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Organization: Board of Adams County Commissioners

Title: Commissioner

Comments: Thank you for this opportunity to provide our input on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the Stibnite Gold Project. We believe this major project will provide substantial benefits to the citizens of Adams County and other communities like ours in the surrounding region.

We have observed with interest the progression of the Stibnite Gold Project since Midas Gold first began communicating plans for redeveloping the Stibnite site nearly a decade ago. Since that time, we have appreciated the unique approach taken by Midas Gold to truly involve the surrounding communities in their planning and placed environmental restoration at the center of their proposed project.

The commitment to involving local community members in the development and planning of the Stibnite Gold Project became more concrete with the creation of the Stibnite Advisory Council. The Stibnite Advisory Council consists of representatives from each of the communities that entered into the community agreement with Midas Gold in 2018. Through the Council, local community members have been able to learn more about the project, request additional information from Midas Gold, voice concerns, and have their questions answered. This has fostered a deep understanding of the project and a sense of collaboration.

In our opinion, there has been a high level of transparency and accountability from Midas Gold throughout the planning stages of the Stibnite Gold Project and during the past four years of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) review process since formal submission of the Plan of Restoration and Operations (PRO) in 2016. After hearing from and meeting with Midas Gold over the past several years and reviewing the DEIS published this summer by the U.S. Forest Service, we believe the company is well-positioned to bring positive change to our region, both environmentally and economically.

In the modern world, the rigorous environmental standards that exist today under NEPA, and strict financial assurance requirements will help ensure Midas Gold completes the approved mining and restoration plan. We have observed Midas Gold consistently making every effort to work with local, state, and federal regulators; community members; and other stakeholders to ensure their plan creates new economic opportunities for rural communities like ours while at the same time ensuring environmental issues created by past operations are cleaned up to modern standards.

Adams County is looking forward to the economic benefits this project will provide for our region. From the \$1.1 billion in private investment, the Stibnite Gold Project is expected to create roughly 600-700 direct jobs during the construction phase, with annual payroll ranging from \$42 to \$49 million. During operations, the company expects to provide Idahoans with another 500-600 direct jobs, with payroll ranging from \$48 million to \$51 million. Another 950-1,400 indirect jobs would be created during both phases.

Several citizens from the City of Council within Adams County have been employed by Midas Gold and can attest to the company's values and ongoing commitment to the region. We look forward to further employment opportunities throughout the life of the project.

With our long history of resource development, particularly mining and forestry, in our region, we are familiar with both the challenges and benefits of major projects in these industries. With the Stibnite Gold Project, one major positive aspect for our county is that there will be opportunities for the younger generation to have well-paid jobs with good benefits near to their home-town, near family, and not be reliant on only part-time tourism or government jobs. This project represents some encouraging news about the potential for economic growth and revitalization within Adams County.

Additionally, the project is expected to inject hundreds of millions of dollars into our state's economy and provide significant local and state tax revenue. For a region like ours, these benefits will have a substantial positive impact on the local economy.

Finally, and as we are sure many Idahoans would agree, in addition to the economic benefits that will result from this project, Adams County approves of the extra measures proposed by Midas Gold to protect the environment and help restore habitats for local wildlife and fish populations.

For all these reasons, Adams County urges the U.S. Forest Service to adopt Alternative 2 as proposed by Midas Gold and as presented in the DEIS as well as Adams County does not support any road closures by the Forest Service or Midas Gold for this project.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide our viewpoint on this important project.