

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

Hello,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment during the Draft EIS period for the Stibnite Gold Project. I am an Idahoan and care deeply about the future of our state. Midas Gold has a huge potential to positively impact many lives with their project.

If you examine Midas Gold Idaho's Plan of Restoration and Operations, it is evident the company identified the best possible plan to restore the site under Alternative Two. The company is limiting its footprint to existing disturbance as much as possible to minimize new disturbance, natural fish spawning routes will be restored after being blocked for decades and the company has plans to make improvements that will keep thousands of pounds of sediment out of the river each year. According to 4.12-22 of the draft Environmental Impact Statement, Alternative two would provide an additional 26.5 km of habitat for anadromous salmonoids becomes available before mining begins, a net gain of 11.1 km of intrinsic potential habitat for steelhead trout and 12.4 km for bull trout. The document also indicates this alternative could help to increase productivity and diversity of these fish by opening up access to historically blocked habitat (DEIS 4.12-39). Unfortunately, if Midas Gold Idaho is not allowed to move forward with its plan, it is highly unlikely that these critical improvements will ever happen.

Having compared Alternative 2 with Alternative 3, I believe that Alternative 2 is better from an environmental perspective, having less area, less impact on wetlands based on functional units, less impact on stream reach and avoiding a costly two-year delay to the project. Further, I also believe that Alternative 2 is lower risk and environmentally less impactful and risky than Alternative 4 given the proximity of the Alternative 4 transportation route to major fish-bearing waterways where construction would pose a significant risk, and the delay the project unnecessarily for two additional years at considerable cost. Finally, Alternative 5 is the worst of all alternatives as it means no environmental restoration, no jobs, no capital investment and leaves environmental issues at site unresolved.

Midas Gold wants to restore the rivers, wildlife and habitat near the Stibnite Gold Project site. We should let them. Please permit the Stibnite Gold Project and continue to move this important project forward and do it within the 60 day timeframe for the comment period.

Most Respectfully,

Ruth Starr Ruth JS