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Comments: I appreciate this opportunity to weigh in with my support for the permitting of the Stibnite Gold Project proposed by Midas Gold Idaho. As a local resident, it's been difficult to watch the Stibnite Mining District slowly deteriorate over the years and to wonder whether anything can be done about it. Now, Midas Gold has come into the picture with a plan that places mining and environmental restoration at the same level of importance.

Mining in the Stibnite Mining District can be traced back to the 1800s and up until the 1990s, occasional mining projects were conducted at the site. Unfortunately, many of those past mining activities happened before state and federal environmental regulations were in place. Sadly, numerous environmental legacies were left behind as a result. And while some cleanup was attempted, there is far more restoration to do. This is where Midas Gold steps in, spending millions of dollars on scientific studies and working with restoration and engineering experts to develop a comprehensive plan to mine the Stibnite site and restore the area's environment. The water quality, landscape, natural habitat and fisheries are all addressed in Midas Gold's plan. They will even put up the funds before the project begins to guarantee these restoration efforts.

The region's fish population has been particularly affected as they are blocked from swimming upstream to their headwaters. Midas Gold plans to remove those barriers which will then allow salmon and trout to reach their headwaters for the first time in over 80 years. They also have plans to reconnect salmon to their native spawning ground temporarily before eventually transitioning to a permanent solution.

The plan will also address the area's water quality and salmon and steelhead habitats which have been degraded due to millions of tons of sediment are running into the waterways. A majority of the sediment enters the river system each year from Blowout Creek where an earthen dam failed years ago. Midas Gold's solution is to initially install a rock drain at the site of that dam and rebuild the stream channel to keep that excessive sediment from getting into the river.

This project will also provide high paying jobs that offer medical benefits for their employees. The locals that work for Midas will spend their money in this region increasing the economy here at home. Tax dollars will feed into our region by Midas purchasing local, all of this adds to the tax base and therefore helping to maintain our communities.

Midas Gold has spent years developing a sensible plan for the Stibnite Mining District that makes environmental restoration a priority. The U.S. Forest Service should adopt alternative 2 laid out by Midas Gold in their proposal.