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Comments: Having enjoyed the area and people in and around the proposed Stibnite mine for many years, I feel compelled to write in defense of native environmental value.

Many projects which affect the natural environment come down to the same basics of value assessment. The Stibnite mine project is no exception.

As in many proposed projects certain statements can be made with certainty.

The area of proposed development is part of one of the last tracts of truly wild land in the lower 48 states.

There will be guaranteed environmental impacts from the mine including degradation of forest, hillside vegetation, streams and rivers.

These effects will be felt by fish, birds, and land animals in a way that will negatively affect their population health.

There exist innumerable unanticipated events and consequences of the proposed development.

The negative environmental effects will persist for a long time - decades and generations - in this fragile ecosystem.

The economic gain will benefit a remarkably small number of people (applied in any rational relative assessment).

The overall financial benefit will accrue to an incredibly small number of people represented by the mining company and shareholders.

I challenge any rational argument against any of the above points.

So this, as many decisions, comes down to a clear value judgment. Should a project be allowed that benefits a few at the expense of environmental degradation that will affect the vast majority of people and degrade the historical and cultural value to native Americans?

There is no such thing as a dispassionate assessment in this matter. Human beings are living embodiments of value systems. Now is your opportunity to stand up and voice your belief. No hiding behind supposed objectivity when politics and other powers rule the day.

I will close by stating simply - the federal government has an ethical responsibility to protect the future for my children, grandchildren, and future generations.

Thanks for your time,

James Dugoni