

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 10/7/2020 6:00:00 AM

First name: Claudean

Last name: Line

Organization:

Title:

Comments: I am writing to voice my support for the Midas Gold proposal to clean up the section of the Salmon River near Yellow Pine. I have examined their alternative 2 plan and feel it is by far the best way to get a handle on the environmental catastrophe that has plagued this part of Idaho for far too long.

No one is alive today who remembers what the East Fork of the South Fork of the Salmon looked like before mining took place. That started back in the 1890s. It was a productive mining region for many years, even contributing rare metals that helped win World War II. But tragically, back in those times, no one thought about the long-term damage mineral extraction would do to the environment and, importantly, to the salmon and other native fish that stretch of water held.

Now we do know. The legacy of tailings, stream blockage, habitat destruction and other detrimental impacts of mining has made it nearly impossible for local fish populations to survive. The only way for them to migrate to the headwaters now is in tanker trucks, driven by hatchery workers. That is not an acceptable solution.

Midas Gold does have an acceptable solution. They would reconnect fish to the native spawning grounds in the East Fork of the South Fork of the Salmon River, remove sediment that harms fish of all kinds in the watershed, and get rid of the decades-old tailings and other mining wastes that pollute the water.

Yes, Midas Gold is a mining company and they would fund all those environmental improvements with the revenues they generate by extracting minerals from the area. But it is wrong to equate Midas with the mining companies of days gone by. They are a modern firm that does business with respect to the environment and in full compliance with strict environmental regulations. Instead of harming Idaho's land and water resources, Midas Gold would save them.

The U.S. Forest Service's own environmental impact statement for this project recognizes the beneficial impact it would have. Old-time mining companies caused the problems facing the Yellow Pine area watershed today. Let's allow a modern one to fix them. Please approve the Midas Gold plan.