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Comments: To whom it may concern:

Hello! My name's Alex, and I've been lucky enough to grow up, go to school, and recreate in central Idaho over the last few decades. Idaho's stunning geology and natural history inspired me to pursue a career in geology--specifically, in hydrology. I feel my profession gives me a unique perspective on the potential impacts of the proposed Stibnite Mine on the sublime River of No Return watershed.

First, mining projects have a long and insidious history of excluding and harming indigenous communities in favor of maximizing profit. As the original stewards of this land, the Shoshone, Nez Perce, Flathead and other indigenous communities should be at the forefront of this conversation. Anything short of centering Native voices is a travesty and only furthers the settler colonialism agenda.

In addition, the Salmon River watershed and downstream regions are already suffering from the loss of native species; while the push to remove dams along the lower Snake and Columbia Rivers is a promising step towards protecting the dwindling trout and salmon populations, the Stibnite Mine and its peripheral effects would likely cause massive setbacks to the rebound of these populations.

I'm not naive. I know mining is a necessary means for security and for technological development. That said, I ask that all stakeholders consider whether the proposed mine is truly necessary at this time and in this place.

I fear the Salmon River's nickname may be sadly prophetic: we can't put the gold back into the ground once it's taken out; once altered, we can't return this land to its original state. I urge you to establish a meaningful dialogue with the original inhabitants of the land, to thoroughly consider these public comments, and to put people over profit. In the meantime, those of us who love and care for this land will continue to fight to protect it.