Letters to the Editor

On the Stibnite draft record of decision

On Sept. 6, the Forest Service issued its favorable draft record of decision (RoD) allowing the Project to move ahead in the permitting process. This triggered a public comment period of 45 days which ended on Monday.

I have pointed out in my recent letters to the editor that, in my opinion, the Biden Administration and the federal agencies under their control have repeatedly exerted their influence in order to push this project forward. One needs look no further than the well documented Department of Defense's award of $75.5 million to Perpetua Resources for the development of antimony at the site. There is also less visible evidence than this which involves relationships between Perpetua personnel and state and federal elected officials. However, now that the Draft RoD has been issued the administration is being even bolder about their support of the project. I would highly recommend reading the "fact sheet" issued by the Biden-Harris Administration on Sept. 20. In this document they highlight their "whole-of-government effort" to "strengthen and secure critical minerals supply chains".

The document specifically mentions the Stibnite Project and the Department of Agriculture's issuance of the RoD. It also highlights many other mining projects around the country that the administration is supporting and how they are doing so. All in the name of "saving the environment" or supporting the wars we are currently involved in around the world. Remember these are your tax dollars being spent without your expressed consent. Perpetua openly brags about this "fact sheet" in an email they issued on Sept. 24.

In my letter to the editor on Aug. 22, I challenged Perpetua and the DoD to disclose their plan for the final processing of the antimony concentrate and where it is likely to be done. To my knowledge that question remains unanswered.

If you are reading this I would strongly urge you to become well informed about the Stibnite Project before taking a position. There are many sources of information other than the government and Perpetua Resources available to you. It is best to get a complete picture before forming your opinion. The local group Save the South Fork Salmon has a wealth of information compiled by highly qualified and knowledgeable people. Also, from an economic perspective it is worth reading the independent study done by the Idaho Headwaters Economic Study Group.

When the government starts using terms like critical, crucial and "whole of government effort" my antenna go up and so should yours. All four of Idaho's elected representatives to the federal government along with the governor are openly in favor of the Stibnite Project. Couple that with the support from the Biden-Harris Administration and I suppose that is what they mean by "whole of government effort". It is becoming obvious to who's tune the Forest Service is dancing. John Paulson and Perpetua know their way around the DC dance hall.

Samuel Stoddard, Cascade

Ponderosa Center: A vision for our community's future

As long-time supporters of the Ponderosa Center, we wish to share our enthusiasm for its ongoing development and the vital role it will play in our community's future.

The Ponderosa Center represents a dream brought to life by dedicated locals who recognized the potential of a prime location on Payette Lake in McCall. This center is poised to greatly enrich our community today and for generations to come. Situated across from Legacy Park, the site is already well-loved, especially during the "Tuesday at the Terrace" concert series. The Center aims to enhance our cultural landscape through the arts, education, and community events.

By partnering with the McCall Music Society, the Ponderosa Center will broaden access to diverse programs for all ages, creating opportunities for music, film, theater, dance, and performances by popular artists. It will serve as a hub for educational initiatives in collaboration with Idaho universities and local schools, fostering lifelong learning and community engagement through public lectures and continuing education.

Additionally, the Ponderosa Center will feature exhibits from the McCall Ski Heritage Foundation, celebrating our local ski culture and offering residents and visitors alike a chance to connect with our rich history. The McCall Chamber of Commerce also supports this vision, considering a Visit McCall information location within the Center.

Importantly, this property was made available by the Carey family, who wished to preserve its legacy for public use. Development will not involve taxpayer funding, ensuring that our community's investment remains focused on enhancing economic benefits for McCall. Comprehensive studies indicate a strong demand for meeting spaces at the Ponderosa Center, which will help sustain operations, manage parking, and create year-round job opportunities.

From the outset, this initiative has been viewed as a "game changer" for McCall, and it remains so. As we enter the crucial fourth quarter, the Ponderosa Center is ramping up its fundraising efforts. We encourage donors across our region and state to consider contributing to this transformative project.

The Ponderosa Center truly is "a gift that will keep on giving."

Sincerely,

Bob and Linda Hallock, McCall

The silent majority

The City of McCall buckled to the pressure of the vocal minority when it submitted a letter of opposition to the Stibnite mine earlier this month. What the city forgets is that the loudest voices don't always represent the larger population. And in this case, I firmly believe that the quiet majority supports reopening the Stibnite mine.

I'm a Cascade resident and business owner who once worked in the oil and gas industry. Like oil and gas, mining is faced with a small but very loud minority of people who fight against responsible projects, never mind the fact that the world we live in cannot exist without mining.

Also like the oil and gas industry, mining has come a long way in just the last few decades, and must go to great lengths to protect the environment to operate a project.

I'm excited for the jobs and opportunities the Stibnite project will bring, for the investment in Valley County, and that we can be part of the solution to China shutting down access to the minerals America needs. And, Perpetua Resources has already been a great partner to the community, opening their doors and investing in local businesses and causes.

The majority may be quiet, but I'm proud to be part of the many in our community who support Perpetua and the Stibnite project.

Jeff Gordon, Cascade

Please stop spamming us

So, first off, everybody vote how you want for the EMS levy. You do you.

On a side note—in talking around town, there are a decent chunk of us that magically got added to an email list that keeps sending out notes opposing the EMS levy. The funny thing is, some of us have never met the authors before; our sole communications were with them at the Star News when they owned it. It seems pretty likely that they saved off our contact information before they sold, and that's what's being used to email us now.

Illegal? Yeah. Tacky? A bit. It's a free country. Except for spam. That's just sinful. Gotta follow the same old boring laws the rest of us do. Stop spamming us please!

Tom Doe, McCall

C'mon man

Let's stop messing around and get the money to EMS. I simply don't understand the registered voters in Valley County who are reluctant to cast their vote in favor of this essential service.

I want the brightest and the best to answer my 911 call in a timely fashion. You and I both know the cost of living is very high here, qualifying for a home purchase is almost impossible for people on middle-class incomes and long-term rentals are scarce.

What is the hourly price for a person to accept a job where he or she may know a loved one, friend or acquaintance when they arrive on scene? Victims burned so badly they are unrecognizable, arrive on an accident where you know the vehicle but can't recognize the deceased driver because of blunt force trauma? Arrive on a code 0 – suicide only to discover you just had a conversation with that person you knew? Arrive on scene to assist only to be met with a drunk pointing a gun in your face.

Does your job provide counseling for what you may have to see and do in the course of your job description? It's not that the above may happen here, these incidents have already happened to our fine men and women charged with the duties of firefighter/EMT in Valley County.

So let's stop the reluctant BS and vote to give the EMS District the money they need to provide the service we so hope to get when it's our turn to require their services.

Gary Swain, Lake Fork

Realizing why EMS is important

Sunday afternoon my husband and I witnessed a tragic accident, then experienced the kindness of strangers, the timely response of local medical emergency services, and the support of our caring community.

I have never called 911, but as I rushed for my phone, then heard the calm voice of dispatch, I knew that soon the professional help that was needed would be on the way. I could feel my body start to relax the moment I heard the sirens, then saw the flashing lights carrying the paramedics, bringing calm into a storm of chaos.

I had also never stood on the McCall airport tarmac waiting for the St. Luke's air ambulance to arrive, which made me realized how invaluable their service is to our community. I am convinced that without the timely assistance of the McCall paramedics, the St. Luke's McCall staff and air ambulance, and the incredible caring strangers who immediately rendered helped as needed, there would have been a different outcome.

I am still shaking as I think about how quickly life changed on what was a perfect end of summer afternoon. My heart carries deep gratitude for all who helped. We learned accidents happen anywhere, anytime. We were extremely fortunate to have received help from many, particularly the well-trained professional McCall paramedics and fire district team.

Please know this could one day be you having a similar experience and you could end up feeling as we do today. Our community cares and it supports one another. We learned that our emergency medical services save lives.

I share our experience so that when voting Nov. 5 you will consider the importance of voting yes to fund the Valley County EMS District contracts with the McCall, Donnelly, and Cascade fire districts. Each of us may one day need their timely, professional, and invaluable emergency help. Accidents happen. Should you need to call 911, you want to know that someone will answer and assist in a timely manner.

With deep gratitude and thanks to all involved,

Rae Ann and David McKeating, McCall

EMS funding request

One of the many things I've learned since being involved in community service, is the lack of funding available to help take care of our communities. County and city budgets are capped at a 3% rate of increase plus a small adjustment for new construction. This allows some basic salary adjustments for current staff and to cover small emergency purchases. When it comes to finding funding to cover the increased medical costs and need for additional EMS services,those funds are not available in existing budgets.

The current EMS levy severely under funds the needs of the community. We can and should provide needed emergency services to our community. When you call for help, there is an expectation that an ambulance and paramedic will show up to your door quickly. The community is on the brink of not having this available. Also, with the new request for funding, a paramedic will be included in the team there to help.

They may be able to help you at your home without a transport to the hospital. This would save residents the cost of a hospital visit. Basic life support only provides someone with basic

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Road less-traveled beats road-less travel

On Tuesday night, just over a week before Halloween, a group of New Meadows and Adams County citizens began brewing up a concoction that should have city and county officials across the region taking notes.

Like many committees before them, the newly formed New Meadows Roads and Streets Committee is likely to be cast aside by most observers as yet another layer of government bureaucracy unlikely to yield any tangible results, but guaranteed to warm the hearts of the bureaucrats and do-gooders who sign up for such duties.

The committee, however, is on the verge of tapping into some of the most readily available resources in the region—a glut of blue collar talent and a strong public distaste for substandard roads.

Roads have long been among the chief complaints of residents in New Meadows and across Adams and Valley Counties, but little ever changes because it turns out building and maintaining quality roads is an expensive endeavor in snow country. Look no further than the $3+ million per year the City of McCall spends on roadway improvements, which is still a far cry from what would be needed to improve all McCall streets to adequate conditions.

Government funding alone might never foot the bill for quality roads, and so for decades residents have endured dusty neighborhood roads and bumpy, bone-jarring rides to the grocery store.

This will not change overnight, but as the New Meadows committee correctly pointed out, the talent to improve these roads is among us. Many of these people would be motivated to provide equipment, material or time to begin making incremental improvements for pennies on the dollar.

To be clear, the committee assembled by New Meadows is only at the beginning of what is sure to be a long and arduous road—literally—even with only 1.5 miles of city roadway to contend with. Still, the "outside the box" thinking touted by members of the committee should be replicated by Valley County and the cities of Cascade, Donnelly and McCall.

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