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First name: Nicole

Last name: Mansfield

Organization:

Title:

Comments: To Whom It May Concern;

As a whitewater kayaking enthusiast and appreciator of the communities surrounding and recreational opportunities provided by the public lands impacted under Midas Gold's Stibnite Mine Proposal, I am strongly opposed to this mining project. My main concerns are environmental and my main objections to the DEIS are this, as well as, economic.

While I recognize the significance of mining, I believe that the negative impacts far overshadow the benefits of this particular mine. Yes, the antimony mined was significant in the past, but that does not imply that the small amount that may also be produced in this proposal cannot be found in other already operating mines elsewhere in the states. As gold is not significant to the US economy and is also already mined in sufficient quantities elsewhere in the country, this resource will inevitably be exported. This leaves me to question why it is even under consideration that our public lands are being threatened by a mining proposal from a Canadian company for resources that are not even of need in our country. Midas states that they will do their best to put people of the surrounding communities into jobs within the project. If we're discussing jobs, the merit seems limited in scope as the resources are exported and the project is proposed to last no more than 20 years including preparation, operation, and remediation. The impacts will be felt forever and have not been properly addressed in the DEIS.

Ultimately, these twenty years could be far more detrimental with regards to economics and destroy more jobs in both the long and short term. I excitedly spend weeks throughout the years appreciating the many downstream sections of river. There are thousands of people like me who travel specifically to the surrounding towns in order to appreciate the rivers that flow through them and the wilderness that surrounds them. The allure of wilderness multi-day trips is not the same when paddling through polluted waters and altered landscapes. Fishing businesses are not successful if fish do not have the conditions under which to survive. More roads with greater carrying capacities do not need to be built in these wildernesses. Hikers, campers, and various other recreationalists will not be as drawn to the area, and the businesses that rely on tourism will suffer an economic hit.

There is a legacy of mining in the area, but that does not imply there should continue to be. All too much of taxpayer's money has already been spent on remediating past abandoned mines at Stibnite. The proposal for dealing with waste and maintaining a clean watershed seems highly unrealistic and unfair for the communities downstream who rely on the water resource. I am concerned that arsenic and other toxins will contaminate this valuable river system. Water temperatures will rise due to mining operations, as will the amount of sediment in the river. The East Fork of the Salmon and the rivers into which it flows are critical habitat for salmon and these impacts will be detrimental for their subsistence. A dredged passageway around a mining zone for fish passage is not an appropriate solution. And, the other proposed mitigation efforts to salvage fish habitat from the impacts of this mining operations to water quality are both unrealistic and inappropriate. The negative impacts inevitably will be far-reaching as the success of salmon is intrinsically linked to the success of downstream communities, native populations, and the extraordinary wilderness.

The value of this area is far greater than the gold contained within. The economic benefit will be appreciated by people outside of our country. The environmental detriment and subsequent economic losses will be felt by Idahoans and US citizens.

Thanks for the consideration.

Sincerely,
Nicole Mansfield