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Comments: As you've no doubt heard by now, the Stibnite Mining District has suffered from years upon years of neglect that has greatly hurt the surrounding environment. From poor water quality and diminished habitat for aquatic life to ongoing erosion and the destruction of once fertile wetlands, this area needs restoration. After reviewing the draft environmental impact study compiled by the U.S. Forest Service, I believe that the Alternative Two proposal presented by Midas Gold is the best solution we have available to address the myriad of problems at Stibnite.

Ever since an earthen dam failed at Blowout Creek in the mid-1960s, erosion has been a major issue at Stibnite, which has also led to increased sedimentation into the East Fork of the South Fork of the Salmon River. While the waters downstream have become murkier and less habitable for fish, the streams and creeks upstream from the failed dam have been drained, causing the wetlands to dry out.

Fortunately, Midas Gold has identified a solution to this problem. As part of Alternative Two for their plan to develop and restore the site, the company intends to install drainage beneath the site where the dam once stood and rebuild the stream channel, reducing the excessive sedimentation while also raising the water levels upstream to restore the surrounding wetlands.

From the conclusions made in the draft environmental impact study, it appears the U.S. Forest Service agrees that these mitigation and restoration plans will help address the negative environmental impacts seen at Stibnite. In Appendix D, it states that their mitigation and restoration plans will provide a net gain of more than 345 functional wetland units, a 40% increase, as well as a net gain of more than 21,000 functional stream units, a 23% increase.

Moreover, Alternative Two would help repair the damage done at Stibnite and restore the wetlands in the shortest possible timeframe. If Alternative Four is selected, for example, it would add another two years to the construction timeframe – least, according to chapter two of the environmental impact study. And figure 4.8-48 in the study shows that Alternative Two improves on Alternative 1 in order to fill in the Hangar Flats pit lake five years sooner, accelerating the rate of recovery of groundwater levels around the lake.

There is no doubt in my mind that Alternative Two offers the best possible approach to restore the environment around Stibnite and revitalize the wetlands in the shortest amount of time.

Please help make this possible by approving this option.