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Title:
Comments: The environment surrounding the Stibnite Mining District has been allowed to languish and degrade for decades. As a member of the board of the Women's Mining Coalition, I've seen hundreds of mining projects over the years and I feel as though Midas Gold Idaho is best equipped to help address the impacts of previous mining operations and improve the quality of life of the local ecosystem, help the local economy, and aid in national defense by being the largest domestic source of the critical mineral antimony.

As you know, previous mining operations that lacked proper oversight left landscape and natural habitat surrounding the Stibnite Mining District in desperate need for restoration. There are 10.5 million tons of used, discarded material from previous mining efforts-known as tailings-leaching metals into the river and groundwater. A dam failure more than 50 years ago has resulted in ongoing erosion that has led to a massive buildup of sediment in the water.

All of this has had a severe, negative impact on aquatic life, water quality, and the overall ecosystem surrounding the East Fork of the South Fork of the Salmon River. To address these environmental concerns, Midas Gold has made mitigation and restoration a key part of its plan for the Stibnite Gold Project. In fact, many of these efforts have already begun. Already, Midas has planted more than 55,000 trees to help prevent further erosion and reclaimed 33 acres of land. It has also recycled 4,000 pounds of waste and invested hundreds of thousands of dollars to improve road conditions and reduce sediment runoff.?

In addition to contributing to unsustainably high sediment levels in the water, the blown-out dam has also drained a large area of what were once thriving, functional wetlands. Midas Gold plans to stabilize this area to reduce erosion, thereby improving water quality and watershed conditions while enabling wetland restoration to begin as soon as construction of the mine is complete and continue while the operations are ongoing and after they are complete. As the Draft Environmental Impact Statement indicated in Chapter 4, the mitigation plan would increase the functional wetland in the area by 40 percent (Appendix D, CMP Table 8-2).?

The Stibnite Gold Project is an opportunity to restore the local ecosystem and mitigate the decades-long problems that threaten local wildlife and the surrounding environment. Midas has been transparent and collaborative with the community, concerned about potential impacts and working diligently to address them. And, on a side note, to me, as a part of the Women's Mining Coalition, seeing their commitment to hiring women in top positions is very reassuring and a sign that they're committed to diversity and have a forward-looking attitude about mining. The U.S. Forest Service should adopt Alternative Two in the draft EIS without any further delay.