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Sent: Saturday, June 29, 2019 9:45 PM

To: Comments <comments@idl.idaho.gov>

Subject: IDL Comment

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Records Request Description: Dear Eric Wilson - I have lived in Idaho for over 25 years. What makes our state special, in an international spectrum, is access to public lands, its recreational outlets and its pristine wilderness. Currently, I am a masters student studying Environmental Systems Science. One of the aspects of my academics is conducting a literary analysis of Environmental Impact Studies (EISs) of large infrastructure projects in Sub-Saharan Africa; these projects are mostly gold mines funded by companies from Australia, Brazil, or Canada. The language used throughout most of the reports that I have reviewed has been largely vague, with minimal repercussions for foreign corporations if their monitoring and impact goals are not met. Often, these industrial projects are introduced in rural, underserved regions with great hope of economic opportunity, but little ability for the local public to legally refute environmental degradation. Idaho has the potential to become a target location for large corporate mining projects and the temporary rules established should not enable companies to create permanent operation. First of all, the state of Idaho and its stakeholders should be the priority of legislative activity. Financial Assurance should thus encompass funding sources that can be easily liquidated if needed. Seeing as land values fluctuate and Idaho already has much public land to manage, property collateral should not be considered. Additionally, there have been historical cases of depreciated trust funds, and thus they should be thoroughly evaluated and granted restricted withdrawal for the sole need of reclamation purposes by the Idaho Department of Lands. Corporate guarantees are not accepted by the federal government to manage work on federal land and should not be considered for state land. However, for temporary standards, my opinion is paralleled with Helen Lojek: First, corporate guarantees should only be allowed to cover a maximum of 20-25% of the reclamation costs. Second, corporate guarantees should not be authorized to cover post-closure and water treatment costs. Third, corporate guarantees should only be considered from companies with a ratio of assets to liabilities greater than 2:1, and in no cases

should a corporate guarantee be approved from a company with liabilities that exceed net worth. Fourth, corporate guarantees should only be considered for companies (including subsidiaries and affiliated LLCs) with 90% of their assets located in the United States. Fifth, corporate guarantees should only be considered for companies with a AAA or higher bond rating as issued by Moody's or Standard and Poor's. Finally, operators must be required to notify IDL immediately if their financial fitness falls below any required standards, and replacement bonding must be submitted within 30 days to reduce risk to taxpayers. Additionally, final decisions from the Idaho Department of Lands about projects that are assessed with the potential to create more than \$1,000,000 of environmental damage should be overseen by a commission that reaches a board decision - not a singular director approval. On this point, companies should be upheld to original negotiation agreements for reclamation costs. If a company chooses to diminish their annual construction projection, values should reflect the conditions that were formally disclosed prior to project approval and operation. Supporters of this bill give little regard to existing industry in Idaho. Thousands of people and millions of dollars are generated through the whitewater recreation and fishing industry within the state - both of which may be damaged by a mining catastrophe. Water quality should be a highlighted priority for this temporary (and long-term) regulation. Each project with the potential to create more than \$1,000,000 of environmental damage should be evaluated by a water quality expert in an official capacity, with no vested interest in the project. Importantly, projects should all provide an emergency plan and adequate security measures for the circumstance of extreme weather (ie additional catchment zones and filtering barricades for tailing pond overflow). In your revisions, please take conservative measures to help keep what we have great in the state of Idaho - in terms of finances and the social and health value engrained in environmental quality. Kind regards, Ruth Lewinski 606 Syringa Dr McCall ID, 83638