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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Dear Forest Supervisor Jackson,

I'll begin by admitting that I'm not particularly well-versed in the legal ins and outs of EIS requirements, etc. as pertains to the proposed Stibnite mine project. I won't waste my time trying to make arguments about the legal problems associated with treaty violations, the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act, or anything of the like. I'm sure there are plenty of lawyers for that. What I will talk about is the recreational and spiritual value of the wild places that Senator Church had the foresight to appreciate and work to protect, nearly 40 years ago. I worked as a river guide on the Salmon and Snake Rivers for nearly a decade and grew up on those same rivers. I now live in New Mexico, but make the pilgrimage back to these same wild places year after year after year, because there is no place like the Salmon drainage, and no place like Yellowpine, the South Fork, and the EF South Fork, anywhere else on this planet. It absolutely breaks my heart to think that our nation would compromise such an obviously sacred space for the sake of shiny necklaces, earrings, and shareholder profits.

Many of the wild spaces that are under Forest Service jurisdiction, though perhaps not technically meeting Wilderness definitions, are the same untrammelled woods, mountains, and rivers that our friends and family have hunted, fished, played in, and gone to for peace and restoration for generations. I'm certain that you wouldn't have put in a 30 year career with the USFS if you didn't have that same appreciation for the less commercially tangible value of these places. I'm sure you haven't watched your grandkids playing in those same forests and streams and thought that their lives and experience would be improved by more gold in the marketplace in exchange for fish die-offs and arsenic in the water.

Though companies like Perpetua claim to be working towards a sustainable future for Idahoans, it's clear to anyone who understands resource extraction on this level that there is nothing sustainable about mining. They aim to remove a finite resource, to the benefit of their shareholders, and the detriment of local communities and ecological health. Having recently witnessed a reclamation project gone wrong which poisoned hundreds of miles of the Animas river, it's hard to imagine that we as a people could consider opening the East Fork and South Fork drainages to the increased hazard associated with reinvigorating this mine.

I implore you and the Forest Service to not approve the Stibnite Gold Project. At the very least, it is clear that the potential impacts have been inadequately studied and that other options have not been adequately explored. My sincerest thanks for your time and consideration.

Best,

Mike Thurber