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Comments: It is incongruous that the Forest Service would seriously consider re-opening and expanding a former mine when the former mine still hasn't been cleaned up.

It is incongruous that the Forest Service would seriously consider permitting a massive strip mine at the doorstep of the Frank Church-River of No Return Wilderness and at the headwaters of the East Fork of the South Fork of the Salmon River.

This dreadful proposed project would double the former mine's footprint and use up to 20% of the water in part of the East Fork of the South Fork. It would encompass a colossal 1,800 acres of mine pits, 15 miles of new roads (as well as dozens of miles of currently remote Forest Service roads), a 400 foot tall tailings dam to contain 100 million tons of material, and other infrastructure within the 30,000-acre project area! Moreover, it would generate more than 3,000 hazardous vehicle trips per year and year-round traffic for the next 25 years.

Under the preferred alternative, mining operations and road construction would cause serious impacts to the Frank Church-River of No Return Wilderness, including:

- *audible noise over a nearly 2-mile radius
- *increased access to and activity in what is now quiet and lightly-visited Wilderness
- *wildlife disturbance and displacement
- *sediment pollution in streams within the Wilderness
- *a new road constructed along a ridge at the Wilderness boundary.

These impacts are improperly trivialized in the wilderness evaluation.

Instead of approving the re-opening and expanding of this mine site, the Forest Service should require Perpetua to fully clean up the former mine site. Period.