

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 10/27/2020 6:00:00 AM

First name: Kennet Bertelsen

Last name: PE

Organization:

Title:

Comments: After reviewing the August 2020 Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS), I would like to voice my support of this very important project. I have three primary reasons for supporting the Stibnite Gold Project.

First and foremost is the fact that Midas Gold has developed a restoration plan for the site and is has committed to do so willingly. As an engineer working on site restoration/remediation projects in historic mining districts I see this as a huge benefit to the State of Idaho. The \$1-billion investment proposed under Alternative 2 will not only develop an environmentally sound modern mining operation, but also provide several regional benefits. Reprocessing of historic tailings and repurposing sent heap leach ore removes a potential source of contamination from the watershed. Stabilization of Blowout Creek and full restoration at closure will remove one of the largest sources of sediment in the watershed. Restoring East Fork of the South Fork of the Salmon river will improve the fishery's habitat over twelve river miles. Reforestation, surface water management improvements, and upgraded rock storage areas all will help to stabilize the area.

Secondly, besides having a private party willing to absorb the cost of site reclamation and clean-up, the Stibnite Project will also develop the only domestic mine source of antimony. Considered one of the US Department of Commerce's thirty-five critical mineral, the US is completely reliant on antimony from China and Russia. This mineral has numerous uses in fire retardants, high tech electronics, battery and green energy production, consumer and industrial plastics, and military applications. Domestic production of these minerals is becoming a national security issue as reliance on foreign sources is becoming less and less stable. The Stibnite Project can be a model, showing how to develop these domestic sources in a responsible and thoughtful way.

Third, this project will create a great economic benefit to the State of Idaho. It is estimated that the project will invest over \$2-billion over the life of the project. The project will create nearly 1,000 direct and indirect jobs along with \$200-million and \$500-million in direct and induced state federal taxes. Stibnite is committed to hiring locally and has shown itself a valuable community partner throughout the planning and development process. The project's investments will also include bonding and trusts for closure and reclamation.

The Stibnite Project is an exciting opportunity to showcase how modern mining can not only provide economic development, but do so in a safe and environmentally friendly way. The project will restore a legacy site that would otherwise likely fall to taxpayers. This is an important step forward in how we can address these sites and provide for more creative ways to restore them.