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Organization: Council School District

Title: Superintendent/Secondary Principal

Comments: I would like to express my support for the permitting of the Stibnite Gold Project proposed by Midas Gold Idaho as it is an all-around win for our state and local community. Along with the many economic benefits the project will bring, Midas Gold has already proven its commitment to becoming a valuable community partner, especially to Council schools.

There is no denying Idaho's economy has been cruising along over the last several years with unbelievable, rapid growth. However, it is important that we do not rest on our laurels, especially given the sudden global pandemic. Rather, we must continue supporting opportunities for more economic opportunities.

The Stibnite Mining Project is that economic opportunity. Midas Gold hasn't mined one mineral, yet they have already spent \$100 million in the state since exploration of the area began in 2009. State and local tax coffers will take in an estimated \$218 million in direct and indirect taxes from the project. These are revenues that we may not otherwise be able to generate that can be directed to state and local projects in need of funding.

Our unemployment rate while steady at 5.6 percent spiked to more than 11 percent during the pandemic. The Stibnite Mining Project is the perfect opportunity to add more stable jobs to our economy. It would directly employ 600 to 700 people during construction. Once the mine is operational, Midas Gold expects to provide roughly 500 jobs with an average yearly salary of approximately \$80,000. This is in stark contrast to the current \$35,000 in the surrounding area.

Midas Gold has also shown its willingness to be an active participant in the community. Significantly, they have done a tremendous amount of work with our local schools. In addition to collaborating with school districts for a tree planting campaign, they have worked with the Council Schools to support our Elementary Reading program, our sports programs and helped us fund much needed technology in our classrooms.

It is for these reasons; I encourage the U.S. Forest Service to adopt Alternative 2 laid out by Midas Gold in their modified plan of restoration and operations.