

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 1/9/2023 2:12:21 AM

First name: Jasper

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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Dear Forest Supervisor Jackson,

As a resident, river-guide, and high school teacher in Valley County, I oppose the Stibnite Gold Project. I wholeheartedly believe that SGB does not support the interests and wellbeing of the local community.

Five years ago, I moved to Idaho for the rivers. Immediately, I was enamored with the Salmon River and the way I could swim, eat fish out the river, and filter the water without worrying about my health. On the river flowing through my hometown of Missoula, Montana, biologists advise people to never eat fish from the river, and as a child I was not allowed to swim in it. Over a hundred years ago, mining activity flourished upstream of Missoula. The legacy of this mining includes the contamination of rivers with heavy metals (like copper, zinc, arsenic, lead, and cadmium) and the designation of more than a dozen superfund sites. As one of the last clean rivers, the Salmon River watershed should be protected at all costs from this fate.

While Stibnite Gold claims their mining project is somehow different from the hundreds of mines that continue to poison the waterways, and claim that their project is a "restoration" project, the risks certainly outweigh the negligible benefits. As you drive up the South Fork Salmon road to Yellow Pine, several red, metal boxes labeled "emergency response kit" sit on the banks of the crystalline, emerald river. According to Perpetua Resources's website, these boxes are designed to "neutralize accidental spills", almost as though these spills would be inevitable. If this project was safe and restorative, why would these boxes be needed? The mine exists in a far too volatile location to be infallible.

With this mine project, as with all mine projects, it is truly not a matter of "if" but "when" the rivers become contaminated. Even if the contamination occurs in a century, that reality should be unacceptable. What is the point of gold, antimony, money, or jobs, if there is no clean water left on our planet?

For these reasons, I urge the Forest Service to protect the Salmon River watershed and reject the proposed Stibnite mine plan.

Sincerely,

Jasper Vanspoore.