Dear Payette Forest Supervisor Keith Lannom and staff,

I've been a whitewater paddler for 40 years and I visit Idaho at least once a year to run the magnificent waters of the land.

I'm worried that the so-called "restoration" project is dishonestly named, because moving that much river sediment into surrounding valleys and mining under the riverbed is guaranteed to cause significant damage to fish, plant and animal habitats and life in the short term, as well as impacting water quality for years to come.

Sediment, heavy metals and leached acids can quickly devastate fisheries and are a risk to human life downstream as well. The USFS should require advance planning enforce and proper execution such that the existing fisheries are not destroyed.

At the very least the mining company should be required to backfill its pits instead of leaving them as "lakes", and to minimize the disturbance of spawning habitat by finding creative ways to store rock and sediment instead of dumping them in the riverbottom.

If the continued vitality of the South Fork drainage cannot be assured, the mining project should not be allowed.

Also, the mining company must be forced to pay for restoration up front, so that they cannot renig on the agreement. Our public lands are not available to any for-profit company that does not respect them. If this project including its restoration effort are insufficient or absent, the Forest Service should look at ways to restore the site independent of mining activities .
The proposed project will require undoing over $13 million of taxpayer-funded restoration work. If the site is eventually restored as envisioned by Midas Gold, the Forest Service needs to describe how these investments will be protected in the future and not simply undone by the next mining company.

In good faith,

Dr. Teresa Gryder