Fallon Fereday January 8, 2023

713 Wooley Avenue

McCall, Idaho 83638

Ms. Linda Jackson

Payette National Forest Supervisor

500 N. Mission Street Building 2

McCall ID 83638-3805

To Ms. Linda Jackson,

I have lived my entire life in Valley County, save for a few years during and after college. Since returning with my husband, I have served for 9 years on the McCall Area Planning and Zoning Commission, and understand the importance of public comment. Now, raising a family in McCall, running a family business and contributing to this community through volunteer work whenever possible, it feels more important than ever to speak up. I believe in the adage “take care of what takes care of you,” and for our family, who has watched our sleepy Valley County grow to attract visitors from all over the world, in search of our near-pristine rivers, lakes, and forests, the Stibnite Gold Project threatens what we depend on now and in the future.

The gaps in our understanding of the environmental and economic impacts of a mining operation in this area should at minimum call for a pause to determine exactly what benefits do exist, and how those benefits can compare to the environmental and economic factors that currently exist in the area. Can we count on Perpetua to protect every aspect of the project—not just their revenue and profits, but the actual communities, wildlife, waterways and all that the project will impact downstream, both literally and figuratively? Their stake exists for as long as they are pulling from the ground—the long-term reality is not their concern. The information they have provided to date has been lacking in a variety of ways, from basic engineering to analysis of mitigation measures. Anyone would hope they would take care of what all of us in Valley County and Idaho consider our place, where we live, work, and play, but I, and many others, are unwilling to take that gamble.

The Idaho Headwaters Economic Study Group has published an analysis performed by Power Consulting (Missoula, MT) that upends the narrative that Stibnite will bring a huge bounty and boom to Valley County. From high-paying jobs to public land values, I read this information as incredibly damming to the mining impacts and benefits in both the short and long term. Our local community has flourished and prospered as tourism has taken hold in the region, and while that also comes with its own set of shortfalls and challenges, Stibnite Gold and its operations have the potential to upend what has been a successful and growing economy. If we protect and nurture our natural resources, promote responsible recreation, invest in local communities by creating a sustainable and long-term plan for growth, we will have treasures to share with many generations to come.

I have three small children who will be raised in McCall. Now, they are just at the beginning of their journey—exploring the forests and learning to ski. Jumping in puddles and camping with friends. I would not gamble with their future in this place by permitting a project that could completely and permanently change how and if people can live and work here. I want them to be able to know what as asset a childhood in West Central Idaho can be—I want them to grow up and leave, only to return and realize that there are not many places more wonderful to learn to be a person in this world. I want to make decisions today that do not carry so much potential destruction and danger that one day, none of us will recognize this place.

 The risk of this mining operation is too great. What we do and don’t know is too little and too much, at once. Please make sure the decisions made now protect our future generations—of all living creatures big and small. This place is too great for anything else.

Respectfully,

Fallon Fereday