

Congress of the United States  
Washington, DC 20510

June 7, 2016

Chris Savage  
Forest Supervisor  
Kootenai National Forest  
31374 U.S. Hwy. 2  
Libby, MT 59923-3022

Dear Mr. Savage:

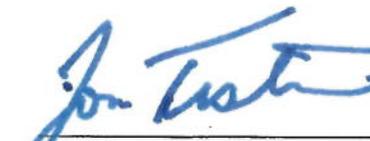
We are writing you concerning the proposed Rock Creek Mine Project located on the Kootenai National Forest in Montana. We appreciate the time and effort that the Forest Service has already dedicated to the permitting process for Rock Creek Mine. We encourage the Forest Service to continue to commit necessary resources to consider public comments and work towards finalizing the Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS) in a timely manner. We also respectfully request an estimated timeline for when the SEIS will be finalized.

As you are well aware, permitting for the Rock Creek Mine Project is entering its third decade. During this time, the proposed project has been closely scrutinized by state and federal agencies and undergone judicial review. Recently, the project completed the public comment phase on the draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS) prepared in response to a judicial remand issued in 2010 requiring further clarification on a number of issues, which the draft SEIS aims to address. Because of the quality of your previous work, the Biological Opinion on wildlife withstood judicial review in 2011. We ask that you continue the same diligence and quality of work in completing the NEPA review process.

The permitting process is a necessary step towards ensuring that the project's proposed operations are conducted in a way that conforms to all relevant state and federal regulations and is responsive to public concerns. The timely completion of this process is necessary to provide certainty to the mining company's planning efforts and to fully engender the public's trust and confidence in the Agency's permitting process. Accordingly, we would appreciate your continued conscientiousness and commitment in completing the SEIS in a timely manner.

We appreciate your time and attention to this matter. If we can provide any additional information or assistance, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,

  
Jon Tester  
United States Senator

  
Steve Daines  
United States Senator

  
Ryan Zinke  
United States Congressman

cc: Chief, Tom Tidwell  
Regional Forester, Leanne Martin