



Brad Little, Governor
Tom Kealey, Director

U.S. Forest Service, Payette National Forest
Attn: Linda Jackson, Payette Forest Supervisor
500 North Mission Street, Building 2
McCall, ID 83638

Dear Ms. Linda Jackson,

Fostering economic opportunities for Idaho workers, businesses, and industries is one of the primary concerns of the Idaho Department of Commerce. To that end, we are supportive of business willing to make a private investment in developing our state's workforce and infrastructure and contribute to the continued economic success of our communities – especially in rural areas where such opportunities are often few and far between. It is also true that business growth can be accomplished in such a manner that promotes the responsible use of our natural resources and protects Idaho's natural places. From cobalt to antimony, Idaho has the opportunity to responsibly source some of our country's most needed critical minerals while bringing jobs, workforce training, upgraded infrastructure and many secondary benefits to Idahoans.

Representing a \$1.1 billion private investment, the Stibnite Gold Project will create roughly 500 direct jobs during operations in rural Idaho, with an average annual salary of \$91,000, as noted in Section 4.21 of the SDEIS. Indirectly, the project would be responsible for supporting hundreds of more jobs across a wide spectrum of industries, in the transportation sector, the supply chain for goods and services, and in the jobs created to fill the increased needs of local communities, including teachers, hospitality workers, and more. All of that is only accounting for the ongoing operations once construction is complete. During the construction phase, the project could support up to another 600 direct jobs for local workers, contractors, and others involved in the construction industry as well as 800 indirect jobs.

Moreover, local communities and our entire state will benefit from the significant new revenues that will be injected into our economy. We find the Supplemental DEIS analysis accurate in accounting for roughly \$300,000 in annual County property taxes, \$100 million in state corporate income taxes and mine license taxes, \$150 million in sales transactions for the regional economy, and \$200 million in direct, indirect, and induced state taxes.

Perpetua has been in the region for 12 years now, spending nearly \$88 million in Idaho through a commitment to prioritize local hiring and spending. The company has also done excellent work incorporating feedback from local businesses and communities to ensure their plan appropriately addresses the needs of local residents and business. Perpetua has proven itself a responsible corporate citizen, not only transparently providing information to local communities, but also investing in community giving, charitable work, and educational outreach.

Perpetua has also indicated that it intends to invest in workforce training for communities, collaborating with local schools, community colleges, and Idaho's Department of Labor to help connect Idahoans with

the new opportunities. At a time when many Idahoans are struggling from housing affordability and inflation pressures, creating these kinds of employment opportunities is more important than ever.

One of the largest challenges to business growth in rural Idaho is access to infrastructure. Many of our rural communities struggle to attract new businesses because of outdated or underperforming infrastructure like access to power and fiber networks. The plan to upgrade 73 miles of transmission line to a higher voltage and add distribution capacity to Valley County will, in our experience, help attract new business and help existing businesses grow.

In our experience, we have found that local businesses benefit from the diversification of the local economy. An increase in high-paying natural resource and construction jobs for a community heavily reliant on accommodation, food service, and real estate sectors can help to promote economic resilience. Increasing the purchasing power of local residents has significant trickle-down effects which spur local business. Providing competitive benefit packages increase health and well-being of workers and their families. In addition to the direct benefits, the mine would support local business offering construction, excavation, maintenance, repair, transportation, retail, and a suite of other services. Demand for these services will create new opportunities for local businesses, inducing additional growth.

As you know, previous mining projects left Stibnite decades ago and left an unfortunate legacy of environmental destruction in their wake. Based on what Perpetua has proposed for the Modified Mine Plan Alternative as analyzed in the Supplemental DEIS, the Stibnite Gold Project will not only help address these concerns, but do so while being held to the strictest environmental standards and regulations to ensure that past mistakes are not carried into the future. Just this last year, Department of Commerce staff helped Perpetua celebrate the commencement of vital legacy cleanup work at Stibnite. We were so thrilled to see Perpetua invest up to \$12 million in legacy cleanup work that would not otherwise be done without taxpayer intervention. It is precisely these types of private partnerships from companies willing to go above and beyond that make Idaho so unique.

For the above reasons, the Stibnite Gold Project presents a valuable opportunity for economic growth, community development, and environmental restoration. We ask that you support the permitting process and in a timely manner so that these opportunities may be realized.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this important project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Tom Kealey". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Tom Kealey
Director
Idaho Department of Commerce