

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

To Ms. Jackson:

Rural communities across Central Idaho are in desperate need of jobs and economic activity, more so now than ever before. That is why I feel compelled to speak out in support of the proposal by Midas Gold Idaho to redevelop the Stibnite Mining District. This project will create local jobs, strengthen local communities, as well as restore and protect the local environment for generations to come.

Ever since Midas Gold Idaho first came into the area, they have been extremely good about working with Idaho businesses and hiring Idaho workers whenever possible. To date, this has led to the company spending nearly \$70 million in Idaho while also investing hundreds of thousands of dollars more in fixing up the roads and infrastructure around the site. That's all before the project has even been approved.

Once they're given final approvals, Midas Gold says it expects to create roughly 600-700 construction jobs during that phase of the project and another 500-600 jobs during the project's ongoing operations. They have also indicated their interest in supporting ongoing training and workforce development opportunities for Idahoans throughout the duration of the project, working with local schools, community colleges, and the Idaho Department of Labor to help prepare the next generation of Idaho's workforce for employment opportunities.

These commitments—on top of the economic impact the project would have on other businesses and local communities—make this an incredible opportunity for Idaho. On top of that, hundreds of millions of dollars would be injected into our economy due to the increased sales transactions and tax dollars the company would spend. Even the draft Environmental Impact Study compiled by the U.S. Forest Service concluded that the long-term productivity of the Stibnite site would be an economic benefit to our state. And, unlike other alternatives explored by the draft EIS, Alternative 2 could get off the ground right away, instead of delaying any economic benefits for another two years or longer.

Idahoans need your support to ensure the Stibnite Gold Project moves forward and leads to more jobs and increased economic activity statewide. I hope you will find that cause worthy of your support and approve Alternative 2.

Thank you, *George A. Shafter Jr*

