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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Payette National Forest Supervisor,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Stibnite Gold Project as part of the U.S. Forest Service's permitting process. This is an important project for Valley County and will have a significant impact on the community. As someone who explores, plays and cares about this region of Idaho's backcountry, I want to make sure the Stibnite Gold Project is done the right way.

More than 10 million tons of spent ore and unlined tailings from previous mining are sitting, unlined in the valley near Meadow Creek at the site of the proposed Stibnite Gold Project. As water flows over this waste material, metals leach into the ground and surface. Therefore, we should not be surprised that the amount of arsenic and antimony in water near site vastly exceed levels that are considered acceptable for aquatic life standards. Midas Gold has a plan to mitigate the impacts of previous, unaffiliated mining projects to improve water quality and fish habitat. Among many other investments, Midas Gold would clean up the roughly 3 million tons of historical tailings and reprocess and properly store them in a state-of-the-art tailings facility. The company would also relocate the 7.5 million tons of used ore underneath the tailings facility liner system permanently separating it from interacting with water. These efforts to remove legacy materials will improve water quality, a finding reflected in your own agency's draft environmental impact statement. According to chapter 4, removing legacy tailings and waste improves water quality in Meadow Creek Valley (4.12 103-104).

As the U.S. Forest Service and other state and federal agencies review the proposed plan and determine the course of action, I encourage you to consider and appropriately weigh the positive benefits Midas Gold will have on Idaho. We need to move this project ahead after the 60-day comment period. Alternative Two truly is a win-win opportunity for Idahoans and the environment.