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Comments: As a resident of Idaho, I am providing this comment as part of the review process for the Stibnite Gold Project. As I understand, the U.S. Forest Service has the authority to grant permits that will allow this project to move forward. I offer these comments from what I hope is a practical and historical-though not expert-point of view.

The fact is, the Stibnite area has long been mined . Prospectors began to seek gold in the area before the turn of the 20th century. While the area is associated with gold and antinomy , tungsten was also heavily mined. Both tungsten and antinomy were essential for our nation's war effort during World War II.

When mining ceased in the area about 25 years ago, the legacy of nearly a century of mining was left behind. Of course, much of this mining activity took place before our nation had environmental protection laws . The damage is evident in the area: exposed pits, abandoned tailings and other mining waste, the unnatural landscape from the 1965 dam failure at Blowout Creek, and the blocked East Fork of the South Fork of the Salmon River.

We cannot of course go back in time and change how mining was practiced, but we can make a positive change for future generations. The U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service, Draft Environmental Impact Statement, in reference to Alternative 5 (the " do-nothing" Alternative), notes that "It is not anticipated that soils in most of these areas [where historical mining has occurred] would recover naturally" (4.5.2.5). This hardly needs to be stated; action must be taken if we are to see the area restored in any measure.

Alternative 2, Midas Gold's updated proposal, offers the best chance for robust restoration . New tailings and development rock storage facilities will limit the amount of toxins that enter area soil and water. This pollution would continue without the actions proposed by Midas Gold .

The Stibnite Gold Project will also help stabilize the land. While large-scale engineering is planned for mining activities, it will also provide long-term environmental benefits. The Draft Environmental Impact Statement even notes that reclamation work could "help to minimize the severity of climate change impacts resulting from warmer temperatures, variable precipitation, decreased snowpack, lower stream flows, warmer stream temperatures, and changes in wildfire patterns" (4.4.6.1)

Locally, we cannot do much to fight climate change. This is a larger geo-political issue, but if we can take actions to minimize what happens in our environment, we should move forward. The Stibnite Gold Project is not focused on reclamation per se, but reclamation will be one key outcome of the project. For this practical reason, I urge the USDA USFS to approve Alternative 2.