

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 1/11/2023 5:50:28 AM

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Organization:

Title:

Comments: To Whom It May Concern Regarding the proposed Stibnite Mine Project:

I am vehemently opposed to this project moving forward. One need only look at almost ANY mining project to be undertaken in areas of similarly 'precious' land, water, and wilderness access to see how each and every one of those projects has the potential to harm those natural resources.

First and foremost, the watershed surrounding the proposed stibnite mine activity is one of pristine natal spawning habitat for salmon, steelhead, and bull trout. These fish are already experiencing the dire consequences of human interference. These fish are Keystone species to the other animals, nutrient content for the land and forests, and are a vital to the recreation dollars spent in our wilderness annually. My own income and that of my company, and my guide's directly depend upon the healthy populations of these fish returning each season to their spawning grounds, to create more fish.

For a company to say that they will completely reroute this section of river due to the need to mine this area, and that they will "do it well enough," is absurd to me. When has a mining company, ever done even a merely satisfactory job in PRESERVING an area while disturbing it, and then properly "RECLAIMING" the area, "RETURNING" it to nature sufficiently.

Likewise, I have less than no faith that the engineering of holding ponds, reservoirs, and other water retaining areas, will be of sufficient, safe, construction to withhold the almost DAILY tremors and earthquakes that our region sees. Meaning... that it would take next to nothing for these large reservoirs which will hold huge amounts of poisonous chemicals (Cyanide? Arsenic? Other chemicals?) in their mining processes, to break... and for that poisonous material to flood the region below. This would kill fish, neutralize native plants, and sensitive soils---irreparable for decades if ever.

I also feel that the influx of humanity into a previously, quiet, and undisturbed, little traveled 'backdoor' to the wilderness would cause irreparable damage to my business, Idaho Wilderness Company and that of other outfitters in the area. The potential changes to infrastructure, increased human traffic to trail heads, increased access for hunters in the backcountry-these are all things that would make our business much harder to operate in the fashion that we do; a business based on the 'Wilderness of Idaho' not the 'paved paradise' this could potentially become.

Mines always seem to boast "jobs for locals!," boost the local economy, etc etc. However, I would weigh those claims against the millions of dollars that come into Idaho for recreation and for its natural spaces, and quiet landscapes and get-away-from-it-all-ness. The 600-1,000 job that this project MAY create for a temporary period of time, do not feel necessary to me in the large picture, as there are plenty of jobs in the market today for those wanting to work.

I am extremely skeptical of who may ultimately be behind Stibnite Mine in the first place, previously the 'Midas Project,' now Perpetua? Who truly owns these companies, and are they American in ownership? So often these projects are pushed by foreign interests, foreign backers when it comes to the money. Tell me, what possible RESPONSIBLE interests would a foreign backer/ foreign company have in our natural landscapes, our wilderness. Yes, this project is Wilderness-adjacent... but I have no trust that foreign interests would responsibly "clean up their mess." Look to the many other mining projects where this is exactly the case. I feel that this project has the very same potential for disastrous outcomes as the Boundary Waters mining projects would/ would have should they go forward.

Why are we so eager to give away our incredible, and irreplaceable wild places in favor of such potential damage and destruction? When have you ever seen a beautiful, quiet mining site? Is this to be the new horizon that we must look out upon from the beautiful mountaintops of our precious wilderness? Can you truly feel 'warm and fuzzy' at night knowing that you gave the greenlight to a project that WILL destroy such important Salmon and Steelhead spawning grounds? I suppose we will have to be saying "Welcome to Salmon-less Idaho" even sooner, if it is to be.

I urge you, the decision makers to please serve the interests of the recreation users, the animals, fish and the land-over the temporary financial benefit that may be provided by supporting mining interests in this project.

Please accept this letter as a statement AGAINST the Stibnite Mine (or any name hereafter that the project may go by) moving forward. Thank you for your consideration and time.

Jessica S. Zettel