

I am writing in support of the Stibnite Gold Project.

I am a mining environmental professional and have worked on environmental management of mines since 1980. What I have witnessed in those 40+ years is a monumental improvement in how mines are designed and permitted, especially for environmental protection. In the case of Perpetua, it is clear to me that the level of environmental protection and restoration of legacy environmental impacts integrated into their plan are the some of the best I have ever observed for a mine project.

A key aspect of developing a mine on public lands is to comply with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). For years the public has demanded that mines conduct a systematic review of a proposed mine, including public participation.

Clearly Perpetua has undertaken one of the most thorough and rigorous environment and social reviews of a mine project ever. The agencies, led by the U.S. Forest Service (USFS), and Perpetua, have engaged dozens of scientists and experts to undertake this review. They have conducted numerous public outreach and engagement activities to fully inform the public, as prescribed by NEPA. This effort clearly meets the “hard look” principles of NEPA. Additionally, as part of that hard look, Perpetua has modified its proposed action in response to agency and public input to improve the environmental performance of the project. This how NEPA was intended to work.

NEPA requires that the agency base their decision on the quality of the analysis and the inclusion of significant public input and comment. These two standards have been met by the Forest Service and Perpetua.

Importantly, this project has the potential to put hundreds of Idahoans to work, bring a \$1 billion investment into the state and restore an area of Idaho's backcountry desperately in need of repair. It will also significantly improve the domestic production of antimony, a critical mineral crucial to national security! It also has the potential to transform energy storage to help meet renewable energy and greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets.

The Stibnite Gold Project can restore fish passage around the Yellow Pine pit and clean up and prevent heavy metals from leaching into the ground and surface water. The mine would leave the conditions better than they are today and would result in a major, permanent, regional, and beneficial effect on Chinook salmon, steelhead, bull trout, and westslope cutthroat trout within the vicinity of mine.

This project is a much an environmental restoration project as it is a “mine” project.

NEPA prescribes that an agency “use all practicable means and measures . . . to create and maintain conditions under which man and nature can exist in productive harmony, and fulfill the social, economic, and other requirements of present and future generations of Americans.” 42 U.S.C. 4331(a). At this point, the USFS has met its duty and that standard. The right decision is to approve this project as designed and modified to achieve the highest level of environmental protection feasible.

I encourage the USFS to move the Stibnite Gold Project forward and permit Perpetua Resources' project as outlined in the 2021 Modified Mine Plan.

Timothy Dyhr