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Comments: I am writing to voice my support for the Stibnite Gold Project proposed by Midas Gold Idaho.

The Stibnite Gold Project would solve two problems at once. It would create badly needed jobs and inject millions of dollars into Idaho's economy, and it would result in the restoration of polluted land that has been neglected for decades. It is difficult to envision a more perfect proposal, especially at a time when job security is at the forefront of everyone's mind.

Some people are concerned that the return of mining will cause further damage to our nature. However, modern mining is heavily regulated, and the environmental risks posed by the Stibnite Gold Project are a drop in the bucket compared to the ongoing harm caused by tailings and waste material left behind from older operations. It would be hypocritical to reject the project for environmental reasons when the alternative is far worse. Given the high cost of restoration, it is unlikely that cleaning up Stibnite will be a government priority any time soon. Idaho would be wise to let a private company pick up the tab and create hundreds of jobs at the same time.

Snowmobiling is also popular recreational activity in McCall and throughout all of Valley County, attracting local and visiting snowmobilers eager to enjoy the breathtaking bowls and back country snow powder. The McCall region also offers more than 544 miles of groomed trails and our members are proud of its consistent top ranking for the North Western United States. When Midas Gold first proposed its plan for the Stibnite Mining District, many were concerned about continued access to the area given their need for road closures and road design changes during the project. These concerns were alleviated once it became clear Midas Gold was aware that maintaining access to the backcountry is important to Idahoans and designed their plan accordingly. Their travel plans to and from the site prioritizes safety for Idahoans while taking care to maintain access for all types of recreational activities from hiking to hunting to fishing and of course, snowmobiling.

The Stibnite Gold Project does not. I am strongly in support of Midas Gold's plan, and I encourage the U.S. Forest Service to approve Alternative 2 outlined in their Plan of Restoration and Operations.