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Organization:

Title:

Comments: My name is Rachel Hart and I am a resident of McCall, Idaho and a mother of two. I am writing to ask that the Forest Service create a Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the public to review and to support Alternative 5, the No Action Alternative based on my belief that the DEIS does not answer all the questions I have concerning this project, particularly the lack of information surrounding the possibility of creating a "cancer cluster".

I believe that critical information is missing from the DEIS that makes it very difficult for the Forest Service or residents of Idaho to understand the full implications of a project such as this. McCall has been in the spotlight before as a potential "cancer cluster" which prompted Trevor Schaefer to pass "Trevor's Law" (<https://www.cdc.gov/nceh/clusters/guidelines.htm>) which was introduced in 2011. Trevor grew up in McCall, Idaho and the year he was diagnosed (2002) there were a total of five cases of brain cancer which is high for a (then) population of 1,700. Charlie Smith, Trevor's mother and advocate stated, "I didn't think about the environmental contamination from the mining when we moved there [McCall]. I heard about cancers, of course, but I didn't pay attention..." (<https://people.com/human-interest/idaho-cancer-survivor-fights-to-uncover-cancer-clusters-no-kids-should-have-to-go-through-what-i-did/>).

Considering that in the fall of 2018, CDC/ATSDR began working to update their existing guidelines in accordance with the Trevor's Law which will ensure that "state, tribal, local and territorial public health communities...have access to information about current scientific tools and approaches to assess and respond to potential cancer clusters in communities." Midas Gold should be under enormous pressure to explore the negative impacts that their mining could cause to our community and surrounding communities. To me, and anyone with children or loved ones in this community, this is extremely important information that is missing from the DEIS and needs to be understood. Dust from mining, containing mercury and other metals such as cyanide, arsenic, and cadmium can be far reaching and cause unintended but irreversible harm to the air quality in the surrounding areas which could possibly lead to cancer. Since we haven't had any adequate research on what the past mining has done to this area, how can we allow another mine, even with promises of reclamation and mitigation add to the harm that has already been done? I would like to see the DEIS address this and any and all studies pertaining to the direct consequences to air quality from a mine and the potential for another cancer cluster to form.

Aside from my giant concern of cancer clusters I am just as concerned about the aquatic, plant and wildlife in this area. According to Midas Gold's proposal Alternative 2 of the DEIS, this project would destroy 20.8 percent of Chinook Salmon's critical habitat in the analysis area. Considering that the East Fork South Fork of the Salmon River are important spawning areas for Chinook Salmon and the Nez Perce have a treaty-reserved right to harvest these fish, it is your responsibility to protect these fish and waters and demand that Midas gold does no harm to the water quality, which, frankly, would be impossible for anyone to do no harm if allowed to have an open pit mine in the area.

Lastly, as a citizen who eats wild game from these areas I am also wanting information on the amount of toxic chemicals that game meat could contain. Mule deer, white tailed deer, rocky mountain bighorn sheep, mountain goats and moose will all be affected as they live in the proposed mine area. The DEIS did not address this specifically and what they do address in the many charts they provide are almost non-sensical when trying to weigh the direct impact of the mine. I believe we all have the right to consume non toxic meat from these wild areas and need to know the direct correlation with the mine and toxic chemical levels in these animals.

In conclusion, I hope this letter does its job of expressing the need for more information from Midas Gold. We all have the same goal: to protect the real things at stake here-a safe, healthy environment for further generations,

which includes clean water, clean food, and clean air.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Rachel Hart