

Midas Gold Should Take Operation to a More Accommodating Country

To the Editor:

Ms. McKinsey Lyon, Midas/Barrick Gold's vice president of external affairs, complains about delays in the Environmental Impact Statement process for the proposed Midas Gold Project.

She claims that, "Canada and Australia have equally tough environmental regulations and yet can permit mines in two or three years at a fraction of the cost." ("Midas Gold Stibnite mine study delayed again," The Star-News, April 9, 2020.)

The fact of the matter is neither Canada nor Australia has environmental or disclosure laws anywhere near as stringent as ours. Neither country has laws equivalent to our National Environmental Policy Act, Endangered Species Act, Clean Water Act, or National Forest Management Act.

Those speedy and cheap Canadian regulations that Ms. Lyon admires? Those are the same regulations that legalize the displacement of First Nations people and the ongoing environmental disaster of tar sand mining in northern Alberta.

But I'm willing to give Ms. Lyon the benefit of the doubt. Maybe she is really on to something. Maybe the repeated permitting delays mean the Stibnite Gold Project simply can't withstand the rigor and scrutiny of US environmental laws.

This latest delay gives Midas/Barrick an opportunity to take advantage of Canada's or Australia's quick and cheap environmental regulations - plus cut their substantial losses here in the USA.

I suggest they do just that. I think it's time for them to pack up and move their operation to a more accommodating country.

That would be a real win-win deal. If Midas/Barrick moved to Canada or Australia, they would be rid of our burdensome environmental laws. Granted, they would have to pay royalties on minerals mined in either country, but they could avoid the public scrutiny and the certainty of lengthy and costly litigation they face here.

In return, we would be rid of the looming environmental and economic costs of their mine, along with the false promises, anxiety, conflict, and divisiveness they've already brought to our community, our home.

Charles Ray, McCall