

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

To Whom it May Concern,

I am writing in support of the Stibnite Gold Project and the benefits it will bring to Idaho. This project has the potential to put hundreds of Idahoans to work, bring a \$1 billion investment into our state and restore an area of Idaho's backcountry desperately in need of repair.

By law Midas Gold Idaho is required to set aside all of the money needed for restoration prior to any mining activity. This gives me, and Idahoans, peace of mind that the restoration work the company has discussed will come to fruition no matter what happens.

If Midas Gold Idaho is allowed to move forward with its work under Alternative 2, salmon will be reconnected to their native spawning grounds. This hasn't happened in 80 years! The US Forest Service's Draft Environmental Impact Statement concluded that removing existing barriers to fish migration will help Chinook salmon, bull trout and steelhead. In fact, DEIS 4.12-39 says long-term access to blocked habitat would result in increased productivity and genetic diversity of isolated populations. Mining has devastated this area. Midas Gold Idaho wants to fix it and I hope you will clear the path to allow their restoration work to move forward.

The study of the Stibnite Gold Project brought to light the environmental conditions existing at Stibnite because of past operators. Arsenic levels in the EFSFSR are far beyond safe standards. If Alternative 5 is selected, how will USFS address these legacies impacting the waters of Idaho? Who will pay to provide permanent and volitional fish passage?

The virtual meeting room has made it easy to draw these conclusions. The USFS has given the community ample time to participate and plenty of resources to review the document, the comment period does not need to go beyond 60 days.

For the above reasons and many more, please move forward with Alternative 2 of the Stibnite Gold Project as it is important to all Idahoans.

Have a good day,

Ben Bernier
