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First name: Owen

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Organization:

Title:

Comments: My name is Owen Watson. I am not from Idaho but I am a public land user and I have been for the entirety of my life. I floated the river of no return first in 2010, when I was 7 years old, and have had the incredible privilege of returning every year since. I have also rafted the whitewater of the nearby South Fork of the Salmon River a handful of times. I have grown up alongside Idaho's public lands and they have left an indelible mark on me as a person. I have had the opportunity to grow to be a river user, fisherman, rafter, skier, and wild and free river enjoyer. The nearby Frank Church Wilderness is an experience rivaled by none other- It provides a bucolic glimpse of what once was. The Frank Church is an undoubtedly special place, seemingly unspoiled from the voracious greed of industry. Every time i have the opportunity to exist among Central Idaho, I am enamored at how quiet the nights are, how bright the stars shine, and how undisturbed the area remains. Light pollution, water pollution, particulate pollution, and noise pollution all are unacceptable posed threats to the nearby Frank Church. Central Idaho and the South Fork of the Salmon are one of the few places humankind can still find solace in nature. This project poses a significant threat to the rugged amenities of the Frank Church Wilderness and the South Fork of the Salmon River. To destroy the tranquility of the Central Idaho is to tear the soul out of the State. New mining projects do not constitute restoration. This project cannot be permitted.

Not only is this a significant threat to the remote nature of the Frank Church Wilderness, but also this project is a threat to Chinook Salmon, Steelhead, Bull Trout, and countless other less-threatened species. This project poses unacceptable risks to these threatened species, and we cannot afford to lose them. The Stibnite mine will amplify the threats that the Chinook, Steelhead, and Bull Trout face. Additionally mining roads would fragment habitat for wolverine by constructing the 15-mile long Burnt Log mine access road through pristine roadless areas.

Moreover, the pollution from the Stibnite mine is insurmountable and not worth the marginal costs. Idahoans and Americans-alike deserve clean water and air. The increased risk of hazardous material spills from the transport of more than 9,400,000 gallons and 46,000 tons of hazardous materials to the mine site is unacceptable. The groundwater contamination is a travesty as well, and will require more than 40 years of restoration after the project is completed. Gold mines destroy, and we cannot afford to lose our wildlife in Idaho

I cannot let this disgrace occur on my public lands. If society loses the wilderness of Idaho, it has lost itself. More than 70% of this project is on public lands, so we people ought to have a voice. I use these lands and will continue to do so for the entirety of my life. A gold mine threatens that existence- and threatens the existence of already threatened wildlife. I oppose allowing the Stibnite Gold Project to proceed as proposed because it will cause irreversible harm to water quality, wildlife, public health, and a sustainable outdoor recreation-based economy and pollute the area for generations to come. This project cannot continue. Not on my Public Lands. Not in My Idaho. Not in my lifetime.