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Comments: I believe Midas Gold Idaho is well positioned to help restore the Stibnite region after more than a decade exploring the site, working with local communities, and coming up with a plan to help rectify past environmental damage. I am writing today to ask you to please move this vital project forward by adopting Alternative 2 outlined in the draft environmental impact statement (DEIS) and Midas Gold's proposal.

It has been more than eight decades since local fish have been able to swim upstream past the exposed Yellow Pit Pine and rocky terrain to reach what used to be their native spawning grounds. This project will fix that problem by first installing a temporary passageway that will connect our local salmon, trout, and other fish populations to areas upstream that will be more suitable for spawning, and then later backfilling the pit so that fish can be permanently reconnected to miles of critical spawning, feeding, and rearing habitat .

The best part is, all of this will happen simultaneously along with redevelopment of the Yellow Pine Pit so that fish can get a head-start on recovering their struggling populations sooner rather than later. As concluded by the DEIS, free movement and access to habitat can improve genetic diversity of isolated fish populations. (4.12-39)

For the well-being of local fish and wildlife, as well as the entire ecosystem in the Stibnite area, the U.S. Forest Service should approve Alternative Two as soon as possible. Compared to the other options on the table, this is the plan that will provide the greatest benefit to local fish habitats and the environment in the fastest timeframe. It's time to move forward with this project.