

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 10/28/2020 2:07:26 PM

First name: Kyle

Last name: Smith

Organization:

Title:

Comments: Dear fellow Idahoans,

Raised amongst the southern desert of Idaho's sage, I have had a love affair with this beautiful state from the start. Whether by foot, hoof, or motor-power, I have traversed all over this state and plan to do so for the rest of my life, for there is always more to explore.

The South Salmon river, its drainage in its entirety and its abutting river corridors are certainly one of the most magnificent resources that we as Idahoans have. Each spring Kayakers flock to rivers turbulent waters, each summer/fall, anglers to its shores, hunters roam its bountiful hillsides and recreational enthusiasts bask in the glory of its seclusion.

What makes this place so incredible, is its wildness and those that congregate within it. The diversity of ecology both on land and in the free flowing waters.

I agree that the past travesties that have befallen the EFSF headwaters at the hands of poor mgmt and little/no consideration for sustainable practices, should be reconciled. Asking an industry that was responsible for such destruction of the area in the first place, however to "restore" the area in return for more extraction and expansion in otherwise untouched habitat is counter intuitive and oxymoronic.

There seems to be literally no access point to the mine in which the road does not go along the navigable waterway. How will Midas prevent discharges from refueling operations as well as the occurrence of vehicles running into the river? To create such infrastructure would only continue to degrade the previously undisturbed habitat, weakening the overall robustness of the area. Consider incidents in Glens-Ferry and along the Lochsa river in Idaho's beautiful highway 12 corridor. We as Idahoans are not ignorant to these occurrences. There are plenty of opportunities for contamination with open material stockpiles, (2) 5,000 gallon fuel tanks, (8) diesel tanks and numerous refueling operations taking place many times over at different scales throughout just a single day of operation. This does not include the contaminants such as ammonium nitrate fuel oil, which they mix ammonium nitrate with diesel fuel to charge drill holes for blasting.

Even the most expensively lain plans go awry, something that we as Idahoans have a long history of experiencing and deal with to this day; Incidents that we continue to clean up in many places at costs that far outstrip their original worth.

The EFSF and SF salmon drainage area has too much to offer as-is to exchange it for a global demand for GOLD BULLION on account that it is considered valuable due to its shiny nature and looking pleasant when worn around a finger or neck. The United States is not reliant on gold production, and the United States government does not consider gold a strategic or critical mineral. Let's be real, this operation is about GOLD. However, this is our state, and we think that a healthy forest with healthy soil that support strong deer, elk and fauna; with waterways that support powerful steelhead, salmon and trout has more value than some soft shiny metal.

We want more sustainable, higher paying jobs in the area. However, MIDAS would likely bring in many outside employees for a short amount of time. Giving true locals very little long term opportunity. At the same time, the stark population increase will drive up demand for housing that does not exist. Locals property taxes will increase, often being priced out much like what we have seen to the North. Infrastructure will be built and most likely forgotten at decades end as Midas packs its bags. Booms and busts...is this the way we as Idahoans want to live?

Personally, I left Idaho for a short time in pursuit of a career that would allow me to come back to my community for the long term. Driven by my passion for this place, I sought a career that would allow me to be in Idaho, provide for my family, give back to my community and enjoy everything that this great state has to offer. I, along with many like minded Idahoans, are part of Idaho's industry, want to invest in fellow Idahoans and the highway 55 corridor. Don't allow short sighted projects like this mine , diminish the long term sustainability and majesty of the areas communities and natural resources that surround them.