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Organization:

Title:

Comments: I recreate regularly on the different stretches of the Salmon River. I kayak on the EFSF and South Salmon, mountain bike the trail from meadow creek lookout down through Riordan Lake to Johnson Creek, and fish on the main salmon. I've become familiar with the Stibnite mining project through my land surveying work for the Forest Service, and I am deeply concerned by the prospect of continued mining activity in the area after the rough history and costly rehabilitation it has caused in the past.

I think that with as precious of a watershed that is at stake here, the Forest Service would be remiss to not take a hard line on imposing restrictions on this project that might cause Midas Gold to rethink it as a lucrative venture in the first place.

History has shown us that when these mining operations fail or go bankrupt, it is the taxpayer who is left with the burden of rehabilitation, and the plants, animals, and water that are left contaminated with toxic pollutants.

It is up to the Forest Service to do what they can to protect one of Idaho's most precious watersheds. "Caring for the land and serving people" is not about granting permission to completely deface the side of a mountain and contaminate the water for short-term monetary gain for a FOREIGN mining company. It's not about completely acquiescing to an antiquated mining law from the 1800's. It's about being stewards of the public domain; land that belongs to all of us, and ensuring that these projects are limited in scope, and that the sustainable health of the forest and surrounding habitats are protected.

I understand that mining is an important industry and that none of us would have the luxuries we have today without it, but there needs to be special care taken when this activity threatens a sensitive ecosystem that so much effort has gone into rehabilitating already.

I think the Forest Service should:

- limit the scope of this project

- require that Midas Gold backfill its pits instead of leaving them and separate tailings piles.

-require that all spawning habitats are protected and kept in tact and that special care and alternative methods are implemented to keep harmful tailings out of the watershed.

-ensure that pollution from heavy metals and corrosive chemicals does not happen whatsoever. The tarps they use to keep these pollutants from leeching into the ground are inadequate, they puncture and do not outlast the lifetime of the pollutants they are designed to contain. If a better system cannot be devised, the project should be declined.

- ensure that the project is adequately bonded and insured for the worst-case scenario, covering the costs of disaster, failure, and total rehabilitation.

Thank you for your time and consideration.