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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Dear U.S. Forest Service

As a former Forestry Technician of the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the U.S. Forest Service, I request that the public comment period for the Stibnite Gold Plan of Operations Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) be extended 75 days for a total comment period of 120 days. An extension from the required 45 days for a DEIS under the Forest Service's regulations 36 C.F.R. 215.25(a)(1)(ii) is required in order to provide sufficient time to provide meaningful and lawful public participation under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

The Stibnite Gold Plan of Operations will have massive impacts on the environment and the socioeconomics of the communities within Valley County, Idaho. Public appreciation of the Payette National Forest, the Stibnite area, and in particular, the Salmon River and its tributaries by Valley County residents and visitors alike is immense. The South Fork Salmon River is habitat for endangered and threatened species and one of only four drainages in the Columbia basin that supports wild populations of native steelhead. The river is a major economic driver in Valley County for sport fishing and is of significant cultural importance to the Nez Perce Tribe. A project the size of the Stibnite Gold Project will drastically impact some of the nation's greatest forests and rivers and have irreversible, long-term environmental and socioeconomic impacts to Valley County, Idaho. Each of these reasons alone warrant an extension of the DEIS comment period.

Given that Midas Gold and the Forest Service have taken years to complete the DEIS, and continue to remain under the average timeline for a project of this magnitude and complexity, an extension of time for the public to review what will be a voluminous document is necessary. I believe that the requested extension of time will enable the public to provide more meaningful feedback, which will be valuable to everyone involved in this process. Furthermore, granting this request for an extension of time to comment will allow the Forest Service to meet its obligations under NEPA to ensure that information on the environmental impacts of this Project is made available to the public before irreversible decisions are made.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,