

Perpetua Resources' Stibnite Gold Project presents Idaho, particularly rural Idaho, with a huge economic and environmental opportunity. The company has a plan to improve water quality, wetlands and the river and leave the site better than it is today. I am writing to encourage you to permit the project as quickly as possible.

Given the history of the region, I was a bit skeptical when I first heard about this project, but it is clear that Perpetua is going out of their way to put environmental safety and restoration front and center. Especially with the improvements the company made in its 2021 Modified Mine Plan. For example, in the SDEIS the company eliminated the Fiddle Rock Development Storage facility, which resulted in a 168-acre reduction in the project footprint. They also made improvements to water quality, so no long-term water treatment will be necessary after mining is complete. After looking at the tools provided by the USFS, I feel strongly that the Modified Mine Plan is the best option moving forward. It addresses the purpose and need of the agencies in a manner that provides environmental advantage and economic feasibility over the other analyzed alternatives. With so much promise for the site's future, I hope the consideration of no action is removed from the table. There is finally an opportunity to restore the site and help secure America's source of antimony, a designated critical mineral.

The SDEIS reduces the size of the project footprint, improves water quality, eliminates the need for long-term water treatment and makes sure water temperature on site does not exceed baseline conditions – all while providing our nation with access to a mineral we desperately need. The permitting process has been thorough and complete. Now, I hope the U.S. Forest Service will realize the benefits this project and permit the Stibnite Gold Project using the 2021 Modified Mine Plan.

Harold Hitchler