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Organization:

Title:

Comments: My name is William L. Josey, I am a retired mining geologist, who from mid-1983 to early 1986 was the mine manager for Superior Mining's (The Superior Oil Company) operation at Stibnite. We managed the operation of the West End pits and the crushing plant, and were operators of the heap leach pads, the processing plant, and the refinery. I, like the majority of Americans, want to see our national economy grow by fostering domestic industries; therefore, I support the approval of Midas Gold's Stibnite Project.

The Stibnite Gold Project, as submitted to the US Forest Service in Midas Gold's Plan of Operation and Restoration, will be a boost to the local and State economies and ultimately, an improvement to the local environment at the Stibnite site.

Like many western mining areas, the Stibnite district has a long and colorful history. The date of the original gold discovery is not exactly known but was probably about 1900 by prospectors attracted to the area because of the gold strike at nearby Thunder Mountain. The recorded history dates from 1914 when the Hennessy and the Meadow Creek claim blocks were staked. After over 100 years of mining operations, the district needs environmental reclamation and restoration.

To my knowledge, there is not another alternative to environmentally improving the site. Disapproval of Midas Gold's plan will leave the site as it is and has been for so long, and I don't think that situation is in the best interest of the biological habitat or the local community. Approval of the proposed project is an opportunity and incentive for a private enterprise to invest in a facility that will ultimately restore public lands for wildlife habitat and the enjoyment of the public.

When I was involved in another mining development project, we found a statistic that said, "That for every employee at a mine five other persons were being supported". The five supported persons included family members and local businesses. With the stalled development of the Tamarack Resort, I suspect that the local businesses, Valley County, and the State could readily use the mine employee expenditures and tax revenues from the operation of a mine at the Stibnite site. Midas Gold estimates an investment of \$1 billion to develop the mine and projects \$86 million in State corporate income and mine taxes. These funds remain in the State and local communities unlike the Federal taxes, which will also be required.

I strongly recommend the Forest Service and cooperating federal and state agencies to proceed with Midas Gold's Plan of Operations as the preferred Alternative. Thank you for the opportunity to comment