

U.S. Forest Service, Payette National Forest
Attn: Linda Jackson, Payette Forest Supervisor
500 North Mission Street
McCall, ID 83638

Midas Gold Idaho put forth a Plan of Restoration and Operations (PRO) to the U.S. Forest Service to move forward with the Stibnite Gold Project. I urge you to adopt Alternative 2 proposed by Midas Gold Idaho, as it would improve passage and enhance habitats of local fish populations.

Since the mining of the Yellow Pine pit in 1938, Chinook salmon, steelhead, and bull trout have been cut off from an abundance of waters. While fish were eventually allowed to flow back into the pit, the upstream passage remains impossible for fish to access. Midas wants to use the Stibnite Gold Project to restore fish passage past the Yellow Pine pit, which will improve habitat and spawning grounds in the East Fork of the South Fork of the Salmon River and Meadow Creek. According to the Midas Gold Plan of Restoration and Operations, the company will improve twelve miles of perennial streams, which, in conjunction with improved fish access, will result in roughly six miles of additional stream habitat compared to existing conditions for migratory fish. At the completion of this project, local fish populations will have the ability to reach the upper portions of the East Fork of the South Fork and Meadow Creek via a fish-friendly tunnel, the first time in 80 years.

The Stibnite Gold Project's mission is to preserve and have as little impact to local fish populations as possible. To ensure Midas is implementing the best fishway design, the company evaluated eleven sites around the world for feasibility, passage performance, constructability, operating costs, and accessibility for maintenance. In fact, the company has already committed extra millions of dollars to these designs as it is at the core of the Stibnite Gold Project. Specifically, the project's proposal is to provide a solution for migrating fish to reach historical spawning grounds for generations to come.

Additionally, Midas Gold designed Alternative 2 to increase safety and establish access routes to the site that keeps the public away from mining operations. The depths Midas has gone to ensure the end result of the Stibnite Gold Project is better than its current state makes it clear to me moving forward is the best and only option. I ask you to adopt Alternative 2 suggested by Midas Gold Idaho.

Sincerely, *Afton Spratt*