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Organization:

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Comments: Sent electronically

October 27th, 2020

U.S. Forest Service, Payette National Forest

Attn: Linda Jackson, Payette Forest Supervisor

500 North Mission Street

McCall, ID 83638

RE: Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the Stibnite Gold Project

Dear Ms. Jackson:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Payette and Boise National Forests' August 2020 Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the Stibnite Gold Project (SGP).

I am an Idaho native who has worked in the mining industry as a Human Resources professional for nearly 15 years. As such, I am astutely aware of the many economic benefits that the mining industry has provided to our region, including well-paying jobs with extensive healthcare benefits, investment toward building healthy communities, substantial taxes and fees paid to local, state and federal governments, and many other indirect economic impacts. As a 38-year resident of Soda Springs, and an outdoor enthusiast, I have also concluded that responsible mining and environmental stewardship can coexist.

Over the past several years, I have had the opportunity to become familiar with the Stibnite Gold Project and continue to be impressed with the actions that both the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) and Midas Gold Idaho have proposed to restore the site and remediate many longstanding environmental issues. The DEIS, along with the immense amount of additional information available to the public, clearly indicate the amount of the work that has gone into this project to ensure all aspects have been thoroughly analyzed and properly vetted.

Based on my review of the alternatives included in the DEIS, I believe Alternative 2 is the best option for the SGP. The fact that this alternative addresses concerns such as reducing traffic by operating a lime kiln onsite, improving water quality by adding an extra layer of geosynthetic liner to the tailings storage facility, protecting the Landmark area by moving the road maintenance facilities to the Burntlog route, and placing the tailings storage facility in an area previously impacted by mining activity while cleaning up historical mine tailings makes it the most environmentally beneficial option. These responsible mining practices will minimize risks, mitigate impacts, and alleviate most, if not all, concerns with the SGP.

For these reasons, I strongly encourage the USFS to select Alternative 2 as the Agency Preferred Alternative for the SGP. Doing so will allow Midas Gold Idaho to remediate many longstanding environmental problems at the site and provide 500+ well-paying jobs along with many other economic benefits to the region and the State.

Thank you for your consideration and for giving Idahoans sufficient time to comment on the SGP.

Respectfully submitted,

Mark Kirby