

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 1/10/2023 9:07:55 PM

First name: Erica

Last name: Laidlaw

Organization:

Title:

Comments: While I am not an expert in any field pertaining to the SGP's SDEIS, after overlooking the document, it seems there are many areas of neglect- one being that of the proposed Burnt Log Route. To my understanding, this is a proposed 15 mile road to be constructed through four Inventoried Roadless Areas in our backcountry and will become Idaho's 2nd highest roadway. It will facilitate transporting an ungodly amount of toxic material and because of the rugged landscape, the roadway will maintain a high elevation to evade many avalanche paths. This will intern force transporting vehicles to travel through inclement and exposed terrain, areas that receive roughly twice the annual snow-water equivalent as Galena summit. While high on ridges, the transporting SGP trucks will thread between the Frank Church Wilderness area and other sensitive ecosystems, all vulnerable to both the construction and mishaps that may occur on the Burnt Log Route.

Given this, let me consider hypothetical numbers. Conservatively speaking, the SGP will result in 12,000 - 15,000 heavy vehicle trips per year. This could potentially be 255,500+ trips in total over the course of the mine's 20 yr. proposed operation. Even a spill risk of .01% would result in at least 25 spills. That's a potential of diesel, explosives, sulfuric acid, or sodium cyanide dumping all over the roadway- two dozen times. Even one major spill could be catastrophic for our watershed, animal life, and community safety, not to mention bankrupt the subcontractor responsible for the cleanup. Is this potential not utterly alarming to the Forest Service?

Additionally, while not "substantive", I have a few other personal comments to make about the South For Salmon River. Two years ago, my brother and I were commissioned by the City of McCall to create a new public art piece for downtown. We reached out to the public to assess their interests. Following our public art survey, along with many personal interactions, it became clear that the people were drawn to our backyard and notably our waterways, as iconic places under threat. More specifically, 92 people in our small community (roughly 72% of survey participants) responded that they wanted the artwork to be inspired by our natural surroundings, particularly the South Fork Salmon River and the greater Salmon River drainages. One response on the survey reads: "As an Idahoan and whitewater enthusiast, river confluences have become an almost spiritual place. The South Fork Salmon River is arguably McCall's river, and that makes...[artwork on this subject] appropriate and meaningful. I believe it could be a great representation of what people in this area value: nature."

From this feedback, we created an art piece that evokes what we believe the South Fork Salmon River represents: a critical life-force for Idaho. This waterway has fostered incredible life diversity- from dynamic ecosystems to rich human histories. It is the birthplace for many of our celebrated species, along with their final resting grounds, should they manage the harrowing journey home. Geologically, ecologically, anthropologically- under any lens the South Fork Salmon drainage is a remarkable place and it is the heart of our state. It is our arterial waterway and its adjacent mountains serve as our backbone. It represents our vitality and our spirit. Its value is truly unquantifiable and to consider jeopardizing the South Fork Salmon River is to consider the seriousness of cardiac arrest.

Perpetual Resources offers nothing but uncertainty and harm to our region. No amount of gold, antimony, and empty promises of "cleaning up the site" can compensate for how the South Fork Salmon River has and will continue to serve us. The risks are too great and the SDEIS illustrates the ramifications haven't been fully considered. Please appropriately weigh the opinions and wellbeing of our community and choose the No Action Alternative. At the very least, please hold Perpetua Resources to higher standards and demand a more thorough consideration of the SGP and its impacts. Our heart and our home are at stake.