

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 10/26/2020 12:17:33 PM

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Comments: Midas Gold Stibnite Project

I grew up in a gold mining community in Northern Ontario. Two of the areas I considered playgrounds were tailings ponds from long-defunct gold mines. They were flat open areas where nothing grew. In the winter they were great for snowmobiling. In the summer, they were great for biking. We avoided them in the spring and fall because they would get slimy and you could sink into them. Locally, we called them the Slimes. As I look at Google images today from that area, nothing grows. 100 years after mining began, the Slimes are still barren. There's a better way to do mining. Midas Gold has found it.

1. Midas is cleaning up the sins of the past.

Midas did not make the tailings mess that remains from historic mining. Regardless, they are cleaning that mess. Yes there is gold in the tailings and Midas will likely profit from cleaning the existing tailings area. But their goal is not just profit, it's also restoration. They know the best solution to clean this area is to mine it. A clean up alternative is Superfund. As an Environmental Scientist, I've worked in the Superfund arena and it makes remediation far more expensive and takes far longer than it needs to be. Mining with the future restoration of these historic tailings is the best solution for Stibnite and the surrounding environment.

2. Midas is letting the Salmon, Bull Trout and Steelhead swim.

Early in the restoration is the construction of a tunnel to allow these fish to swim upstream to places they haven't swum since the 1930s. Again, more environmental restoration is being done in the name of mining this site. Without mining it, this tunnel would not be built and the fishes natural habitat would still be off-limits to them. After mining Yellow Pine Pit, once the pit is backfilled, Midas will create a stream that will allow for the fish to continue going upstream (and back down) for generations to come.

3. Midas is employing so many for so long.

Constructing this mine will cost over \$1B. The construction will result in hundreds of skilled jobs. The electric line upgrades will provide a more reliable source for Valley County. The new access road will be safer for residents and the nearby rivers. Midas is building access roads that avoid being adjacent to the rivers so as to minimize the potential for environmental releases. And skilled labor will build those roads.

4. Midas is providing necessary minerals.

Antimony is primarily mined in China, Russia and Bolivia. Having a domestic source will strengthen this country and provide for the many domestic uses of antimony, including military. An example is the need for fire-proof clothing for utilities throughout the country. Antimony is a need to keep workers safe as they maintain the electric and natural gas grids across the country. It's possible that antimony from this mine will one day protect the electric workers who maintain the new transmission lines to this facility.

5. Midas is protecting the night sky.

Midas will illuminate that which requires lighting and will not illuminate that which does not require lighting. Midas cares about the night sky. They're not just looking at the ground for the gold, they're also looking up to the sky to protect it.

6. Midas Gold has revised their approach and Alternative 2, the Mod Pro, is the approach to take.

Even after pouring hours into their plan, Midas Gold continued to think and consider better options for this project. For example, using the on-site marble (for lime), rather than trucking it from afar, will save money, decrease vehicle emissions, and decrease traffic. Midas listened to their fellow Idahoans and changed their plan

so it now includes a designated access road to Thunder Mountain through the active mine site. The Mod Pro includes management of site water so they don't have to treat it. They will pipe it in low-flow conditions to keep it cool, consistent with the rivers to which the water flows.

7. Alternative 5, doing nothing, is the least logical option.

We have the opportunity to remediate and restore an impacted area. Idaho can employ up to 1,000 people in the process of mining and restoring. It's a win-win-win. The environment is remediated, the ore is mined, and the area is restored for future generations. Doing nothing would just leave the blight, the Slimes, in place and continuing to harm the area rivers and streams.

Midas Gold has the right approach to the right project. I fully support their efforts to mine and restore the Stibnite project.

Sincerely,

Keith Bodger
Environmental Scientist