

I am writing to express my full support of Perpetua Resources and the Stibnite Gold Project. Perpetua has shown they are committed to Idaho and want to take care of the environment. The company designed its project to clean up legacy waste, reconnect salmon to their native spawning grounds and fix one of the watershed's largest source of sedimentation. The Stibnite Gold Project would water quality, wetlands and the river better than they are today. I hope you move forward and permit this project as quickly as possible.

Salmon have been cut off from miles of high-mountain spawning grounds and rearing habitats since roughly 1938, when the East Fork of the South Fork of the Salmon River was diverted around the Yellow Pine Pit. We need to do better. Fortunately, Perpetua Resources plans to design and install a fish passageway to help connect fish to their native spawning grounds before mining even begins. While skeptics have questioned whether or not the passageway would work, the SDEIS concludes it will provide passage for all four special status fish species at Stibnite. And, once mining at the Yellow Pine Pit is complete, Perpetua would begin full restoration of the river, creating a long-term solution for salmon to spawn upstream. This is just one of the benefits of the preferred alternative.

As the U.S. Forest Service and other state and federal agencies review the 2021 Modified Mine Plan and determine the course of action, I encourage you to consider the positive benefits Perpetua Resources will have on Idaho, especially now that the company has reduced its environmental footprint and made further improvements to water quality. This truly is a win-win opportunity for Idahoans and the environment. After years of careful scrutiny by regulators and the community, it is time for us to make these benefits a reality.

Ron Kestle