

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

July 22, 2008

Mr. Bill Wood  
Forest Supervisor, U.S. Forest Service  
50 Highway 93 South  
Salmon, ID 83467

Dear Mr. Wood,

Thank you for issuing a Record of Decision for the Idaho Cobalt Project. As you may be aware, establishing an assured domestic supply of high-purity superalloy cobalt is a matter of national security. The Department of Defense is required under US law to buy strategic materials, such as specialty metals, which are critical to national security from American sources. However, there has not been an established domestic source of mined cobalt since the early 1970s.

The United States is highly dependent on the import of cobalt from a limited number of sources. 30 USC Sec. 1401, states that in the case of certain hard minerals, such as cobalt, the United States is dependent upon foreign sources of supply and the acquisition of such minerals from foreign sources is a significant factor in the national balance-of-payments position.

The Idaho Cobalt Project will provide high-purity super alloy cobalt required for many defense applications. Critical strategic applications, where there is no substitute for cobalt, include: batteries, jet engine turbines and missile guidance systems. The project will ensure future supplies of high-purity super alloy cobalt by establishing a new primary cobalt mine, using the most advanced mining techniques, and a new production facility of which the cost is entirely borne by private industry.

We affirm our support for the Idaho Cobalt Project, and your efforts to ensure the availability of materials and facilities necessary to keep priority defense programs on schedule. This will expand the domestic capacity to produce specialty metals for the Department of Defense and reduce our dependency on unreliable foreign sources.

Sincerely,



Cathy McMorris Rodgers  
Member of Congress



Rob Bishop  
Member of Congress



Doug Lamborn  
Member of Congress



Madeleine Bordallo  
Member of Congress



Michael Michaud  
Member of Congress