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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Dear US Forest Service,

I am writing to urge you to not approve the Stibnite Gold Project. The US economy is not reliant on gold production, nor is gold considered a strategic or critical mineral in the US. In addition, Midas Gold claims that they may produce antimony from this project; however, it is unclear how much antimony could be produced and refinement would need to occur abroad as the US lacks processing facilities for antimony. In short, the use of public lands for this project is not justified by direct benefits to the economy.

At the same time, the Stibnite Gold Project would have a large detrimental effect on public lands that would result in negative economic impacts. The South Fork Salmon River is a wild, free-flowing river that provides habitat for four salmonid species with great conservation and cultural value. These fish species require cold, clean water that would be jeopardized by the Stibnite Project. The project would destroy 162.5 acres of wetlands, 630.3 acres of riparian habitat, and 20.8% and 27.5% of chinook salmon and bull trout habitat within the analysis area, respectively. These habitats are also used by other species of conservation concern, including wolverines, gray wolves, and migratory birds. Most of the project would occur on public lands that would be inaccessible to the public for at least 20 years, and disturbances would have lasting impacts long after this time period. Additionally, the project would require hauling large amounts of hazardous materials, and these risks and their mitigation are not examined in the project plan. This area is prized for its outdoor recreational opportunities, and the project would deprive public access to and degrade the value of these recreational opportunities.

Given the costs of the Stibnite Gold Project, the estimated benefits are not justified. It is in the public interest to not approve this project.

Sincerely,

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