

Dear Payette National Forest Staff,

My family has owned property, resided at times and worked in the Yellow Pine/Stibnite area for over one hundred years. It is an amazing area and one that has played an important role in the history of our country. There are many reasons why my family and I support Midas Gold Idaho's Stibnite Gold Project. My objective in writing to you today is to share several of the reasons we support Alternative 2 in the Draft EIS and are excited about Midas receiving the necessary permits and beginning operations at Stibnite.

First, we have worked with Midas in a number of ways over the last ten years and been continually impressed with its leaders' environmental sensitivity, business acumen, professionalism and community orientation. What's more, Midas has demonstrated time after time over the years an outstanding ability to raise the necessary capital from industry leaders to develop Stibnite without cutting any corners. This indicates to us the company will make necessary investments in not just operations but immediate and future reclamation and restoration initiatives.

As all citizens of Valley County are aware, Stibnite is a "Brownfields" area, was subjected to years of mining activities and needs much restoration. The Midas Plan of Restoration and Operations and Draft EIS clearly document the extensive plans Midas has throughout the life of the project to enhance the environment, conduct a myriad of reclamation projects and restore much of the drainage area in accordance with the highest environmental standards. We can think of no better example of their environmental objectives than the early construction of a fish tunnel around the Yellow Pine pit, so salmon, steelhead and bull trout can make their way to the headwaters of the East Fork of the South Fork for spawning. Another priority for Midas will be to reprocess millions of tons of historical tailings and properly store them in a modern lined facility to prevent heavy metals from entering the drainage. Also noteworthy is the company's willingness to engage in continuous initiatives to mine and restore the site to simultaneously, while reserving capital and time after mining ends to close out the site in a manner all concerned can point to with pride.

In addition, we would remiss in failing to highlight the profoundly positive economic impacts the Stibnite Gold Project will have on Valley County and State of Idaho. The project will directly and indirectly employ approximately 1,000 workers and provide millions of dollars in tax revenue. The project will drive infrastructure improvements, maintain roads and deliver financial grants to communities through a recently established foundation. Importantly, these are just a few of the many economic benefits of the project.

Last but not least is the fact Midas has committed to recovering significant quantities of the metal antimony at Stibnite. Antimony, while not technically a "rare earth," is still an important strategic metal. The country has few domestic sources for antimony, so the project will contribute to national security by producing antimony for industry and the strategic reserve.

The Stibnite Gold Project has survived more than a decade of development, review and analysis. We urge the government to move ahead at long last on this unique and critical project and permit the mine using alternative 2 in the Draft EIS. It is simply the right thing to do for posterity.

Sincerely,

Ron Oberbillig

Name: Ron Oberbillig