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Comments: I have spent almost a decade working as a river restoration engineer and have had the good fortune of being a whitewater enthusiast who has been able to paddle the EFSFSR and South Fork of the Salmon many times. The Stibnite Project has the potential to adversely impact the ecosystem of the EFSFSR and South Fork Salmon, and the downstream rivers including the Main Salmon, Snake, and Columbia Rivers. Mining, as seen time and time again, results in heavy metal contamination, sedimentation, and industrial runoff entering waterways, even when the best intentions and efforts are made to mitigate these risks. The upper Snake/Salmon River complex is one of the most pristine sections of river habitat and home to a variety of fish species, including salmon, steelhead, bull trout, feeding endless birds, bears, and feeding into the complex nutrient cycle of the ecosystem. Even a small impact on this could be detrimental and threaten the health of this ecosystem. Too much of this project is within the river corridor or adjacent to, with too great a risk to this ecosystem to be considered safe.

We, as humans, have put our river systems through hell and back, and are now learning the costs associated with cleaning up our rivers. Dam removals are expensive, Superfund sites are costly - why not avoid the actions and resource extraction that often led us to these horrid conditions in the first place. Metal extraction is needed, but there are other locations where the risk is not so high. Hundreds of miles of river lay downstream from this site, and are home to fish, birds, and animals that we cannot replace if we threaten their populations through ecosystem degradation.

Engineers and scientists have learned from past experiences and mistakes, and we should take these lessons into account. The East Fork of the South Fork Salmon is not an appropriate place for a gold mine. The short term economic gains will be heavily outweighed by the long term risks associated with damaging a place of this caliber. If we preserve this ecosystem, we will have working forests, productive river systems ripe with fish and clean water, and a healthier world for everyone. Furthermore, us river recreationists will be able to continue to play in this area and share this spectacular place with future generations. Towns like Yellow Pine will continue to benefit from seasonal visitors and long term preservation of their beautiful backyard. We are in trying times, and thoughtful consideration of the lifetime impacts of projects like this must be considered. Air, water and soil are vital, priceless resources that cannot be justified in compromising. Please consider stopping the Stibnite Project, as this beautiful pocket of Idaho is no place for mining.