

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

Dear Supervisor Jackson,

As an Idaho taxpayer who cares about our state's environment and wild fish populations, I fully support the Stribnite Gold Project. I would much rather see a private sector company like Midas Gold foot the bill for correcting the environmental problems that exist in the area today instead of funding the much-needed cleanup with public money.

If there is one thing we can all agree on it has to be that the East Fork of the South Fork of the Salmon River is a disaster. Dangerous chemicals from long ago mining operations leach into the water, the river itself has been forced out of its natural banks, and what was once a paradise for wild salmon, trout, and other fish is essentially uninhabitable.

We cannot go back in time and make the mining companies that bequeathed us this mess do things the right way to begin with. To be fair, much of the damage occurred so long ago that hardly anyone, not even state officials or outdoor-loving private citizens, cared that much about the environmental impacts of mineral extraction. We had so much pristine land that industrial pollution like what occurred on the part of the Salmon that flows near Yellow Pine simply wasn't a big issue.

That was wrong, as we can now so clearly see. The damage done to the river has severely impacted the wild fish population, to the point that they can no longer reach their spawning grounds. Allowed to go unaddressed, the mining wastes in that area could eventually wipe out native fish populations, never to return.

Letting Midas Gold conduct an environmentally responsible mining operation there will not only generate tax revenues and Idaho jobs. It will create funding for an effective cleanup that will allow fish to once again access their spawning grounds, at first through a tunnel as minerals are extracted and then later via the stream when it is restored, as they had done for untold thousands of years.

After studying the Midas Gold proposal, I believe Alternative Two is best. I feel the USFS EIS backs this up, as the benefits it details in Chapter 4 are those Alternative Two would most capably produce.

I appreciate the Forest Service's efforts to inform the public about the Midas Gold project. With abundant informational resources available, I see no need to extend the comment period beyond 60 days and urge you to move the project approval process along as quickly as possible.

Debi Riddle