

December 31, 2022

Dear US Forest Service:

Representing over three hundred Idaho employers and their organizations across a diverse range of industries as well as chambers of commerce across the state, the Idaho Association of Commerce & Industry (IACI) works to support effective public policies that support prosperity for both businesses and citizens throughout the state. We write today to strongly urge you to advance the Stibnite Gold Project at the historic Stibnite Mining District. After reviewing the Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement, we urge your agency to move forward and finalize the EIS under the 2021 MMP alternative. Not only will this project go a long way in creating jobs and supporting Idaho businesses, but it will do so in a way that protects and restores the local environment by taking an ethical and responsible approach to mining. The project will also end foreign reliance for our supply of the critical mineral antimony, which is vital for goods ranging from semiconductors and storage batteries to defense munitions.

Perpetua Resources has upheld a commitment to hiring and working with local Idaho vendors and suppliers in the planning, construction, and operations of the project. Even though construction and mining has yet to begin, the company has already spent nearly \$100 million with in-state businesses and contractors. Throughout the life of the project, Perpetua has indicated it will also collaborate with local schools, community colleges, and the Idaho Department of Labor to provide training opportunities that will give Idahoans the skills they need to enter the mining workforce.

During construction alone, the project is likely to support over 1,500 Idahoans developing the site. Once operations are up and running, Perpetua anticipates it will provide 550-650 ongoing direct jobs ranging from management and administration to equipment operators and mechanics to geologists and environmental specialists. In addition, another 680 Idahoans would be employed indirectly or through induced jobs during operations (Section 4.21).

Headwater Economics, a Montana based and northwest focused economic research group, studied economic impacts of restoration projects in Lemhi and Custer counties. The study found that a variety of local economic sectors benefit from restoration projects, including mining company sponsored restoration efforts.¹ These sectors included businesses involved in manufacturing, wholesale trade, retail trade, transportation, finance and insurance, arts, entertainment and recreation, and accommodation and food services. The economic effects analysis indicates an employment multiplier of 1.49, which is consistent with that predicted by the EIS economic analysis. Notably, the Headwaters study found that economic benefits are especially important in rural counties with strong ties to industries linked to the health of land and water resources, including agricultural and recreational industries important to Valley County. The restoration aspects of the Stibnite Gold Project, especially projections of improvements in water quality and restorative benefits to fisheries, will deliver similar, or greater economic benefits to local rural communities.

¹ https://headwaterseconomics.org/wp-content/uploads/Idaho_Restoration_Report.pdf

Perpetua has also made a concerted effort to raise the bar when it comes to determining how to ensure the surrounding environment is restored and reclaimed after operations are complete-and even while they are underway. In the past, the Stibnite Mining District has been neglected and suffered from environmental degradation. The water quality in the region has been severely compromised for decades, as millions of tons of World War II era tailings and sediment from erosion due to deforestation has settled in the Meadow Creek Valley. Water interacting with the tailings has raised the level of arsenic and other metals to uninhabitable levels. Idahoans value a high-quality environment, and Perpetua is committed to providing the resources it will take to finally address these problems with the existing site, including water quality and fish migration.

In fact, IACI is so confident that Perpetua Resources is the right partner to help develop the Stibnite site in an environmentally sustainable way, that we awarded the company our 2015 Environmental Excellence Award recognizing their innovative environmental leadership efforts and accomplishments, including environmental restoration, water quality improvements, and fish habitat enhancements in the Stibnite-Yellow Pine area.

Perpetua Resources has already been working to address these issues. To date, the company has already initiated site restoration in collaboration with the EPA. The company has also planted more than 60,000 trees to control erosion and reduce the collection of sediments in the East Fork of the South Fork of the Salmon River. Their cleanup efforts on the site have removed more than thirty tons of scrap metal and reclaimed more than thirty acres of land. Furthermore, they have crafted a phased approach that prioritizes environmental reclamation, ensuring that restoration will continue in conjunction with responsible mining efforts. They will be improving the land as operations continue, not waiting until they are complete to begin restoration.

The Stibnite Gold Project will bring much-needed private investment, employment opportunities, and business growth to central Idaho-all while responsibly developing this historic site and restoring the surrounding environment. This is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity Idaho cannot afford to miss. We strongly encourage publication of a final EIS and swift approval of this project under the modified mine plan alternative so Idaho can begin to reap the economic and environmental benefits this project will bring to our state.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Alex S. LaBeau', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Alex S. LaBeau, President