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Comments: The Forest Service should be doing an environmental study before approving this project. Categorical exclusions may be done "if there is no individual or cumulative impact on the human environment." With so many concerns, how can you say there is no impact without doing a study first? Don't fast track this project. The 1872 mining law is under review as it is outdated and does not account for stakeholder input. From the property and environmental research center, "Though the impacts of preliminary exploration are fairly limited, the impacts become more serious as the process continues. Sample drilling, in particular, escalates the environmental impacts of identification work. Access roads and other infrastructure generally must be constructed. Failure to properly reclaim the land disturbed by roads may result in soil erosion and pollution to surrounding water supplies. For this reason, as exploration and development proceed, firms will generally have to complete-and comply with-the environmental impact statement required under NEPA." If I can't drive around a forest service gate, how can you allow exploratory mining? Makes no sense, your first priority is to protect the forest. There are successful lawsuits and precedents to stop exploratory gold mining. https://www.spokesman.com/stories/2022/apr/05/groups-seek-to-stop-gold-mine-exploratory-drilling/ I thought the Forest Service wanted to avoid being sued at all costs.