

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 10/13/2020 3:17:50 PM

First name: Jack

Last name: Hurty

Organization:

Title:

Comments: This comment is being submitted in opposition to the Stibnite Gold Project. This mine will create profit for a few wealthy shareholders, while putting the priceless natural heritage of Idaho in jeopardy. Thousands of jobs in the Salmon River drainage depend on healthy fish populations and clean water, including my own. By allowing this project to move forward, we will be sacrificing long term sustainability for the extraction of short term profit. The local economic benefits of the Stibnite Gold Project are still opaque, while the risks are crystal clear.

The South Fork of the Salmon River contains miles of priceless habitat for chinook salmon, steelhead, and bull trout, but Midas Gold's Stibnite mine will change that. According to the DEIS, the Stibnite Gold Project directly threatens between 27.5% and 69.5% of bull trout critical habitat, and 20.8% to 26% of critical Chinook salmon habitat in the area. Risks to native fish stem from barriers to migration, increasing stream temperatures, changes in water discharge levels, and hazardous material spills. While populations of these species are currently healthy in the South Fork drainage, they are struggling elsewhere, and have been listed as endangered and threatened by the US Fish and Wildlife Service. This mine will put these vital reservoirs in danger.

Midas Gold is marketing this mine as a restoration project. They claim that they will return the area to its original status, thus undoing any damage they might cause. But the restoration won't occur for decades, during which time ESA-listed fish populations will almost certainly struggle. Can we really afford to wait? There are quicker and cheaper ways to restore the Stibnite area that don't involve making deals with corporate mining interests.

For the sake of wild fish and clean rivers, for the thousands of jobs that rely on the health of the Salmon River drainage, for the untold generations coming after us, do not allow this project to move forward.