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Comments: The public lands and waterways in, near, and along the access routes of either alternative for the SGP and areas beyond the analysis area, are of immense value to Idahoans and recreational tourists. In a brief summary, this region, within the Payette and Boise National Forests, represents a diverse array of recreational assets providing a broad range of opportunities for the public. Hunting, fishing, whitewater paddling, cycling, backcountry skiing, dispersed camping, hiking, bird watching, wildlife viewing, mushroom foraging, OHV use, and horseback riding are a few examples of activities that are enjoyed in the area year-round.

The area of analysis for this project extends five miles from any major SGP feature. This analysis area is too narrow in scope and misses numerous trailheads, access points, and campgrounds that will be impacted by either action alternative presented in the SDEIS.

The increase in traffic, regardless of alternatives, will likely result in an increase in traffic along the South Fork Salmon Road and Lick Creek Road. Both roads are primary access routes for fishing, hiking, and river recreation in particular.

Additionally, the roughly 14,000 acres that comprise the general SGP area boundary will be closed to all recreational pursuits for over 20 years. Access to the popular Thunder Mountain area, traditionally accessed via the Stibnite Road, will be restricted and in all likelihood closed for significant periods of time during the life of the mine.

The SDEIS also fails to incorporate any sort of downstream analysis. The South Fork Salmon River, while being a premier recreational destination in itself, feeds directly into the Wild and Scenic Main Salmon River. Any negative impacts to water quality as a result of the SGP stand to influence the vast number of private boaters who float this stretch of river annually as well as the 33 licensed outfitters who operate commercial float and fishing trips along this stretch of protected water.