

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 9/22/2020 6:00:00 AM

First name: Travis

Last name: Watson

Organization:

Title:

Comments: Thank you for the opportunity to comment on Midas Gold's Stibnite Gold Project. My family loves exploring on Idaho's public lands. It doesn't matter if we are boating, camping or dirt biking, we simply love being outside. So, when I heard there was a proposed mine on public land outside of Yellow Pine, I wanted to learn more. Naturally, I was concerned about public access, impacts on the land and how a project of this size would affect the larger community. The more I learned, the more I liked the project.

I am a single father who has worked in the electrical field for more than 20 years. The Stibnite Gold Project could present me and many other Idahoans with the opportunity to create a brighter future. According to an economics study put out by the company, the average salary for Midas Gold employees will be \$80,000, enough money to raise a family on. Midas Gold estimates they will need to hire 500 employees during operations, and they are committed to finding the talent they need locally, so the project benefits Idahoans. If the Stibnite Gold Project moves forward, Midas Gold will invest \$1 billion in our state, contribute millions of dollars in taxes each year and help stimulate the state economy with their workforce. We need projects like this, especially with the Coronavirus pandemic.

Access to public lands is a right extended to all Idahoans. This is something Midas Gold understands and has prioritized in their Plan of Restoration and Operations. While some of the Stibnite Gold Project will take place on public lands, Midas Gold has made a commitment to the community to ensure access is preserved to our favorite places. The company has promised to provide parking for winter recreationalists at their maintenance facility and submitted additional plans to the U.S. Forest Service, under Alternative 2, to allow Idahoans to continue to use Stibnite Road throughout the life of the project when it is safe. Their willingness to work with recreationalists to provide access gives me great hope for the future.

If you examine the DEIS, it is evident the company identified the best possible plan to restore the site under Alternative 2. The company is limiting its footprint to existing disturbance as much as possible to minimize new disturbance, natural fish spawning routes will be restored after being blocked for decades and the company has plans to make improvements that will keep thousands of pounds of sediment out of the river each year. I worry if Midas Gold is not allowed to move forward with its plan, that the area will remain as it is today, and the environmental legacies will never be cleaned up.

This project truly is a unique opportunity for our state. Stibnite needs to be cleaned up. Idahoans need jobs. And our nation needs the minerals this project would produce. This project needs to move forward. I hope you will consider my comments around Alternative 2 as you evaluate the DEIS.