

U.S. Forest Service, Payette National Forest  
Attn: Linda Jackson, Payette Forest Supervisor  
500 North Mission Street  
McCall, ID 83638

Supervisor Jackson,

The mining operations in the historic Stibnite district served America well during WWII and other eras but the damage that mineral extraction did to the East Fork of the South Fork of the Salmon River is tragic. I want the Forest Service to approve the Midas Gold plan so we can again utilize those resources, but this time do it in a responsible way that will protect the local water system.

For more than 20 years starting in the 1930s the tungsten and antimony resources taken from Stibnite were a major contributor to U.S. national defense. They could be again, lessening our dependence on China and other foreign suppliers of minerals, but we cannot allow taking them out to be as harmful to the environment as it was decades ago.

The best thing about the Midas Gold proposal, and I'm talking about alternative 2 here, is that it would not only use safe, modern mining techniques to reach mineral deposits, but also clean up the damage that was done in the past. Letting them clean up the site makes so much more sense than having government subcontractors do the work.

Midas Gold has a plan to restore fish habitat and spawning runs. They would also address the estimated 3 million tons of tailings that exist in Meadow Creek, which flows into the East Fork, as well as the 7 million tons of spent ore that was dumped there years ago. They would also fix other waste dumps and open pits, including the big abandoned mine pit that blocks the river now. Your USFS environmental study, Chapter 4, section 4.9, points out that cleaning up those waste dumps would provide a long-term reduction in the amount of dangerous metals contaminating the water, both in streams and in the underground water table.

We must not wait to get this project started, the sooner we clean up the Stibnite district, the better. Please end the comment period on time and then rapidly approve the Midas Gold alternative 2 plan.

Thank you,

*Sylvia Zinsky*