

Payette National Forest,

As a member of the Payette Forest Coalition, I had the opportunity to hear a lengthy presentation by a major Midas Gold representative a few years ago. As I recall, the presenter had been previously employed by the EPA and was familiar with environmental concerns. I was much impressed by the extensive restoration work planned for the project, as well as what had already been done at the time. One fact alone, makes it very important that this job not only be done right, but that it definitively be done: the need for precious minerals for which we are currently dependent upon Russia and China. Next is the promise of more jobs for our rural Idaho communities. Also, Midas Gold has already contributed much to our communities around and in the Payette National Forest.

I agree that the old Stibnite mine site will likely never be cleaned up unless industry takes responsibility for those who came before them. Several years ago, I came upon the Stibnite mine site by accident (my husband and I rode in from the back side on our horses). My observation at the time was: what a shame for this to be left in this condition.

I am so glad that Midas Gold plans to restore the area. By mining the site, Midas Gold plans to restore the natural flow and gradient of the East Fork of the South Fork to reconnect historical spawning grounds. The DEIS analysis showed removing existing barriers to fish migration will help Chinook salmon, bull trout and steelhead. In fact, DEIS 4.12-39 says long-term access to blocked habitat would result in increased productivity and genetic diversity of isolated populations. The company will repair blowout creek, permanently solving a source of massive sedimentation and habitat degradation. Plus, in reprocessing and repurposing millions of tons of spent ore and unconstrained tailings, Midas will safeguard water quality indefinitely. To protect the environment, the Forest Service is requiring Midas Gold to implement 156 mitigation measures (appendix D of the DEIS). Part of these measures include a one to one replacement of wetland areas (DEIS 4.11-26), which would lead to a net gain of 346.5 wetland functional units – a 40% increase (DEIS appendix D, table 8-2).

The Stibnite Gold Project is the type of project our state needs. I highly encourage the U.S. Forest Service to permit this project, using the preferred alternative presented by Midas Gold, as expeditiously as possible.

Best Wishes,

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