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Comments: I have been kayaking Idaho's rivers for over ten years, and have been lucky enough to paddle the South Fork Salmon ten times. People come from all over the world to experience the pristine water quality and fishing on the rivers here. Clean water is not only crucial to a healthy ecosystem, but a basic human right. Because the Stibnite mine poses a threat to water quality, the ecosystem, and communities downstream, I am writing to voice my opposition to Perpetua's proposed mine.

There are a number of concerning points, or lack thereof in Perpetua's SDEIS.

The SDEIS fails to acknowledge the cultural importance of the South Fork historical range of the Nimiipuu (Nez Perce) people. A number of treaty violations have occurred over the last several hundred years after the Nimiipuu were driven from their land. Salmon decline and loss of this historical land have had significant impacts to the tribe and their way of life. Further decline of Salmon and their habitat would only worsen this, and the lack of consideration of the tribe only perpetuates the ongoing travesties that have been committed against them.

One of the biggest threats to water quality is the leaching of mining chemicals into the drainage. The area is also prone to large earthquakes, as we have observed in recent years. This poses a threat because an earthquake could cause catastrophic failure of the tailings ponds. Loss of water quality would further endanger the many species of fish such as Bull Trout, Chinook Salmon, and Steelhead that already struggle to survive in their severely altered habitat. The diversion of water around the mining site will likely also cause an increase in water temperature that will be detrimental to the fish.

Transportation of hazardous materials poses a threat to the surrounding communities. The increased traffic alone will cause increased pollution of the rivers, and the possibility of a spill is devastating. The proposed routes of traffic to and from the mine are high mountain passes to that are prone to rockslides and avalanches, and would be extremely hazardous to travel in the winter, especially in the event of an emergency.

The mine is expected to leach chemicals for at least hundreds of years resulting in the need for a treatment system that will be used in perpetuity. It will be the taxpayers who pay for the treatment of the water.

Perpetua operates under the guise that they are here to clean up the existing mine. While it is important that restoration of the site happens, Midas should not be the ones to do it. Too many mining companies have come into old mining sites with the promise of cleaning up the site, only to leave it worse off than it was and the taxpayers are left with the burden of the cleanup, and Perpetua will be no different. The new mine will be much larger than the first and will create an even bigger problem and mess to clean up, and leave devastating ecological consequences in its wake.

The Stibnite Gold mine project is dangerous and shortsighted. The jobs it will create are temporary, but it will have permanent consequences for the landscape, the people inhabiting and recreating in the area, and the wildlife that calls the South Fork drainage home.

Thank you,

Anneka Door  
Bozeman, Montana