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Organization:

Title:

Comments: July 20, 2017

Stibnite Mine Proposal

Keith Lannom, Supervisor

Payette National Forest

Dear Supervisor Lannom;

These are my comments on the stibnite mine project proposed by Midas Gold.

This would be a very large project with significant environmental impacts, which would negatively affect the land, water, and fish and wildlife habitat for decades.

Midas' Plan of Restoration and Operation (PRO) reflects a lot of effort into trying to make this project sound as benign as possible. I do appreciate that.

But it would still cause major impacts. The PRO indicates serious effort toward restoration of a formerly hammered area, and that sounds good. But I wonder if the project, in accomplishing some restoration, would not cause a more than offsetting destruction of land and water values. If I were king (Midas or otherwise), I think I would oppose this project.

A major potential, and I think probable, negative impact would be acid mine drainage (AMD). Yet I can't see anyplace in the PRO where AMD is even mentioned, and this is disturbing, as if Midas does not wish to talk about it. Sulfide mining often causes significant amounts of AMD. Since I assume that antimony sulfide is the largest part of the ore processed, sulfuric acid would be produced, and it has to drain somewhere. The Forest Service must insist that Midas seriously address this problem and how they plan to control AMD.

The East Fork of Salmon River is an important salmon stream. I understand that although it was seriously impacted by former stibnite mining, it is now on the road to recovery. Would this mine project give the salmon 1 step forward along with 2 steps backward?

The proposed bypass tunnel much be carefully engineered with a high probability of working for the migrating fish.

I have been involved for decades with trying to help save the remaining national forest roadless areas. So I don't like the idea of any new roads in any of them. The roads planned through 3 roadless areas are rich in wildlife diversity; several of the species are rare and not found in many other areas.

If these roads are built, how would the Forest Service and Midas minimize the negative impacts?

What would be the anticipate impacts upon the nearby Frank Church-River of No Return Wilderness?

As has been pointed out by others, the effects of this project would be enormous, wide spread, cumulative and long lasting. If it is to proceed, the Forest Service has a major job ahead preparing an EIS.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Jerry Jayne