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Comments: I urge for Option 5, No Action, in regards to Midas mining in the South Fork Salmon drainage.

The presence of endangered fish species above and below the site warrants federally mandated precautions and protections. Plans to re-channel and de-water streams are unacceptable actions and directly compromise endangered species habitat needs.

Putting a river into a tunnel is objectionable, and would directly compromise habitat for endangered fish. If the project is not seen through to completion, citizens will be left with their river in a tunnel and another costly rehabilitation project.

Other Issues

Recreational opportunities on the East Fork and the South Fork of the Salmon River are in question if the Midas Project is permitted.

There are no guarantees with mining, other than what we have seen historically, and that is short-term gains with long-term repercussions. All mining companies claim that their actions are state-of-the-art and that they're armed with the best technology. Inevitably, however, contamination arises.

The South Fork of the Salmon River is managed as a suitable Wild and Scenic river. Therefore, it is paramount that water quality not be compromised so that this river can remain suitable to someday join the ranks of other pristine Idaho Wild and Scenic rivers.

The mining operation will result in the building of a city in the mountains. The traffic alone to facilitate the building, maintenance, supply, and use of the infrastructure alone will far exceed any estimate of vehicle use on the surrounding road structures. Any construction does so, compounding more so as the scope of the project increases. It would be catastrophic on the surrounding forest users and wildlife.

This project would degrade or destroy any and all forest management practices which have prevailed in the past, negating any progress that the Forest Service and public have worked towards, both in the immediate vicinity of the project and associated areas.

Popular recreation areas, such as Warm Lake, Stolle Meadows, Paradise Valley, Eagle Nest Trail, will all be negatively impacted by the increase in vehicle traffic. Any system of convoys of Midas vehicles, although CRUCIAL to such a project where public lands are traversed, will fall short as "incidental" trips will be uncountable, unmanageable, and unending.

Warm Lake is a NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE, and the proposed primary vehicle route is directly visible and audible to the area. This project would irreversibly degrade the historic qualities of the area.

In short, the natural resources of this pristine area, such as clean water, endangered species, quiet and undeveloped space, must be protected. The values of such natural resources has undergone a dynamic shift this summer that will not reverse or slow. Think ahead.

Deny mining, which has ALWAYS created contamination and now threatens the new NATIONAL emphasis on nature in this area.

