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First name: James
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Organization:
Title:
Comments: Dear Ms. Jackson:

As an Idaho business owner and healthcare executive with operations across the state and more than 3,000 employees in Idaho, I am writing in support of the Stibnite Gold Project. During this critical moment in our nation's history, I urge the U.S. Forest Service to approve Alternative 2 and move the project forward as quickly as possible.

Right now, I am worried about Idaho's economic outlook as the state works to recover from the ongoing pandemic. Sadly, many Idahoans have lost their jobs during this time and that can have devastating impacts for families. Financial insecurity is a major driver for poor mental and physical health. Over the next year, I think communities across Idaho will start to see the negative toll of the pandemic.

Valley County is in a unique position with the Stibnite Gold Project. Midas Gold is presenting an opportunity to put hundreds of people back to work in rural Idaho. According to the company, the average annual salary would be $80,000 - a wage that would allow Idahoans to take care of their families. As Idaho works to recover from the pandemic, it is important we take advantage of these types of projects.

Indirectly, the Stibnite Gold Project would support up to another 1,400 jobs through the life of the mine. These jobs would span a variety of industries including transportation, manufacturing, education, hospitality, healthcare and more. With Midas Gold's commitment to hire and purchase locally whenever possible, the impacts have the potential to be felt across the region.

In addition to the jobs provided by the project, all of Idaho will benefit from the new revenues that would be injected into the state's economy. According to a pre-feasibility study, revenues would include roughly $300,000 in annual property taxes, $150 million in sales transactions for the regional economy, $85 million in state corporate income taxes and mine license taxes and $200 million in direct, indirect, and induced state taxes. We have yet to see how communities will fare as they work to recover from the pandemic, yet it is easy to imagine these new streams of revenue could be very helpful for Idahoans and potentially offset the need for rising taxes.

This project is also important because it will allow America to increase our supply chain independence and decrease our reliance on China for the critical mineral antimony - which currently controls more than 80 percent of antimony production worldwide. In order to maintain our position as a global power, we need to invest in securing our own domestic mineral resources. Antimony strengthens alloys, makes them resistant to corrosion and is a key ingredient in flame retardants. These properties make antimony highly valuable for the military, energy and technology industries. As trade tensions continue to rise with China, it is important we have access to this critical mineral in the United States.

The proposed Stibnite Gold Project is not located in a pristine area. In fact, it is in a brownfields site - abandoned after a century of mostly unregulated mining activity. As you can imagine the site needs environmental attention. The necessary clean-up at the historical Stibnite Mining District is expensive and would likely go unfixed or fall to taxpayers without the private investment of Midas Gold.

Alternative 2 is a sustainable plan to clean up and reclaim the historical Stibnite Mining District, put Idahoans to work in a time of uncertainty and secure our nation's mineral reserves. This alternative has improved incredibly upon earlier proposals, and I feel confident expressing my support knowing that Midas has complied (and will continue to comply) with state and federal regulations.

Best Regards,

James Adamson