

USFS,

I appreciate the opportunity to comment on the Stibnite Gold Project ("Project"). I support the Project for a number of reasons: (1) it will improve the environment; (2) it will provide a U.S. supply of the critical mineral antimony; and (3) it will provide important, high-paying jobs in the U.S.

I am an environmental attorney and have worked on cases in the mining sector for many years, many of them Superfund cases being addressed with supervision from the Environmental Protection Agency ("EPA") under the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act ("CERCLA"), 42 U.S.C. Sections 9601, et seq. I have learned that in many of those cases, the best way to resolve the environmental issues is remediating--using modern techniques, in compliance with today's environmental laws. The mining will pay for the remediation, and today's environmental compliance requirements will avoid new damage.

I support the Project, because that is exactly the approach taken by Midas Gold. Alternative 2 is the result of many years of study by Midas Gold. The company developed this alternative after submitting their original plans and working with stakeholders, community members and environmental groups to try to determine how it could be improved. The result was a smaller project footprint, reconnecting salmon to their native spawning grounds before mining ever begins and improved water quality. Two of the alternatives, 3 and 4, would delay the project by several years and withhold its benefits from Idahoans unnecessarily. Those same alternatives could also become so expensive it could make the project cost prohibitive.

Alternative 2 Will Improve the Environment

The Project presents a unique opportunity to restore legacy impacts left behind from mining activity decades ago, that were an important part of the country's WWII efforts, and brings restoration to the forefront of modern day, responsible, mining. I support the Project, and specifically Alternative 2, because it will improve water quality by reprocessing and safely storing millions of tons of historical tailings. It will restore fish migration to spawning grounds where access has been blocked for over 80 years and will do that in early stages of the Project. Restoration plans will also provide a net gain of 21,941 stream functional units, a 23% increase in the quality habitat these species need. The Project will also restore the East Fork of the South Fork of the Salmon River to flow naturally and support fish passage after decades of pouring into an abandoned mining pit. Removing legacy tailings and managing water quality provides long-term reduction in metal loading to ground and surface water which will improve the water quality of the East Fork of the South Fork of the Salmon River. Alternative 2 will exceed reclamation standards required by law with design that restores and creates dynamic ecosystems that are sustainable and long-term. Importantly, the Project will be fully bonded to ensure this restoration occurs.

A U.S. Supply of Critical Minerals is Increasingly Important

The Project will be the U.S.'s only source of mined antimony, a listed critical mineral needed for important technological, industrial and defense applications and necessary for the country's domestic security and supply chain independence. The U.S. Department of Commerce lists antimony as one of 35 critical minerals. The military relies heavily on antimony. It is used in high tech electronics such as night vision goggles, communications equipment, infrared sensors, explosives formulations, and ammunition primers. It is used in hardening lead in bullets and shrapnel, in armor piercing projectiles, and in nuclear weapons and nuclear power plants on submarines and warships. It helps remove impurities in glass and is important in the production of military binoculars, precision optics and laser sighting and survey equipment. Antimony is also important in a number of non-military industries. It is heavily used in battery production, nuclear energy, wind turbines and marine ship building. Currently, China controls most of the world's supply of antimony. The Project will be an important U.S. source of antimony that we need now.

U.S. Economic Development is Critical for our Future

Mining in the U.S. gives an opportunity to provide jobs here at home. The mining industry provides training, includes experts from many different disciplines (ecology, engineering, legal, etc.) with significant educational experience, and most mining sector jobs are high paying jobs that contribute to the local economy. The Project will create ~500 direct jobs with an average salary of ~\$80,000 during operations and a similar number of indirect jobs. The Project will also provide ~\$1.1 billion dollar investment in Idaho and Midas Gold has committed to spend an additional \$2+ billion over the Project life. With everything happening in the world, I feel strongly that we need to Stibnite Gold Project to move forward now. These investments will bring important employment opportunities to rural Idaho, invest a billion in Idaho, help improve community infrastructure, and would become the only US source of the critical mineral, antimony.

I urge you to accept Midas Gold's plan as outlined under Alternative 2. The U.S. Forest Service has provided the public with helpful virtual tools and materials to submit meaningful comments on the project within the allotted timeframe. It is time to move this project forward.

Thanks for your time,

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