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Organization: House of Representatives, State of Idaho

Title: Representative, District 3 Kootenai County

Comments: I am writing to express my support for the Stibnite Gold Project proposed by Midas Gold Idaho.

First, I applaud the U.S. Forest Service for releasing the draft environmental impact statement (EIS) in a timely fashion. As Chair of the House Local Government Committee and with my experience working in our state's mining, logging, and construction industries, I've taken a special interest in this project. After careful review of the draft EIS, I firmly believe that the Stibnite Gold Project will not only be a win for Idaho's economy, but for the environment as well. Therefore, it is the state's best interest to keep the permitting process moving by adopting the preferred alternative laid out in Midas Gold Idaho's proposal.

Idaho consistently ranks amongst the lowest nationally for per capita income and wages. With unemployment so high in Valley County many workers look for mining jobs out of state. Midas Gold Idaho has made it clear they are committed to hiring employees directly from Idaho when possible and will always look to local vendors first throughout the life of the project. In fact, this project would guarantee up to 1,000 new jobs for Idahoans, bringing workers from out of state mines back to Idaho. Mining workers in Idaho earn up to four times more than the average wages for our hospitality and leisure industries, which make up 23 percent of jobs in Valley County. Midas's projected annual payroll of \$34 million and the nearly \$151 million generated by local tax revenues would offer a substantial windfall to the state's economy.

Another benefit of this project is Midas Gold Idaho's commitment to protecting and improving the environment around the Stibnite site. Years of legacy mining that occurred long before the strict regulatory requirements we now have in place has left the area in terrible condition. Midas Gold Idaho's Plan of Restoration and Operations will guarantee restoration and reclamation occurs, and ultimately ensures Stibnite is left in a better condition than it is today.

The Stibnite Gold Project is clearly a win-win for Idaho. I strongly urge you to move this project forward and approve Alternative 2 presented by Midas Gold Idaho in their proposal. Thank you for your time and consideration.