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First name: April

Last name: Whitney

Organization:

Title:

Comments: I am writing in support of the Stibnite Gold Project, as submitted to the US Forest Service in Midas Gold Idaho's Plan of Restoration and Operations. I have faith in the Forest Service EIS process, and with that in mind, I see the following as real advantages of the project.

Restoration:

The Stibnite Mining District site was subjected to a century of mining BEFORE environmental standards were in place, which has left it in desperate need of environmental repair and restoration. There is currently no other viable plan for clean up at this site, so the Stibnite Gold Project presents a unique opportunity to leverage private funds to improve public lands. Re-establishing fish migration, adding riparian habitat and eliminating sediment washing down Blowout Creek will serve to improve water quality and fish and wildlife habitats.

Economic Benefit:

I would also urge the Forest Service and other permitting agencies to consider the impacts this project could have to the economy in an area that is relatively isolated. Despite a low unemployment rate, Valley County is struggling with the availability of year-round, well-paying jobs. There is also an extreme shortage of affordable housing. Midas Gold's plans will help improve this situation on a number of levels.

The project is estimated to employ 400-500 people at a wage far higher than the community average. Assuming even a modest percentage of those jobs would go to local people, this will have a significant impact on the economic health of our community members. Right now, the valley is flush with seasonal, part time work in the recreation industry, but those jobs are not a good fit for every skill set. The area has a rich history in logging, milling and mining. The skills acquired in those fields are much more easily transferred to the type of work provided by a project like this than they are to some of the other, less-well-paying jobs available currently. In addition to direct employment, a project of this size would create other supporting economic opportunities for the people of our valley.

As far as the issue of employee housing is concerned, the Midas plan includes a solution to that problem by providing on-site housing for employees. Plans call for up to 90 percent of the workforce to be bussed, which addresses safety and environmental concerns. Federal income taxes aside, this project is estimated to bring in \$86 million in state corporate income taxes and mine license fees.

The reasons stated above are why I strongly urge the U.S. Forest Service and cooperating federal and state agencies to proceed with the Plan of Restoration and Operations for the Stibnite Gold Project.