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Comments: I appreciate the opportunity to speak out in support of the Stibnite Gold Project proposed by Midas Gold Idaho. This project will help create jobs and economic opportunities for rural Idaho communities while addressing some of the longstanding problems in the region that were caused by decades of largely unregulated mining projects. In the process, it will reignite the production of a mineral that is critical for our country's national defense.

In addition to the gold that will be mined at the future site, the Stibnite Gold Project will enable America to resume domestic production of antimony, which the U.S. government considers a [ldquo]critical mineral[rldquo] due to its use in national defense, aerospace, and energy. According to the U.S. Geologic Survey (USGS), our country is currently not producing any antimony domestically, leaving China, Russia, and Tajikistan as the leading sources of the mineral for the U.S.

The Stibnite Gold Project will enable America to resume mining of this important mineral on our own soil, helping ease our reliance on foreign sources. It will also allow us to build up a stockpile of antimony as recommended by the Department of Defense to prepare for a projected shortfall of the mineral.

Moreover, the project will be vital in creating local jobs and spurring economic activity in the rural Idaho communities that need it most. Midas has committed to working with local vendors and suppliers whenever possible, and have already spent nearly \$70 million in Idaho to bring this project to life.

During the construction phase, the company expects to employ 600-700 people directly and support another 500-800 jobs indirectly. Once operations begin, Midas Gold anticipates they will employ another 500-600 people directly and support an additional 450-600 jobs through the downstream economic impact the project will have on local communities.

All of this is being done with the highest standards of worker and environmental safety in mind. Midas has a proven track record of success when it comes to safely managing hazardous materials and environmentally sensitive areas, and the Stibnite Gold Project will be no different. The company is planning to construct all the necessary infrastructure to transport and store any hazardous materials involved in the project in a way that prioritizes safety, as outlined in the project design presented to your agency, and the project will include an on-site hazardous materials response team.

Please keep these thoughts in mind as you review this project. I urge you to approve Alternative 2 as presented by Midas in their modified Plan of Restoration and Operations (Mod PRO)[mdash]and help make the Stibnite Gold Project a reality.