

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 9/24/2020 7:18:06 PM

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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Dear US National Forest Service Staff,

I am writing in support of Midas Gold Idaho's Stibnite Gold Project, specifically in support of Alternative #2 - the Revised PRO. Not only does this alternative most effectively address the problems at the Stibnite site with the least potential risk, but it also shows Midas Gold's commitment to listening to the concerns of community members and being a pro-active partner in finding solutions as new issues arise.

Alternative 2 uses Burntlog Road instead of adding to traffic on Johnson Creek Road. This route minimizes travel by creeks and rivers that are imperative to fish habitat and takes advantage of existing infrastructure, used during historical mining of Thunder Mountain. Alternative 2 also shows Midas Gold's commitment to listening to public input on public access and adjusting plans to account for the needs of the community, in addition to the needs of the project.

Other key reasons I support the project:

- 1.The site as is, is discharging not only sediment, but polluted water into the East Fork South Fork Salmon River. According to the Payette National Forest assessment, treating all water that flows through Midas Gold's proposed Stibnite mine would keep or improve water and Alternative 2 is the only of the four alternatives that would decontaminate all water in a treatment plant and lower existing arsenic levels in the East Fork, which now exceed federal water quality standards.
- 2.There is no realistic, timely plan to mitigate this damage outside what Midas is proposing.
- 3.Midas has an impeccable safety record so far with only one lost time incident since April 2013 and no reportable environmental incidents since March 2012. That is a result of a culture of safety and high standards set by company management and embraced by employees.
- 4.The project is being designed to a standard far above the minimum. The Midas team is committed to using the most modern, effective and lowest-risk mining technology even where taking these steps increases costs.
- 5.As long as the Mining Act of 1872 stands as written, there will be interest in the assets in the ground at the Stibnite site, AND a legal mandate for approving mining there. A lot of people seem to think that if this permit is denied, the issue is closed. That is far from the truth.

The bottom line: if this project were proposed on a pristine backcountry site, I would be against it. If this project were proposed on a formerly mined site that was not sending pollution and toxins into a river without any realistic chance of timely mitigation, I would be against it.

But that is not the reality of the situation we face. The Stibnite site, because of more than a century of past mining and lackluster mitigation (all caused before Midas Gold was involved in any way) has no hope for a clean future without Midas.

I am firmly in the camp of trying to fix the problems that face our communities, rather than sticking my head in the sand denying those problems exist. Is this the only solution to the problems at Stibnite? No. Is this the only solution that has a realistic chance of being executed? Yes.

In conclusion, I offer a warning commonly attributed to Voltaire, "Don't let the perfect be the enemy of the good." Scrutinize this project. Hold it to the highest possible standard. Then let it move forward. No one else is going to fix the problems at Stibnite, and they are problems that need to be fixed.