

U.S. Forest Service, Payette National Forest
Attn: Linda Jackson, Payette Forest Supervisor
500 North Mission Street
McCall, ID 83638

Dear Ms. Jackson,

Thank you for the chance to weigh in with my thoughts about the Stibnite Gold Project proposed by Midas Gold Idaho. As someone who loves the outdoors, I have always been saddened by the environmental devastation that has taken place at Stibnite over the years, and I believe this company's plan, as outlined in Alternative Two, offers the best solution to these legacy problems resolved once and for all.


There are a number of issues that Midas Gold has identified as needing remedied, and their plan allows environmental reclamation and restoration to happen alongside their proposed mining project. One of the biggest issues is the deforestation and loss of vital wetlands over the years, which have been caused in part by the failure of a dam in Blowout Creek in the mid-1960s. Not only did the dam's collapse drain surrounding wetlands, resulting in widespread erosion, but it has led to increased sedimentation that continues to degrade local fish habitat to this day.

Midas Gold has gone to great lengths to find a solution to this problem, and has proposed to install a rock drain where the failed dam once was and rebuilding the stream channel to address the sedimentation issue. This will help raise the water level to restore impacted wetlands. All of this work will help address the impacts and improve quality of life. According to the draft environmental impact statement (EIS), concurrent mitigation and restoration reduce the uncertainty in the duration of wetland and riparian resource losses (4.11.3.1.1).

Of all the solutions examined by the draft EIS, only Alternative 2 offers the ideal solution to begin mitigation and restoration efforts as soon as possible. Alternative 5 should not even be considered as it would result in no action being taken to help address the environmental concerns at Stibnite. Meanwhile, Alternatives 3 and 4 would take two years to get going — while also providing less safety measures to protect the local ecosystem moving forward. As you note in the DEIS, "if Alternative 4 were selected, the overall construction timeframe would need to be extended by a minimum of 2 years relative to Alternative 1." (2.6.3)

There is no time to waste. Please accept Alternative 2 as proposed by Midas Gold and help bring some much needed environmental restoration to Stibnite.

Sincerely,


Donald M. Keithly