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Comments: Mining has not improved as much as it should have since then. A 2017 study examined the track records of the 27 gold mining companies that are responsible for 93% of gold production in the U.S. The study found that every single one of these modern, state-of-the-art mining projects accidentally spilled cyanide, mine waste, diesel fuel, or other hazardous materials. This includes cyanide vat leach mines.

That brings us to the Stibnite Gold mine, yet another "state-of-the-art" mine. What makes the Stibnite Gold mine potentially so much worse is the scale of the project and the massive amount of waste mining would create. The project would double the already troublesome footprint from past mining. The quality of the gold ore is so low that you have to use cyanide to sift through 16 tons of rock to produce just 1 ounce of gold. The other 99.99% is mine waste that gets left on site, along with the cocktail of toxins that are now mobilized. Over 100 million tons of toxic mine waste would be generated and left on site. The Tailings Storage Facility and accompanying buttress would be over 2 miles long, the approximate length of Ponderosa State Park peninsula. At a height of 460 feet tall, the tailings would bury the Little Ski Hill at 405' tall.

Even more problematic is its location in the headwaters of the East Fork South Fork Salmon. When the hydroelectric dam at Blowout Creek failed in the 1960s, the plume of debris washed down Meadow Creek, down the East Fork South Fork, down the South Fork, and down the Main Salmon where it was visible in Riggins. If something bad happened at Stibnite, it would not stay at Stibnite.

I am also concerned about contaminants along the transportation route, which does not have a suitable road infrastructure, other travelers on these routes, and the rural communities that this hazardous waste would be trucked through. Trucks would haul:

5,800,000 gallons of diesel fuel in 580 trips per year
7,300 tons of ammonium nitrate in 304 trips per year, and
4,000 tons of sodium cyanide in 167 trips per year.

This project threatens invaluable public lands for private profit, and is not worth the certain degradation.

Please do not allow this mistake to happen.
Sincerely, Rick Barker