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Organization:

Title:

Comments: The Stibnite Mining District has been an area near to my heart my whole life. Like most Idahoans my family loved the outdoors and I spent most of my childhood in the area. From the Glory Hole to the unique U-shaped tree on the way to Thunder Mountain. Four generations of my family have pictures in that beautiful tree and with the recent birth of my son Charlie, I hope to add a fifth. However, the mounting environmental problems in the area need to be addressed, but the burden should not fall on taxpayers. Fixing Stibnite will be expensive, and we need private investment from a company that's committed to leaving the area better off than when they arrived. That's why as an Idaho resident, I support Midas Gold's Stibnite Gold Project presented in Alternative 2. Many of Stibnite's present-day troubles stem from mining activities that ceased decades ago. Fish have been cut off from their historical spawning grounds since the East Fork of the South Fork of the Salmon River was diverted into the Yellow Pine Pit back in 1938. Millions of tons of spent ore and legacy tailings remain in the Meadow Creek Valley, degrading the water quality and leaching metals into the surface and groundwater. And, since the failure of the Blowout Creek dam in 1965, large quantities of sediment pour into the water annually and compromise the ecosystem for aquatic life. Midas Gold's Alternative 2 will initiate reclamation activities during its construction that will benefit the long-term health of the environment and provide sustainable solutions for the Stibnite region that nobody has been willing to fund. Until now. The U.S. Forest Service evaluated several alternatives and found that the solutions provided by Midas to disturbed areas may be beneficial for the environment long term. In chapter 4 of its draft environmental impact statement, it found that "these improvements in the long-term productivity of the mine site may 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). Alternative 2 will spare taxpayers the enormous cost of the necessary environmental repairs and will be a source of economic growth. During these uncertain times Idahoans need growth and they need growth in a multitude of markets to sustain the economy. In addition to the \$180 million Midas Gold has spent over the past 10 years on its due diligence and repairing historical environmental damage, the company is committed to providing local jobs. The Project's final reclamation efforts alone are estimated to directly generate jobs worth \$3.6 million per year and provide another \$5 million per year for the local economy from direct, indirect, and induced impacts. We need to take action as soon as possible, please approve the Alternative 2 measure as submitted by Midas Gold.