valley County should provide deputies on a daily basis instead of a few hours per week as is the current case.

Our concerns are serious. As a property owner (2 properties) in Valley County, I beseech you to take our concerns to heart and if the approval of the project is inevitable, make modifications to the plan to alleviate those concerns. In speaking to representatives of Midas Gold, they are EXPECTING and WILLING to make modifications if required to do so.