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First name: Mark
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Comments: On behalf of the McCall Area Snowmobile Club, I would like to share some views and concerns that our organization has for the Midas Gold Project in the area of what we consider Stibnite.

It is our view that the project, as presented, is a prime opportunity for the Payette National Forest and the citizens of Valley County to be the recipients of a major clean-up of the existing Stibnite Mine property and surrounding area. This is an area that has been left scarred and inadequately managed for decades. With what the Midas Gold Group has proposed, and would ultimately be made accountable for, the area could be re-established and returned to it's former habitat, for all of us to enjoy.

One of our concerns of the project are the proposed access routes to the area of operation. To widen the Burnt Log and the old Thunder Mountain Roads and tie them together is a great idea but to then re-establish them to what they were originally and eradicate any new road construction seems to be counter productive as far as silt and debris management might be in regards to fisheries. With the ever evolving forms of motorized recreation these new roads and accesses would definitely make the forest more accessible for the citizens that want to enjoy it. I don't believe the US Forest Service truly has a grasp on the financial benefit that Valley County experiences from the motorized recreational community. When we speak of summertime motorized recreationists, we are encompassing vehicles pulling or hauling self contained campers, vehicles hauling sight seers, motorcycle use, ATV/UTV users, and vehicles hauling beasts of burden. It is a proven fact that motorized recreationists prefer looped routes versus radial routes. To take a day, or two, and make a loop with a motorcycle or ATV/UTV while camping for several days is truly a preferred excursion instead of a radial trip going in and then turning around to come out the same way. We can't help but feel that whatever roads are established, or upgraded for the project, can't be left and then maintained to a minimum value. Even if the roads were re-identified as "no-maintenance" roads with "travel at your own risk" they would be better and more accessible to the general public than many access roads are now within the forest. The main issue is that they would be open for the enjoyment of the general public.

Another of our major concerns of the project is the proposed winter maintenance of the Warm Lake to Landmark Road. When, and if, Midas Gold Group starts the project this particular stretch of road is to be maintained for year-round traffic. At present, the road from Warm Lake to Landmark is not maintained in the winter except for snowmobile grooming which is done to have snowmobile access to the Landmark area, north to Yellowpine, and south to the Deadwood area and beyond. There are some areas that are presently made accessible to snowmobilers by the grooming of some of the existing Burntlog Road. The current area that is mainly utilized by snowmobilers, on the existing groomed routes in the Landmark area, are identified in the attached picture of the Boise National Forest and highlighted in yellow. Again, if the new upgraded routes to the Midas Gold project could be left intact after the project is done it would create the opportunity to increase and enhance additional grooming routes for snowmobilers.

It has been proposed to create a new groomed route for snowmobilers to access the Landmark area by following the proposed upgraded powerline from Warm Lake to the Trout Creek Campground. This is an excellent idea and has the advantage to open up a substantial area for snowmobiling. This new area is identified on the

attached picture and highlighted in orange. As mentioned earlier, the preferred method of trail riding is in loops and snowmobiling is extremely similar. There are many snowmobilers that never get off the groomed trail and would prefer to make a loop. Once the mining project is complete and winter access is not required, this project has the potential to create and enhance several loop opportunities for snowmobilers. One could ride from Warm Lake up Cabin Creek to Trout Creek, then up Johnson Creek to Landmark and then back down to Warm Lake. Another loop would be over to Yellowpine, through the Midas Gold project to Thunder Mountain Road, then down Burntlog Road to Landmark and back down to Warm Lake. For the adventurous snowmobiler, this new groomed route up Cabin Creek and over to Trout Creek would open up a "boondocking" area about one half the size of what is presently utilized. Due to the present lack of access who knows what additional areas of snowmobiling might be available immediately around the Stibnite area. It could open up the areas adjacent to Yellowpine and Stibnite. With the evolution of the technology for the motorized recreationists, it is hard not to say that where one can't go this year, one will probably be able to go there five years from now.

Also, to attempt to claim that the road from Warm Lake to Landmark will be continually maintained for any and all sort of travel, all winter long, is being a bit naive. Even our state and county road departments realize that some of our winter storms are best to let run the course before starting any snow removal. There are corners on the existing road that are not passable by two vehicles pulling trailers of any kind. There are also a couple of areas that are prone to avalanche and have done so the last few years. The snowmobile grooming program needs to get a snow-groomer from Warm Lake to Landmark for it's grooming program and to create an alternate route along the powerline to groom and open up new snowmobiling areas is a win-win situation. To maintain this as a permanent groomed route, after the Midas Gold project is completely over, is also a win-win proposition.

There has been a new winter economic survey recently completed that shows that snowmobiling has an economic impact of over $197million in the state of Idaho. This survey was done for the 2014-2015 winter season. Individually, Valley County led the state and was the influence of over $32 million of that total. Needless to say, the winter motorized recreationist has a definite financial impact on the County's economy. Who is to say what the true dollar figure might be of the summer motorized recreationist. At present, I don't know if there is a recreational group that has a more outstanding economic impact on Valley County.

The Payette National Forest, Valley County, the State of Idaho, Midas Gold Group, and all of the involved jurisdictions of this project, have an opportunity to make this area a truly spectacular venue for "all" of the general public, especially the motorized recreationist.

I appreciate your time in this matter and am available for any questions or additional information.
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