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Title:

Comments: The South Fork of the Salmon River is a valuable and uniquely wild river. It is an important habitat for numerous protected fish species, such as Chinook, salmon, steelhead and bull trout, for whose survival great efforts are being taken in other parts of the country. Such habitats are particularly important in times of climate change as cold-water river habitats are decreasing rapidly and with them the species that depend on them. This has already been acknowledged by the fact that it is listed in the top ten of American River's "Most Endangered" list.

However, the South Fork of the Salmon River still lacks any national protection that ensures that it can continue to run freely, unimpaired and undeveloped.

The current threat of mining projects of a Canadian mining company underlines the importance of properly protecting this part of the Salmon river and to not exploit it!

Opening the South Fork of the Salmon River up for mining operations would not only significantly change the South Fork but would also impair the protected wild and scenic Salmon river as the South Fork is one of its biggest tributaries. Due to the close proximity to the Frank Church River of no Return Wilderness it can also be assumed that this highly protected area would be negatively influenced by mining operations in the South Fork of the Salmon River basin. The Salmon River basin has to be looked at and protected as a whole ecosystem to ensure that the habitats and species that depend on it can survive and thrive.

The impacts of such mining operations will even reach outside the Salmon river ecosystem. To operate such a big mining operation in such a remote location, many miles of forest roads need to be expanded and maintained or even be built to be equipped for the necessary heavy tools and increased use. The power grid of the greater area has to be adapted as well. All this means a lot of infrastructural costs for the communities, counties and state.

For an expected lifecycle of these mining operations of only 20 years, these seems like incredible negative and in some cases irreversible impacts for the profit of a foreign company. Choosing such short-term profit over the long term negative impacts on the river, the area and the people depending on this land is simply put, just irresponsible, even more so in times of climate change!