

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 10/9/2020 7:54:45 PM

First name: Thomas

Last name: Simenc

Organization:

Title:

Comments: As a long time resident of Idaho, avid public lands user and licensed engineer I am very concerned about the environmental impact of this project and not satisfied that our public lands and waterways will be adequately protected.

A review of the EIS shows that:

*162.5 acres of wetlands will be destroyed.

*630.3 acres of riparian areas will be destroyed.

*20.8% of chinook salmon critical habitat will be destroyed in the analysis area.

*27.5% of bull trout critical habitat will be destroyed in the analysis area.

*Chinook salmon, steelhead, and bull trout and their critical habitat will be adversely affected.

*Mining activities will create 446 million tons of potential acid generating and/or metal leaching materials (waste rock, tailings). 161,095 square meters of open pit walls may cause acid mine drainage.

*The Burnt Log Route would create 13 miles of new access road for heavy mining equipment within 5 Inventoried Roadless Areas.

*Mine access roads would cross 71 different streams, exposing each stream to the risk of hazardous material spills and increased sedimentation.

*Tribal and recreational access will be restricted in the 3,423 acres footprint and 13,446 acres of public land within the Operations Area Boundary for 20 years. The Forest Service identified that this represents a generational loss of knowledge and connection to indigenous resources.

*During 2 years of construction, Johnson Creek Road traffic will more than double, including 45 heavy vehicle trips per day.

Any one of these is a significant concern. When combined in to a single project, it is almost a certainty that this project will create more harm than good to Valley County, Idaho and our planet. The short term benefits do not outway the extremely long term and permanent damage that may be created by this mine.

There is also a lot of unknown still with just how destructive this project will be. Crucial information is currently missing regarding potentially negative environmental effects. Table 4.1-1 contains two full pages of incomplete or unavailable information that are deemed "essential to a reasoned choice among alternatives."

Lastly, in the interest of public participation and associated public health concerns, I would like to request and extension on the DEIS comment period. The released documentation is long and complex and deserves additional time for thorough analysis. The current complications of Covid may restrict or delay potential comments. It is in Midas Gold's, the Forest Service, and the public's best interest to have a thorough review of this report to evaluate the best practices moving forward. Large issues that will affect public health are much easier and less expensive to solve preemptively with coherent strategy, rather than through urgent, emergent measures. Please extend the comment period by 30 days to help guarantee sufficient evaluation of public safety in regard to such a complex project.