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Organization:

Title:

Comments: I am writing in regards to Midas Gold Idaho's Stibnite Gold Project and would urge you to grant them the necessary permits to begin their proposed plans. I am a small business owner in the community of Yellow Pine. Midas Gold and their contractors utilize our business for meals and supplies, providing a significant portion of our business, The Corner. During the start-up phase of The Corner, their support was critical for the success of our restaurant. We have also been placed in a unique position to become very close with third-party contractors for Midas, Midas employees and visitors that are coming to the area to help form an opinion of the project.

Many visitors that come into our restaurant are in opposition of the project and I applaud them for coming to visit the site and become more informed. Anecdotally, most of these visitors form a different opinion after visiting and seeing the site in its current condition.

As it stands, the community is faced with two choices of what to do with Stibnite Mining District: leave it in its current condition, and hope the government will fix the environmental problems there, or put it to use and allow private investment to fix it. Given the tremendous economic and environmental benefits that development would bring to this area, it's clear what course should be taken. With the work that Midas Gold has completed over the last 10 years, they have already helped the Yellow Pine community. Midas Gold Idaho has chartered that course with a \$1.1 billion investment that promises to begin restoration efforts right when the mining operation commences. Given its current state, restoration of the site is not only necessary but is unlikely to happen absent the company's intervention. They've already put their promise into action by planting trees, reclaiming over 30 acres and shelling out \$350,000 to improve road conditions. They assist the community of Yellow Pine with dust abatement in town on an annual basis, we appreciate their partnership.

Those concerned about the environmental impact once the project begins, need not worry. Midas Gold Idaho has an extensively detailed plan in place to minimize the project's environmental footprint. Throughout this process, they have worked diligently with federal regulators to address any concerns. Environmental protection is part of their corporate culture and they back that up with millions of dollars, hours, and resources spent to get their Plan of Operations and Restoration right.

The Stibnite Gold Project will be the source of a range of well-paying jobs for local residents, from administration to mining equipment operators to engineers, these jobs will also provide medical benefits, something that is pretty unusual with tourism jobs. With Idaho ranking near the bottom in per capita income and wages, the direct- and indirect jobs--created will be critical to our economic future. The ripple effects will be felt throughout the region and state economy courtesy of tax revenues generated by the project.

As the saying goes, "a bird in the hand is worth two in the bush." Midas Gold Idaho, the only company to resent a plan for the area, is that bird. And the community can ill-afford to let it fly away. I would strongly recommend that the U.S. Forest Service to adopt Alternative 2 detailed by Midas Gold in their modified plan of restoration and operations (MOD-PRO).