

I support the Stibnite Gold Project for three main reasons. First, the Stibnite Gold Project will clean up a legacy mine site which desperately needs to be cleaned up, and no other group has a plan to clean this site. The Stibnite Gold Project will occur on a site that has been mined off and on for a hundred years. Decades ago the U.S. government creatively disclaimed its duties related to its shoddy cleanup of the site. The site is not pristine wilderness, though the site certainly sits in the midst of wilderness and feeds a river system that needs to be protected from the legacy of past mining activities. The fallout of those past activities are currently prohibiting fish from returning to historic spawning grounds and are allowing arsenic and other toxic chemicals into the water system. This is the current state of affairs, not the prospective outcome of Perpetua's project.

Due to past mining activities, the headwaters of the East Fork of the South Fork of the Salmon River dump into a pit and prevent fish from returning to historic spawning grounds. Perpetua proposes a temporary 0.8-mile tunnel to bypass the existing pit that will have lighting to mimic night and day and a flow pattern that gives fish resting pools. This will allow fish to get back upstream before mining ever begins. Perpetua then plans to fill the pit during the course of its project and rebuild the natural channel of the East Fork of the South Fork of the Salmon River which will permanently allow fish to swim upstream to their native spawning grounds. This will open up more than three miles of fish habitat that is currently being blocked off by the existing pit, and Perpetua is working on plans to open up even more fish habitat that has been damaged by the past mining activities. Idaho Conservation League and Idaho Rivers United claim that the project will decrease fish habitat, though I have not seen that either group supports this claim with a reference to facts or science.

Second, I support mining at home in the U.S. versus outsourcing it to other countries with lax environmental laws, questionable labor practices, and governments that are fundamentally adverse to the democratic system. And that is the case with the Stibnite project, where one of the resources to be extracted is antimony, a critical mineral that is currently sourced nearly exclusively from mines in China and Russia. China and Russia do not have strong records on environmental protection or labor law, and I believe we can do it safer, cleaner, and more securely here in the U.S. Mineral extraction is necessary to sustain our modern lifestyle, and it is not a question of WHETHER we have mines but WHERE we have mines. I am a believer in the "buy local" philosophy and that philosophy applies to mining as much as it applies to agricultural products and other products.

Third, this project will bring good jobs to a part of Idaho that needs them. Valley County, which will essentially be the home of the project, ranks low on metrics that track education and income. Currently, Valley County's economy and housing market are largely subject to the whims of tourism and weekenders. Multi-million-dollar homes sit vacant for much of the year around Payette Lake while locals struggle to find good jobs that offer more than poverty-level wages. The Stibnite Gold Project will bring hundreds of well paying jobs and year-round residents to Valley County that will lead to a more sustainable, healthy local economy.

The facts show that the Stibnite Gold Project is good for the environment:

- Long-term access to historically blocked critical fish habitat would result in increased productivity;
- Free movement of fish and access to habitat can improve genetic diversity of isolated populations;
- Increased fish access to feeding and refuge areas in critical habitat can improve overall productivity;
- Overall increase in stream functional units and an increase in the quality habitat these species need;

- Removing legacy tailings and managing water quality provides long-term reduction in metal loading in ground and surface water showing a 47% decrease in arsenic;
- Removing legacy tailings and waste lowers concentrations of antimony and arsenic in the East Fork of the South Fork of the Salmon River; and
- Removing legacy tailings and waste improves water quality in Meadow Creek Valley.

It saddens me to see groups whose stated missions I identify with, such as Idaho Conservation League and Idaho Rivers United, spread misinformation and attempt to stop a project that by all objective measures furthers the stated missions of their organizations. I cannot help but wonder at their motives: does opposing this project make sense for their bottom line even if their missions would be advanced by supporting the project? I believe in cleaning up the environment harmed by past mining activity, in healthy local economies, in responsibly sourcing materials needed for our modern lifestyle, and in not supporting authoritarian regimes. For those reasons, I support the Stibnite Gold Project.

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