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Comments: I am very much against approval for the Stibnite Gold Project currently under review. My reasons for this are several. Because of the nature of the gold extraction proposed and given the history of the company proposing it (Perpetua Resources, formerly Midas Gold), the Stibnite Gold Project puts not only the famed Frank Church-River of No Return Wilderness at risk, but also the East Fork of the South Fork of the Salmon River and endangered species such as salmon, steelhead, and bull trout.

Under the preferred alternative, road construction and mining operations would cause serious impacts to the River of No Return Wilderness, including noise audible from a nearly 2-mile radius, wildlife disturbance and displacement, increased access to and activity in what are now quiet and lightly-visited places in the Wilderness, and sediment pollution in streams within the Wilderness.

Disappointingly, the wilderness evaluation erroneously downplays these impacts.

The new proposed road would sit 100 feet from the wilderness boundary or could even enter the Wilderness, as the most logical location for the road seems to be an existing pack trail that dips into the Wilderness. As you are no doubt well aware, roads do not sit on the surface of the land; rather, they disrupt soil and subsoil structure as they are stripped away to lay the roadbed, rendering areas of forest previously intimately integrated as separate areas, each unable to support the health and soil biodiversity of the other.

Mine tailings, however they are damned, will leach into the soil, subsoil and aquifers and from there into the riparian system, carrying heavy metals and cyanides toxic to living organisms at all levels of sophistication.

This is a wilderness area; the last thing it needs is more toxic mining and associated impacts.

The Forest Service needs to deny the permit for Perpetua Resource's Stibnite Gold Project and require Perpetua to finish cleaning up the mine site.