

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

Dear Ms. Linda Jackson,

Please approve the Stibnite Gold Project proposed by Midas Gold Idaho. This project will help revitalize and restore an ecosystem that has been neglected for too long. I believe Midas Gold's proposal, which includes extensive plan for restoration, will help improve water quality that has been poor for decades due to previous mining activity.

More than a century of mining—dating back to well before modern-day environmental regulations were in place—has deteriorated water quality in the Salmon River, hurting local wildlife and fish populations. Particularly during World War II, when the U.S. government was exploring and developing the region, tailings from antimony and tungsten mining raised the level of metals in the river to inhospitable levels.

For the past decade, Midas Gold has been monitoring water quality in and around the Stibnite Mining District. Water samples have still show very high arsenic and antimony levels that make the water unsafe for aquatic life and undrinkable. Currently, one of the tributaries to the Salmon River—Meadow Creek—passes by more than 10 million tons of spent ore and tailings from previous mining projects, leaching metals into the water supply and resulting in the further deterioration of water quality. Throughout the planning process, Midas Gold has been sharing the water quality data it collects with local and state regulators.

As part of its proposed plan of restoration and operations (PRO), Midas Gold would reprocess and properly store these legacy tailings in a 21<sup>st</sup>-century, cutting-edge tailings storage facility to prevent any further leaching. The 7.5 million tons of spent ore would be permanently separated from interaction with the water supply. As your own Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) found, these efforts would make a difference for the better. As mentioned in chapter four of the DEIS, removing legacy tailings and waste improves water quality (4.12 103-104).

From everything that I can tell, Midas Gold is taking its environmental responsibility seriously and, by leveraging a state-of-the-art, modern approach to mining, will help vastly improve water quality in the Salmon River, benefitting local wildlife, the environment, and our entire region. I urge you to lend your support to this critical project and approve Alternative 2 outlined by Midas Gold.

Best,

 David Whitney