

November 2, 2022

Linda Jackson, Supervisor
Payette National Forest
500 N. Mission Street
McCall, Idaho 83638

linda.l.jackson@usda.gov

RE: Request for 120-day comment period for the Stibnite Gold Project Supplemental DEIS.

Ms. Jackson:

I request a 45-day extension of the 75-day public comment period—for a total of 120 days—for the Stibnite Gold Project Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement (SDEIS).

I have worked, and I and my family float, fish, botanize, bird, hunt, camp and hike in or around the proposed Stibnite Gold Project area of influence. I have been closely engaged in the pre-scoping, scoping and DEIS process.

The project is extraordinarily complex and risks irreversible and irreparable harm to the South Fork of the Salmon River watershed. Even with restoration components, the proposed large-scale mining will have long-lasting and permanent effects, similar to those seen on that landscape today. Thus, a 120-day comment period is consistent with the primary purposes of NEPA.

The proposed mine is highly controversial and has the potential to significantly impact resources of high interest, including ESA-listed fish, Wilderness, Wild and Scenic River designation, Roadless Areas, and extensive ecological, cultural, and recreational resources. The Forest Service (FS) has allowed longer comment periods for similarly sized mining proposals that did not involve the same proximity to Wilderness or threaten salmon and steelhead.

Perpetua and the FS have had unlimited time and funds (including my taxpayer dollars) to develop the SDEIS. Private citizens and businesses are being given a very restrictive time period and using their personal resources to pay for professional expertise and consulting.

The presence of many federal and other holidays within the 75-day comment period substantially diminishes the available time I have for review. This comes after two consecutive holiday seasons with Covid where folks were not able to be with friends and family and travel was restricted.

The proposal has changed substantially since the draft EIS, which requires additional time and resources for me to review. The FS needed significant additional time to re-analyze the project from a DEIS to a SDEIS. Kevin Knesek admits that the DEIS was “not a very good document”,

that the FS needs to “get it right” on its predictions, and that process is important. I and the public absolutely need a 120-day comment period to review the SDEIS.

I respectfully request that the FS provide a 120-day comment period for the Stibnite Gold Project Supplemental DEIS.

Sincerely,

/s/Mary Faurot Petterson

Mary Faurot Petterson



cc:

Susan Howle at susan.howle@usda.gov

Kevin Knesek at kevin.s.knesek@usda.gov

Mary Farnsworth at mary.farnsworth@usda.gov