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Comments: The old tailings piles left over from decades of careless mining in the Stibnite Mining District are a major concern for me. I think they endanger the health of Valley County human residents and wildlife as well. That is why I am in favor of the Midas Gold plan to clean them up.

As you well know, over the last 10 years Midas has been sampling water quality at various points around the site and has found alarming levels of arsenic and antimony, far above acceptable drinking water or fish habitat standards. Midas was not responsible for any of that pollution, but they have documented its presence. They are the first mining company that has taken environmental protection seriously there.

There are several million tons of tailings and spent heap leach ore in the Meadow Creek Valley. Large amounts of sediment seep into the river system each year too, as they have done since the Blowout Creek dam failed in 1965.

Midas Gold will reprocess and safely store those tailings in the initial years of mining operations, and permanently isolate an estimated 7.5 tons of spent ore with a dependable liner system. They will also install a drain and rebuild stream channels to address the sedimentation problems.

It's ironic to me that mining, which has been the cause of all the environmental problems in the Stibnite District, can also be the solution to them. But the kind of mining operations Midas Gold has pledged and financially committed to conduct are nothing like the old time dig-and-move-on techniques mining companies used years ago.

The USFS environmental impact statement verifies many of these benefits. I am excited about finally addressing the environmental issues impacting the East Fork of the South Fork of the Salmon River by implementing the Midas Gold plan. Please give it your stamp of approval.