

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

First name: Doug

Last name: Pottenger

Organization:

Title:

Comments: I write to you today to urge your support of the Stibnite Gold Project as laid out in Midas Gold Idaho's Alternative 2 in their plan for restoration and operations. I've lived in Valley County for a long time and can attest to the fact that the Stibnite area is long overdue for some serious investment in cleaning up the legacy waste and old mining materials that are contributing to a very poor water quality. Please approve Alternative 2 and help kickstart environmental restoration.

Due to previous mining activity from the World War II era, there are over three million tons of tailings lying unconstrained in Meadow Creek-as well as more than seven million tons of spent ore-which feeds right into the Salmon River. As a result, toxic metals are leaching into the local water supply. On top of that, a dam failure in 1965 has led to large quantities of sediment that enter the Salmon River each year. The exceedingly high levels of sediment make it hard for fish to find food, fight diseases, and can even clog their gills.

Midas Gold has been monitoring the water quality for years and has outlined a number of steps to address these issues. The company plans on removing all 10+ million tons of tailings and rock waste, reprocessing the tailings, and storing both in a way that they will no longer interact with water. On top of that, they have described in how they will address the sedimentation problem by installing a rock drain below the site of the failed dam, rebuilding the stream channel to prevent large amounts of sediment from entering the river, and raising the water level in the surrounding wetlands so they are fully functional again.

Based on the U.S. Forest Service's Draft Environmental Impact Statement, removing the legacy tailings and waste improves water quality in Meadow Creek Valley (4.12 103-104). Further, the proposed mitigation plans Midas has outlined will provide 1:1 replacement of wetland acres (4.11.2.3.1.1-2). For these reasons, I believe Alternative 2 is the best possible solution. Unlike Alternatives 3 and 4, it will allow for work to begin sooner instead of causing a two-year delay. And we cannot afford any further inaction, making Alternative 5 not a viable option.

Please take these thoughts into consideration and help advance the Stibnite Gold Project by approving Alternative 2.