

Dear Permitting Officials,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment during the Draft EIS period for the Stibnite Gold Project.

I have spent over fifty years serving and supplying and owning mining claims. My oldest mining memory is the one of my mother tossing me out the passenger door of our Dodge flat-bed as we traversed the last uphill mile to the Union-Carbide Pine Creek Mine. My father was determined to get the mine their needed lubricants, winter storm be damned. As we plowed up the last switch back before the mine entrance our delivery truck lost traction and started back the direction from which we had just come. My dad yelled at my mom to jump from the truck and take me with her and off into the dark winter storm we went. The mountain spirits were with us that night and dad brought the truck to a halt, mom gathered me up and brushed the snow from my face and we got back in the truck and delivered the dozen drums of hydraulic and rock drill fluids. My father was committed to those miners, so much so that when my mother protested even the thought of father undertaking such a trip the only compromise the young couple could agree too was if one goes up the mountain, we all go up the mountain.

I have supplied mills, mines and mining districts with petroleum products nearly my entire life; names like Eureka, Tononpah, Bullfrog, Silver Peak, CR Briggs, Candelaria, Rio Tinto, US Borax and Pine Creek are just a few. We have mined gold, silver, talc, turquoise and soda ash at claims named Green Monster, Sacramento, Kar-Bo and Sylvania. My babies rode in the carrier, up on my back, whilst I tended the trommel and monitored the sluice. I know mines and I know miners, but after visiting Stibnite and seeing with my own eyes what Midas Gold proposes I felt compelled to comment.

On September 9, 2020 I ventured up Lick Creek road towards Yellow Pine. Weather was clear, traffic was light and the county road was in great shape. I was impressed with the apparent sturdiness of all the bridges crossed. I reached Yellow Pine about noon and was extremely surprised at the size of the community and lunch could be had. After calling my wife to report my progress and consuming a locally prepared cheeseburger at the cafe I proceeded up country to Stibnite. I noticed the mile markers posted, the emergency response kits established and again the last fifteen miles of road were in fine condition. My arrival at the mining district was uneventful, the usual warning signs, closed roads and diggings and tailings all about.

Upon my arrival at the open pit lookout, the first item of interest was the pond at the bottom of the pit. I have seen a number of open pit operations, and I have seen the accumulation of watery bodies in a few, but I have never seen a fish stream flowing into and out of an open pit pond or lake. My first thought was that it can't be good for trout; it's a catch basin for heavy metals and the stalled water must warm up before it discharges out of the pond and down the canyon. This aint good.

I reviewed the public relation boards Midas had on display at the pit look-out and it all came together. Midas wants to fix the lake, redirect the creek to a more habitable form for fish and in the process work the old tailings, overburden and ore bearing bodies about the district to pay for the mitigation and employ Americans. Of all the mines, old and new, I have never seen such a proposal, let alone any non-governmental organization take on such a project without taxpayer money funding the entire endeavor. Of course they are going to try and recoup their investment and make some money for their shareholders, but a great thing is taking place here. Somebody was thinking outside of the box and said, "Hey, we can clean this old mess up and employ Americans and help the critters and we are miles away from any populace and harvest minerals that strengthen our country. Who could complain or slow us down for us wanting to use modern reclamation and mining techniques to achieve such lofty goals?"

I don't have the time to read, nor does any government body expect any citizen to digest all the thousands of pages, of plans, due diligence and environmental assessments Midas and the government have put forth. Midas and the Feds and the State will work out dust control methods on haul roads, best stream diversion processes, best mining practices... But time, time is the true enemy to this mitigation mine. If the government just slow plays it and slowly bleeds the miner and investors with hearings, reports, study after study, at some point hands are tossed in the air, employees are terminated and the project is never undertaken. You have here an outfit trying to correct some wrongs of miners who have long ago swung the hammer and turned the drill and with hindsight we see that the miners of old didn't have the foresight to ensure they protected the East Fork South Fork of the Salmon River. A little channel realignment, backfill here, liner there and replant and process ore. Pretty simple, but we here in America make things pretty unsimple.

What a beautiful opportunity exists for the people of Valley County. A handful of miners, environmentalists and investors have come together or they may be one in the same, to try and make something better for America by taking a chance and betting their time and money that they can clean up an old mine site, refresh a mountain stream and pay women and men a fair wage. You don't get minerals and employment and reclamation by sitting on your hands. Rocks get cracked, trees get cut, noise is produced, lights shine for safety and roads get bumpy, but you go forth and try and do what has never been done or you can sit on your hands and wait for another generation or two to come along with a better plan. And in the meantime the fishery fails.

Sincerely,

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