

Valley County Republican Central Committee

PO Box 234

Donnelly, ID 83615

December 22, 2022

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

Dear Ms. Jackson:

I write today on behalf of the Valley County Republican Central Committee (VCRCC). The VCRCC is the local Valley County entity representing the Idaho Republican Party and Republicans residing in Valley County.

Republicans in Valley County, including VCRCC members, are a diverse group and we are strong supporters of natural resource conservation; not preservation but conservation that makes prudent, responsible, and safe use of our natural resources to support society. We have studied the SDEIS and the efforts of Perpetua Resources to correct the misdeeds of the past. We trust Perpetua will take their duties and responsibilities seriously and will mine responsibly in Valley County. This is evident because Perpetua is already cleaning up the Stibnite area. They are the only entity doing this clean up – not even the federal government is cleaning up the past damage to the ecology of Stibnite and the downstream areas. Our members understand mining and the implications thereof.

You cite in the SDEIS that “Both the Valley County and Adams County comprehensive plans reaffirm the importance of natural resources to their communities’ economies (Adams County 2006; Valley County 2018a). The Valley County Comprehensive Plan includes goals and objectives pertinent to the SGP to ensure mining remains a viable element in Valley County’s economy; to ensure new industrial activities consider long-term impacts and benefits on the local economy and environment; and, to maintain the role of the timber industry, tourism, outdoor recreation, mining, and agriculture in the local economy. Relevant goals under the Adams County Comprehensive Plan for the SGP include to provide an economically viable environment that builds and maintains a diverse base of business.” (3-2)

You also mention that “Compared to the No Action Alternative, the 2021 MMP would remove additional legacy mining materials and further reduce their impacts on water quality but would also contribute new sources of mine waste material to the East Fork SFSR drainage. However, the new mine waste materials would be equipped with current technologies and design features (e.g., liner and cover systems) to reduce their impacts.” (Water Quality Specialists Report;7.5.3, p. 187). Isn’t that a win for everyone?

We support the Modified Mine Plan via Burntlog Rd (Preferred Alternative) as the most practical approach and one that will be best for the communities impacted by the Stibnite Gold Project. "The Burntlog Route would avoid environmental and human health and safety risks associated with the Johnson Creek Route which passes through identified areas for avalanches, landslides, and floods. This route would provide another route for SGP ingress/egress, would decrease SGP and public traffic interaction with Yellow Pine and Johnson Creek area residents; and would decrease the potential for spill risk adjacent to fish-bearing streams." (Ch2. Pg. 2-18).

Conservation Reasons

As stated previously, Perpetua is already improving and cleaning up the disastrous conditions that currently exist at Stibnite. Perpetua's restoration efforts will and already are, enhancing the quality of water and the improvement of other areas will minimize or mitigate the impact of mining. The placement and treatment of tailings is a point that will help to restore the Stibnite area as mining progresses. The result of this action is further enhancement of the water quality and the reduction of arsenic toxicity. This effort, along with other Perpetua "good practice processes" will improve water quality. Other enhancements, such as the salmon tunnel, will create good passage for the fish and provide our South Fork Salmon with spawning beds in the upper reaches of the EFSFSR, where they have spawned 80 plus years ago. Finally, the new and improved mining laws that Perpetua readily supports, calls for periodic bonding adjustments to ensure dollars and other resources are always available to restore the area regardless of Perpetua's financial standing.

Economic Reasons

The economic improvements that the Perpetua operation will provide will help Valley County residents receive more than a living wage. Currently the average income for Valley County residents is approximately \$37,000 per annum. It is projected that Perpetua will bring over 1,000 jobs throughout the life of the project. The trickle-down effect may include another 1,000 jobs. The importance of Perpetua's 1,000 jobs is huge because they will be good paying jobs providing salaries and benefits that could exceed \$80,000 per year. Additionally, the impact to our county tax base will further help our communities.

I read the Star News today and the new study isn't based on fact, it is an opinion! Perpetua has spent in excess of \$80M locally over the last 8-9 years, you should probably talk with their vendors to see what the partnership with Perpetua has done for their businesses, employees and life style. You cannot base a study on "what ifs" when the probability of such "what ifs" is almost nil.

In closing, we recognize Perpetua as a partner that has the best interests of Valley County in mind. Perpetua has always acted in an ethical manner. We believe Perpetua's establishment of the Stibnite Advisory Council and the Stibnite Foundation as bedrock institutions that reflect their caring and progressive attitudes within our communities.

The membership of the Valley County Republican Central Committee, and we believe the majority of Republicans in Valley County that we represent, strongly support the Modified Mine Plan of the Stibnite Gold Project.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Faye Thompson". The signature is written in black ink and has a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

Faye Thompson
VCRCC Chairman