

Publisher's Affidavit of Publication

STATE OF IDAHO }
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County of Valley }

I, Tricia Warren, being duly sworn and say, I am the receptionist of The Star-News, a weekly newspaper published at McCall, in the County of Valley, State of Idaho; that said newspaper is in general circulation in the county of afore said and is a legal newspaper; that the PUBLIC NOTICE, a copy of which is enclosed hereto and is a part hereof, was published in said newspaper once a week for a period of one week in the regular and entire issue of every number there of during the period of time of publication, and was published in the newspaper proper and not in a supplement; and that publication of such notice began June 1, 2017 and ended June 1, 2017.

See Affidavit Page 2.

Tricia Warren

Subscribed and sworn before me this the 1st day of June, 2017.
STATE OF IDAHO

COUNTY OF VALLEY }
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On this 1st day of June in the year of 2017, before me, a Notary Public, personally appeared Tricia Warren, known or identified to me to be the person whose name subscribed to the within instrument, and being by me first duly sworn, declared that the statements therein are true, and acknowledged to me that she executed the same.



Tom Grote

Tom Grote
Notary Public for Idaho
Residing at McCall, Idaho
Commission Expires 2/8/18

LEGAL NOTICE

OPPORTUNITY TO PROVIDE SCOPING COMMENTS ON STIBNITE GOLD PROJECT

The Payette National Forest (PNF) is preparing an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to evaluate and disclose the potential environmental effects from: (1) Approval of the "Stibnite Gold Project Plan of Restoration and Operations," (Plan) submitted by Midas Gold Idaho, Inc. (Midas Gold) in September 2016, to occupy and use National Forest System (NFS) lands for operations associated with open-pit mining and ore processing; and (2) related amendments to the Payette National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan (Payette Forest Plan, 2003) and/or the Boise National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan (Boise Forest Plan, as amended in 2010).

The United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) will cooperate on the preparation of the EIS and evaluate its content to ensure that the EIS can be adopted by the USACE to support an eventual decision to either issue, issue with conditions, or deny a Department of the Army Permit under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (CWA) for the Plan. The United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) will cooperate on the preparation of the EIS and evaluate its content to ensure that the EIS can be adopted in support of the decision-making process for issuance of a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Permit under Section 402 of the CWA.

The project area is located in the upper East Fork Salmon River (EFSFSR) drainage approximately 44 air miles northeast of the city of Cascade and three miles east of the Frank Church-River of No Return Wilderness in Valley County, Idaho. Operations would impact approximately 500 acres of patented mining claims owned or controlled by Midas Gold and approximately 1,500 acres of Federal public lands comprised of adjacent NFS lands administered by the PNF in the historic Stibnite Mining District and two supporting-infrastructure corridors located primarily in the BNF.

Midas Gold's stated objective is to economically develop and operate a modern mine, while providing environmental restoration of impacts related to historic mining activities at the site and socioeconomic benefits in surrounding areas. Midas Gold's Plan includes descriptions of the following operations and activities to be implemented on a mixture of NFS, State, and private lands:

- Redevelopment and Construction (2 to 3 years): Developing supporting infrastructure, including upgraded and reconstructed powerline, communication sites, upgraded and/or new roads (including a long-term, temporary mine access and public by-pass route), maintenance facility, and onsite housing, oxygen plant, and water management infrastructure; relocation and reuse of spent ore and construction of a lined tailings storage facility; modifying stream channels to reduce sedimentation and restore wetland function and fish passage (including temporarily rerouting the East Fork of the South Fork of the Salmon River [EFSFSR] through a fish-passable tunnel); planting burned areas; initial mining of one open pit (which will require closure of the Stibnite road through the mine site); and developing rock storage and temporary ore stockpile facilities, crusher, and ore processing facilities.
- Mining and Ore Processing (12 to 15 years): Resuming mining from two historical and one new open pit at a rate of approximately 40,000 to 100,000 tons of material per day; processing up to 25,000 tons per day of ore to recover gold/silver/doré and antimony concentrate; historical tailings reprocessing and clean-up; placing neutralized new and reprocessed tailings in the tailings storage facility; placing development rock in four engineered facilities, backfilling Yellow Pine pit; and concurrent reconstruction of stream channels, riparian areas, wetlands, and upland habitat, including restoring the EFSFSR to its approximate original gradient across the backfilled Yellow Pine pit.
- Initial Closure and Reclamation (2 to 3 years): Removing structures and facilities; decommissioning temporary roads; recontouring and drainage; additional wetland mitigations; reconstructing various stream channels in the project area and reopening the Stibnite Road through the mine site; and growth media placement and revegetation.
- Post-Closure and Monitoring (5 to 7 years): Establishing a wetland on top of the tailings storage facility, reclaiming rock storage facilities; monitoring reclamation and remediation standards and practices to minimize, mitigate or eliminate the potential for negative impacts and also includes environmental monitoring to document compliance and facilitate adaptive management through the redevelopment, mining, reclamation, and post-closure periods.

Regulations of the Secretary of Agriculture governing the use of surface resources for the purposes of mining of locatable minerals, as set forth under 36 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 228 Subpart A, require that the Forest Service respond to parties who submit plans for approval to conduct operations on, or otherwise use, NFS lands in conjunction with mining for part or all of their planned actions. An initial review of the consistency of the Plan with both the Payette and Boise Forest Plans indicates that approval of the Plan, as submitted, would result in conditions that are inconsistent with the forest plans. Amendments to the forest plans may be required to address inconsistencies with Forest Plan standards, including standards for recreation, roadless areas, vegetation, visual quality, and wildlife. In accordance with regulations at 36 CFR 228.5, the submittal of the Plan by Midas Gold requires the Forest Service to consider whether to approve the Plan or to require changes or additions deemed necessary to meet the requirements of the regulations for locatable mineral operations. The Forest Service cannot categorically prohibit mining operations that are reasonably incident to mining of locatable minerals on NFS lands in the area of the proposed action. Approval of the Plan would be a major federal action subject to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). Accordingly, the Forest Service must also prepare an EIS to consider and publicly disclose the potential environmental effects of the proposed action. The Notice of Intent to prepare the EIS is expected to be published in the Federal Register on or near June 2, 2017. The PNF will be the lead agency for the EIS and for processing and administering the Plan on NFS lands. The USACE and EPA will cooperate on the preparation of the EIS and evaluate its content to ensure that the EIS can support their respective CWA-permitting decisions.

Issues to be analyzed in the EIS will be developed during this scoping process. Preliminary issues include potential impacts to: access and transportation; aesthetics and scenic resources; wetlands and threatened, endangered, proposed, and sensitive botanical species; climate and air quality; cultural and heritage resources (including Tribal treaty and trust responsibilities); environmental justice; Federal land management and environmental protection; fire and fuels management; fisheries and wildlife, including threatened, endangered, proposed, and sensitive species; geochemistry; geology; hazardous materials; land use; noise; public health and safety; recreation; roadless and wilderness areas, socioeconomic; soils and reclamation cover materials; timber resources; water resources (groundwater and surface water); and water rights.

Using the analysis in the EIS and supporting documentation, the PNF Forest Supervisor will make the following decisions regarding the proposed Plan:

1. Whether to approve the Plan as submitted by Midas Gold, or require changes or additions to the Plan to meet the requirements for environmental protection and reclamation set forth at 36 CFR 228 Subpart A before approving a final Plan. The Forest Service decision may be to approve a plan of operations composed of elements from one or more of the alternatives considered. The alternative that is selected for approval in the final Plan must minimize adverse impacts on NFS surface resources to the extent feasible.
2. Whether to approve amendments to the forest plans, which would be required to approve the final Plan.
3. How to mitigate the effects of the proposed mining operation to existing public motorized access.

The draft decision for the project and activities are subject to the pre-decisional objection process pursuant to 36 CFR 218, Subparts A and B, "Project-Level Pre-decisional Administrative Review Process." The regulation provides that "all interested and affected parties who provided written comment as defined in §218.2 during scoping or the comment period will be eligible to participate in the objections process." Depending on the nature of the forest plan amendments required, the draft decisions may also be subject to 36 CFR 219 Subpart B, "Pre-decisional Administrative Review Process." Only those who submit timely and specific written comments regarding the proposed Project during a public comment period established by the responsible official are eligible to file an objection.

How to Comment and Timeframe

The purpose of this Legal Notice is to provide notice that the proposed decision will be subject to the pre-decisional review process, and to announce initiation of the scoping process (upon publication of the NOI in the Federal Register), which guides the development of the EIS. Comments sought by the PNF include specific comments to the proposed action, appropriate information that could be pertinent to analysis of environmental effects, identification of significant issues, and identification of potential alternatives.

Comments submitted via webform are preferred and can be submitted from the project website at <http://www.fs.usda.gov/goto/payette/StibniteGold>. Written comments may be sent to: Payette National Forest, ATTN: Forest Supervisor, Keith Lannom - Stibnite Gold EIS, 500 N. Mission St., McCall, ID 83638, sent via email with a subject line reading "Stibnite Gold EIS Scoping Comment" to comments-interim-payette@fs.fed.us, via facsimile (FAX) to 1-208-634-0744. The office business hours for those submitting hand-delivered comments are 8:00 AM-4:30 PM Monday through Friday, excluding federal holidays.

Scoping comments will be accepted for 45 days from the date of publication of the NOI in the Federal Register. Comments received in response to this solicitation, including names and addresses of those who comment, will be part of the public record for this proposed action. Comments submitted anonymously will be accepted and considered; however to be eligible to submit an objection, individuals and entities must have provided the following during the comment period: 1) name and postal address (email address is recommended but not required); 2) title of the proposed project or activity; 3) specific written comments as defined in §218.2 regarding the proposed project or activity, along with supporting reasons, and 4) signature or other verification of identity upon request and identification of the individual or entity who authored the comments. For comments listing multiple entities or multiple individuals, a signature or other means of verification must be provided for the individual authorized to represent each entity and for each individual in the case of multiple names. A scanned signature or other means of verifying the identity of the individual or entity representative may be used for electronically submitted comments. Individual members of an entity must submit their own comments to establish personal identity; comments received on behalf of an entity are considered as those of the entity only.

The PNF will conduct the following scoping meetings during which members of the public can learn about the Forest Service's proposed action and the NEPA process:

- June 27, 2017, 5:00 – 7:00 p.m., Ashley Inn, Cascade, Idaho
- June 28, 2017, 5:00 – 7:00 p.m., Payette Forest Supervisor's Office, McCall, Idaho
- June 29, 2017, 1:00 – 3:00 and 5:00 – 7:00 PM, Holiday Inn Express and Suites (Airport), Boise, Idaho

Each meeting will be an open house but will include a 15-minute presentation approximately 30 minutes after the start of the meeting. There will be a short question and answer period following the presentation.

Additional information regarding this action can be obtained from: <http://www.fs.usda.gov/goto/payette/StibniteGold>, or by contacting Brian Harris, Public Affairs Officer, at 1-208-634-0784 or bdharris@fs.fed.us. Individuals who use telecommunication devices for the deaf (TDD) may call the Federal Information Relay Service (FIRS) at 1-800-877-8339 between 8 a.m. and 8 p.m., Eastern Time, Monday through Friday. 1pp61

