October 27, 2020

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

Dear U.S. Forest Supervisor Linda Jackson,

For decades, local fish and aquatic life have struggled to cope with the environmental impact that previous mining operations had on the area around the Stibnite-Yellow Pine region. Now, the Stibnite Gold Project offers the potential to restore this site and revitalize local wildlife and fish populations. We must seize that potential, and you can help by accepting Alternative 2 of Midas Gold's plan for this long-overdue project.

Ever since the late 1930's, native fish like the Chinook salmon, bull trout, and steelhead have been cut off from the waters that were once home to their spawning and rearing grounds. To this day, these fish are unable to swim upstream past the part of the East Fork of the South Fork of the Salmon River that flows over the abandoned Yellow Pine pit. As a result, fish populations are struggling and not nearly as productive as they should be.

To solve this problem, Stibnite will construct a temporary one-mile long passageway to help fish reconnect to miles of new habitat at a higher elevation and in cooler waters, which is more conducive to spawning and rearing of young fish. That will help revitalize fish populations starting in the first year of operations.

Then, once mining is over, Midas Gold has outlined in Alternative 2 how it will backfill the Yellow Pine pit, remove historical barriers to migration, and completely restore this part of the Salmon River. As stated in the draft environmental impact statement released by the USFS, long-term access to historically blocked critical habitat would result in increased productivity (Chapter 4, section 12).

There's still hope for local fish and wildlife, but only if Alternative 2 is approved soon. It is by far the best option because it offers the most environmental benefits. Please approve Alternative 2 without delay.

Elizabeth Eiguren Bilbao
Nampa, Idaho