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Comments: See attached Word Document for comments to Stibnite Gold DEIS

My name is Lynn Siegel. I have lived in Adams and Valley County since 1995. My husband is a retired forester who served 20 years (sometimes writing NEPA) on the Payette National Forest. I have USFS friends who worked for years doing their best to undo the damage caused by mining activity at Stibnite.

Midas Gold wishes to mine at Stibnite and there is now a Stibnite Gold Project EIS. A lot of time, thought and research has gone into this DEIS; the chosen alternative will determine the future of Stibnite and its surrounds for generations to come.

Mining on federal lands is a politically and environmentally loaded proposition. Do the benefits outweigh the risks? Today, gold is not essential to any US industry. The US is a major gold exporter. The Midas plan cites a potential national need for antimony. But Midas's extraction of antimony is neither necessary nor strategic, since that mineral is extractable from already active mining operations in the US.

Mining for gold at Stibnite poses at least a dozen serious threats and risks to our environment that the current DEIS does not adequately address. Not all options are adequately considered. How is the USFS going to mitigate the environmental risks including erosion, avalanches, landslides, and dam failures? Toxic byproducts of mining threaten water quality and soil composition. Biodiversity is threatened by toxic waste. Habitat disturbance affects vulnerable populations of plant life, fish, birds, and mammals. Mining will result in the degradation of a pristine landscape and impact backcountry recreation, hunting, and fishing now and for future generations.

I wish to address two interrelated concerns specifically: the fate of fish and their critical habitat. How will the USFS mitigate the anticipated approximately 25% stream loss to endangered Chinook salmon, steelhead, bull trout, and other similarly affected fish species (pg. 4.12-69, pg.4.12-75)?

To access the most valuable deposits, Midas proposes rerouting a stream and building a fish tunnel to provide passage to spawning grounds. Fish tunnels have a dismal record of failure. How will a tunnel failure be addressed?

Although activities to improve water quality by removing toxic waste from previous mining activity is addressed (Chapter 4.12.2.3.3.) , what is the plan for the treatment and removal of waste after the Midas project is completed?

Finally, for the sake of water quality, habitat, and wildlife survival, Alternative 5 needs to be rewritten with more depth and breadth.

The King Midas story ends in catastrophe.