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First name: Charles

Last name: Fereday

Organization:

Title:

Comments: Dear Ms Linda Jackson,

I oppose the proposed Stibnite Gold Mine Project on both economic and environmental grounds.

My family has deep connections in McCall for three generations with family members currently residing there. I grew up (and still do) enjoy hiking and recreating in the Payette National Forest including the South Fork of The Salmon River. My family owns a local business in McCall and I am concerned of the impacts that the boom and bust cycle would impose on Valley County's established tourism and recreation economy. Idahoans know that wild places and ecosystems are a resource for not just recreation but are also vital to our economy. The proposed project threatens the natural resources of the South Fork Salmon ecosystem and in turn threatens the economic health of Valley County and surrounding communities.

I am also very concerned of the environmental impact and damage the proposed mine project would impart on the entire ecosystem of the South Fork of The Salmon River, and specifically impacts on federally threatened fish species. The SDEIS fails to adequately explain and demonstrate how the proposed project would comply with the Endangered Species Act (ESA). The ESA mandates that "federal agencies take no action that will result in the 'destruction or adverse modification' of designated critical habitat." *National Wildlife Federation v. National Marine Fisheries Service*, 524 F.3d 917, 933 (9th Cir. 2007) (quoting 16 U.S.C. 1536(a)(2)).

For example, the SDEIS claims irreversible losses of Steelhead, Chinook Salmon, and Bull Trout through habitat loss, increased stream temperatures, and increased hazardous spill risk. According to a review of 27 modern gold mining operations in the US by Earthworks (Missoula, MT), 100% of these mines experienced at least one pipeline spill, or other accidental release of cyanide, diesel, tailings, or ore concentrate. It isn't a question of a hazardous spill or release occurring, rather when one will occur. These impacts are especially devastating given the location of the Stibnite Mine at the headwaters of the South Fork of The Salmon River, a critical fish spawning habitat. These ecosystem impacts will likely result in the minimum loss of hundreds of generations of salmon and trout species (SDEIS ES-11).

Please deny the proposed expansion of the Stibnite Gold Mine and choose the no-action alternative.

Thank you.

Charles Fereday

Boise, ID