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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Greetings,

I am writing in regards to the proposed Stibnite Gold Project because I am very concerned about the project's impacts to the Salmon River and to the Frank Church-River of No Return Wilderness area. The iconic Salmon River that flows through the heart of the wilderness is a place that my husband and I have returned to again and again through the years because we cherish the clear water and natural beauty and recreational opportunities this remarkable wild country affords. We also appreciate the cultural resources and habitat that the East Fork of the South Fork of the Salmon River provide for endangered salmon and steelhead that inhabit the larger watershed.

Under the preferred alternative, construction of up to 15 miles of new roads and mining operations would cause noise audible from a nearly 2-mile radius, would disturb and displace wildlife, would increase access and activity in an area that is now quiet and lightly-visited places, and would increase risks of sediment pollution in streams within the Wilderness. Although the proposed road would sit just 100 feet from the wilderness boundary, the wilderness evaluation underestimates these impacts and doesn't address them seriously.

It's also very important to underscore that the proposed land use is not benign. The metal mining issue is the most polluting industry in the United States according to the EPA's toxics release inventory. The Salmon River headwaters and the River of No Return Wilderness areas are no place to locate a massive mining operation with 1,800 acres of mine pits and an enormous tailings pond structure. The failure of the dam structure at the Mt. Polley mine in British Columbia points to the high risks that metal mining poses to cherished natural ecosystems and salmon runs.

For all these reasons, I urge the Forest Service to deny the permit for Perpetua Resource's Stibnite Gold Project and require Perpetua to finish cleaning up the mine site.