

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 1/11/2023 3:38:16 AM

First name: Sidney

Last name: Bateman

Organization:

Title:

Comments: To Whom It May Concern - Forest Supervisor Jackson,

This is my public comment on the Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement (SDEIS) for the Stibnite Gold Project (SGP), proposed at the headwaters of the South Fork Salmon River watershed.

I have significant concerns regarding the risks this project represents to the wildlife, habitat, and residents of Valley County.

The SGP will negatively impact Chinook Salmon and bull trout and wastes all the dollars spent on the Snake River recovery. Stream temperatures are predicted to be elevated for up to 100 years within the mine site boundary and the habitat for these sensitive species - that is not even taking climate change into consideration. The likelihood of those fish surviving is slim.

In addition, as proposed, this project will result in the loss of over 120 acres of wetlands. It will also negatively impact the general water quality of streams found within the site from additional sedimentation and the potential release of additional contaminants mobilized by mining and construction.

While I have read about the great improvements in the restoration of mining sites, I have yet to read about a mining site that has been successfully restored. The toxic tailings alone are enough to cause pause. Hazardous materials will be transported to the site through the communities of Valley County, but there are no risk analyses on local communities if a hazardous spill were to occur and the potential exposure of a hazardous spill is much larger than the SDEIS portrays and must be addressed by the Forest Service. As is, Highway 55 is one of the only two North/South highways on this side of the state. The traffic has increased significantly, the noise of trucks going through downtown Cascade, Donnelley, and McCall is already an annoyance yet to increase that volume with trucks carrying toxic waste!?!

The South Fork Salmon River feeds directly into the Main Salmon River - which is protected under WSRA. How do we protect this river if it is downstream from a mine? The scope of analysis does not include any potential impacts that extend downstream. Additionally, Johnson Creek and Burntlog Creek, both eligible under the WSRA, will both face degradation and the risk of a catastrophic toxic spill if this project moves forward.

Recreation will be impacted in the area and perhaps beyond. The analysis of impacts on recreation is limited to a 5-mile radius and does not include any discussion of traffic displaced to the South Salmon Road and Lick Creek Road. And this does not take into account the fact that we have no housing as it is, businesses don't have housing for their employees, and schools are bursting at the seams, yet we want to bring a mining operation to life. Is there an analysis of the boom-and-bust economy of mining towns?

I urge the Forest Service to protect the Salmon River watershed and reject the proposed Stibnite mine plan.

Sincerely,

Sidney Bateman