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Comments: Supervisor Jackson,

Over my years as a rancher, educator, conservationist and politician, I've learned a great deal about the importance of balance. Creating balance is a delicate dance.

I have seen what's possible when we partner-up to take care of the land and water we depend upon for our livelihood and our sense of well-being. I understand what we can achieve in our communities and state when we balance financial gain with smart conservation, and community choices.

I believe the Stibnite Gold Project represents a prime example of how far this thoughtful balance can take our rural communities, and our state. This project is unlike anything we've ever seen because it is not just a mining project. It's also a community, conservation and environmental restoration project.

The Stibnite Mining District was mined for gold and silver beginning around the turn of the century and then became the major source for tungsten and antimony for World War II through the Korean way.

The mining done back then was not regulated and damage done during those early days was extensive. The East Fork of the South Fork of the Salmon River was diverted into a tunnel then a mining pit, disrupting migratory streams and blocking salmon from their native spawning grounds. Millions of tons of waste rock and tailings were left unlined and impact water quality to this day.

When mining activity stopped, the companies responsible for the damage simply picked up and moved on, leaving Idaho to clean up their mess. Unfortunately, until very recently, no plan existed to remediate the serious problems left at the site.

Midas Gold's Stibnite Gold Project could finally fix the problems that remain - and benefit our communities in the process.

The project, which is currently under review by the U.S. Forest Service, would produce gold, silver, and the only domestically mined source of antimony, a mineral critical to our national defense, energy and tech industries. Midas Gold would use the most modern mining practices and be subject to some of the strictest regulations in the world.

The project would create hundreds of jobs for Idahoans; invest billions in our economy through capital expenditures, purchasing, local hiring, taxes and more; strengthen our national security by reducing our dependence on China for imported antimony; and support our communities in the process.

But like I said at the beginning - the key to this project's power is balance.

Because the Stibnite Gold Project isn't just about mining and money. It's also about fixing the problems facing the Stibnite Mining District. Midas Gold has built environmental reclamation and restoration into the center of their proposal. They've committed to fix the flow of this branch of the Salmon River and restore migratory streams that have been severed for decades. They're going to reprocess and re-use old tailings and waste rock, plant trees, and reconnect fish - before mining begins - to make sure they leave Idaho in better shape than before they got there.

These are big promises, and Midas is - so far - living up to every one of them. They've engaged directly with members of the community, like me, through literally hundreds of meetings, presentations, tours, and more. They've already invested tens of millions in Idaho and committed to work with members of the community through the Stibnite Advisory Council before, during, and after operations.

Midas Gold can create balance between the community, environment and the economy. And balance, the delicate dance, should be the goal for all of us.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Stibnite Gold Project.

Best,

Merrill Beyeler