Speaker 1: How's that everybody? How's that everybody?

CROWD: That's better.

Speaker 1: All right. He says to eat the mic. It is five o'clock. So I want to just thank everybody for coming out and showing your interest in this project. I wanted to say first and foremost that I will apologize for the situation we're in here tonight with the room and the space. [00:00:30] We had originally gone with the vestibule out there with a larger space, but they have this children's play going on followed by a meeting that was scheduled after our meeting. So I really didn't expect this big of a crowd, but here we are and I'm glad everybody came out. The original intent of this meeting was to have an open house style format where you could come and talk [00:01:00] to individuals about the project. We did invite F3 Gold here, who is the proponent on this project, and they are here to talk to small groups or individuals.

They're back there in the room. If you wanted to talk specifics about what their project is about and what F3 Gold is about, they can do that. We weren't prepared to do a presentation tonight. We were prepared to talk and have individual conversations because [00:01:30] I think sometimes individual conversations are more productive than group settings because some people don't like to ask questions in a group, some people do. But we'll try to get whatever information that you would like to get tonight. We would suggest that if you don't get the information you want tonight-

Speaker 2: I got a question. If they're here willing to talk to people, why don't they just talk to the whole room at one time?

CROWD: Right, yes.

Speaker 1: Okay. [00:02:00] We will try. It was the conversation that we had about them coming tonight and how this was going to be prepared. They did not prepare for a presentation style. So we'll work on that. If we have to do another meeting, we will do another meeting. So what I will talk about to begin with tonight [00:02:30] is the process that we're embarking upon, and then Jonathan Manning, who is with me tonight, he is my minerals and mining expert. So he'll talk a little bit about the project and he might be able to answer a lot of the questions that you do have. So two weeks ago, we sent out the scoping letter and we also sent out the notice of this meeting. I wanted the scoping letter to go out [00:03:00] prior to this meeting so that there was some information provided and I wanted people to be able to think about what questions they had or concerns that they had.

When I sent out that initial scoping letter, I sent out an indication that I was going to do a decision memo on this project, and that is because of the information that I know as of right now. It's really important for everybody here [00:03:30] to provide us with comments to help us move forward and how that goes forward. I have had a lot of conversations with several different people about the level of NEPA that we should be doing. So right now my understanding is a decision memo is appropriate. However, that does not mean that I know everything at this point, and that's why you're here and that's why we ask you to fill out the comment cards, go online, fill out the online [00:04:00] comments so that you can provide issues to me, so that I can further evaluate how we move forward with this project.

I wanted to make it clear that it's not if we move forward to this project, but it's how we move forward with this project. We're working off of a 1872 mining law that provides mining authority to anyone who files a claim with the Bureau of Land Management. The Bureau [00:04:30] of Land Management is the agency that oversees mineral rights and mineral productions in federal lands across the country. The Forest Service is responsible for administering the ground or the land resources. So that's everything above the roots of the tree. So that's what we're analyzing right [00:05:00] now is the impacts on the resources above ground. Then the Bureau of Land Management manages the impacts on the resources below ground, based on the claims that are out there.

Speaker 3: Is BLM going to show up at any point and talk to us?

Speaker 1: Excuse me?

Speaker 3: Is BLM going to show up at any point and talk to us?

Speaker 1: That would be something I would have to talk to the BLM about or maybe Jonathan can talk to that. They go through their process, [00:05:30] they've already provided the mining claim to the proponent, and so that process is completed at this point. Yes?

Speaker 4: No matter what we say, is this project going through?

Speaker 1: So this project will go through according to the-

Speaker 5: [inaudible 00:05:49] we hear, we live right there.

CROWD: [inaudible 00:05:58].

Speaker 6: Is it our land [00:06:00] or their land?

Speaker 7: That's right. Then goes out of state.

Speaker 1: Well, the reason that you're here is because we only know what we know right now. We need to have your local input as to how we move forward.

CROWD: [inaudible 00:06:16].

Speaker 8: [inaudible 00:06:23] sent out the [inaudible 00:06:24] letter. [inaudible 00:06:28]. [00:07:30] There's only one [inaudible 00:07:49] letter. [inaudible 00:07:49] that the reason they might have changed it for five year plan to one year plan so they could get categorical claim and not to have a complete [inaudible 00:07:49].

Speaker 1: So there is a couple of things to consider here, and this is where I'm looking for feedback. If we do a category exclusion, the only way we can do that, if we [00:08:00] use the categorical exclusion that we have proposed that the project can only last for one year, if we go with a environmental assessment, the project can expand and it could last for up to five years.

Speaker 8: Can they renew after? Can they re-apply after one year and go through the same thing again.

Speaker 1: They could.

Speaker 9: Yeah. But [00:08:30] what if they find something? What I'm saying, now then, what? How many years are we looking at them digging up backyard? I live right there.

Speaker 1: Right.

Speaker 3: Within a mile.

Speaker 9: Are you going to come and turn their lights off at night and turn the noise off? We can't even sit outside with this property tax to play around here. That is not right for us. I'm sorry. That's not fair.

Speaker 1: So this project is only for the exploration.

Speaker 9: [00:09:00] Yeah, but they're not going to do that for enough. They're not going to invest the money.

CROWD: [inaudible 00:09:05].

Speaker 10: They're nothing disappear. They're going to sell it to somebody else it dig.

Speaker 9: That's right. Because we did our homework.

Speaker 10: And pump filthy water to water supply.

CROWD: Yeah. [inaudible 00:09:24]. Yeah, where is BLM here?

Where is BLM?

Elizabeth Rocks: I do have a question back here. Hi, I'm Dr. Elizabeth Rocks.

Speaker 12: [00:09:30] Mic. One second. We have a ...

Elizabeth Rocks: Hi. I'm Dr. Elizabeth Rocks. I'm from the South Dakota School of Mines and Technology. I'm a fifth generation South Dakota from this area. My child here is six. We care a lot about this land. We have spent generations with our homestead doing [00:10:00] things that are environmentally responsible. We're ranchers, we're teachers. We've been here for a long time. We don't want this.

CROWD: We don't want this.

Elizabeth Rocks: I understand that there's an 1872 law, however, are we taking into account things on the surface? As you mentioned, for example in Hells Canyon and Spearfish Canyon, there is a endangered and imperiled snail. Is that something you're looking at? [00:10:30] I'm not a big huge snail lover, but if it helps keep drilling out of our backyards, I'm willing to look at it and talk about it. Bald Eagles. What are the upper assessments and how are you going to guarantee that we don't have our waters poisoned? We have livestock. How many people here livestock? Come on? I know you had a cattle. I'm going to have a real problem with if there's cyanide here. I live about [00:11:00] five blocks from here. How many people saw the propane tanks floating down the street a few years ago? How are they going to keep cyanide out of our water when they're processing gold they This is baloney.

Speaker 13: They won't [inaudible 00:11:20] responsible for checking it. The fox is guarding in my house.

Elizabeth Rocks: That's right. So much as you're making this decision, we know you live in this community and you're making these decisions. We understand. I would say we understand that there's a law here, but I think you made a very good [00:11:30] point about the categorical exceptions. They could keep going on year to year. What did they want to do with this? If they explore, are think it's going to make a gold mine, are they going to be processing an ore here? We've all been up to lead. How many people been to lead South Dakota? How many people knew that that was a gold mine before?

Speaker 14: [inaudible 00:11:50] see my backyard. We live by within a mile.

Elizabeth Rocks: Well, they promised in [inaudible 00:11:54] the last gold company that they would clean it up before they left. Instead, they went bankrupt and left it to everybody [00:12:00] else.

Speaker 15: The money's gone in Minnesota and local businesses are going to get screwed.

CROWD: [inaudible 00:12:09].

Speaker 16: [inaudible 00:12:08] point where it's at, I will have to close down before my water be filthy. Nobody wants to listen to drilling as people in Minnesota get fatter, stuff their pockets and run back.

Elizabeth Rocks: Just before I turn over the mic, I want to say one more thing. Not only …

Audience: I'm here for the beauty. Yeah. What about our local residents? And they expect clean water at their campground. They don't want to have to worry about their pet dying or their kid dying.

And you know what else? Water runs downhill. It's not just here in the Black Hills. We have a really precious, they keep talking about, oh, it's the island and the prairie. Well guess what? There's very other few places in the world that are like this. And it's sacred to a lot of people. The city's [00:00:30] already dumping stuff into the French Creek here.

Margaret: Speaking of water running downhill my name's Margaret Kings and I'm an attorney with 30 years of extensive experience in... Extensive experience in the field of Indian law. And once it runs through the Black Hills, it runs onto the reservation.

And [00:01:00] according to the case of the Seminole Nation versus the United States, the government has charged itself with moral obligations of the highest responsibility of trust for protecting the Indian nation. And this is going to poison their water after it poisons ours. And that is, you're part of the United States government with the Department of Agriculture. And you have to [00:01:30] follow these fiduciary trust duties to protect the native populations. And you're not doing that if you let this go through.

Speaker 3: I just want to say thank you, Margaret. I talked to Margaret on the phone the other day, if I remember correctly. And she's absolutely correct. And again, I will just say that this is why we're here tonight because I wanted [00:02:00] to share as much information as I could at this point.

And I wanted you all to understand what I'm looking for from you. And that is exactly what Margaret brought up. And that's exactly what this lady in the back brought up.

Audience: Dr. Rocks.

Speaker 3: What's that?

Audience: Dr. Rocks.

Speaker 3: Dr. Rocks How can I forget that now, Dr. Rocks? So yes, I'll get right over to you. But anyway, that's what I'm looking for is information [00:02:30] that I can use in my analysis as I move forward to determine effects and everything else. But let me...

Speaker 4: Good evening, everybody. [foreign language 00:02:45], Frank Star comes out. Oglala Sioux Tribe President. One thing I have to say about this is what these guys are doing [00:03:00] here, they're violating the treaties of the Oglala Sioux Tribe.

Audience: That's true.

Speaker 4: According to our treaties here, they need a government to government consultation with the Oglala Sioux Tribe before anything can happen. So as far as I'm concerned, we got a fight on our hands.

Speaker 3: Thank you. Thank you for that. And just so you know, we [00:03:30] have sent out those requests to begin that process. The section 106 process for that consultation.

Margaret: Before you did that.

Speaker 3: Sorry.

Speaker 4: The Mic.

Margaret: You have to tip hat mic from the other.

Speaker 3: I do.

Margaret: Yeah.

Speaker 3: Sir. Back here.

Speaker 5: Besides the treaty that they're not doing, they're going to go without the environmental study. How many other shortcuts can we expect? [inaudible 00:03:59] Due diligence on [00:04:00] the impact study first?

Audience: Why are we not doing the study because it's not going to pass? That's up to him right there.

Speaker 3: Well...

Audience: You're the one that-

Speaker 3: My reasoning and we are moving forward with the consultation and with the tribes and that's for sure. And my other reasoning for my initial thought of going with the decision memo is because there was an environmental study done for the Jenny Golds project. And this project is very similar [00:04:30] if not nearly exact.

It's a different location but the same type of work. Again, the bat caves are something that's very important for you to make comments about. These are local things that occur in that area that help me move forward with how this will be analyzed.

Speaker 6: What are we going to do with gold instead of water?

Audience: Yeah, our lake's drying up.

Speaker 3: Ma'am, you had a question?

Speaker 7: No, I was [00:05:00] going to say. I know a lot of times you're not really allowed to disclose where the bat caves are. But if-

Audience: We can't hear you. Microphone, microphone.

Speaker 7: Right there with your gate on it and your sign that says it's been [inaudible 00:05:20].

Audience: Yeah, why are you letting them in that area?

Speaker 3: The question and the comment was that there are bat paves in that area, one that is signed and gated by the Forest Service. So [00:05:30] we do have information on a lot of this stuff, but it's not like I'm saying we have information on everything. So again, it'd be good to have that information come in through the comment process.

Speaker 8: You closed bat cave all over the Black hills, but you're not going to take this into consideration?

Speaker 3: The bats. The bats will be considered in our analysis. Yes.

Audience: I just want to make a point. Just because I want to understand something. [00:06:00] There's like already bazillion good points being made by people who have looked into them. But you told us at the very beginning, it really doesn't matter what we uncover. Everyone's already made their decision and we're just slapping our gums and you don't really give a shit. Am I right?

Speaker 3: You're not right. No.

Audience: So if this stuff pans out, you're going to do something about it and it won't happen.

Speaker 3: So it is my job to do the assessment that's appropriate and [00:06:30] make sure that the impacts above the ground level and for that matter below the ground level, the water table and all that stuff are addressed. And then mitigation measures or other design criteria are put toward this project to eliminate those impacts. Yes, sir?

Speaker 8: What is going to happen with the water level? Wabash Springs and McKenna Spring right there? When you start drilling, [00:07:00] is it all going to drain out? Can you guarantee that?

Speaker 3: Did you want to talk about the water level, Jonathan?

Speaker 8: So the reason why I am asking because I have [inaudible 00:07:15] is freezing here. So, trying to get water the last couple years there has been quite a chore and now that they have water there, where is it all going to go?

Speaker 3: Right. And so this whole area that we're talking about is not [00:07:30] over any aquifers in the forest. However, there are fissures in springs within that area that supply water to those springs and everything else. So we will be talking about that in our assessment as we move forward. Yes. Back here.

Speaker 9: Hello everybody. I'm the [00:08:00] Director for the Natural Resources Program down in Pine Ridge. And we're directly affected by what happens. Not only are there numerous federal laws being violated, but there's no support or interfacing with all federal agencies under the Department of Interior.

If we let this go by, they're not going to mitigate. They're not going to clean it up. There are not police, nobody polices a federal [00:08:30] agency. Not even themselves. Even though they live here.

He's talking about a plan discretion. And that's not in the best interest of everybody. The people, the animals, the fish, the vegetation heals everything. So if he's here only to give us lip service, then we should have these Secretary of Interior's, a higher official out here.

If you listen around here, not everybody's in favor [00:09:00] of this. So you need to be careful how you go forward in your approach on how you are applying your use of discretion as an employee of the federal government. Thank you.

Speaker 3: I appreciate that. Thank you.

Speaker 10: How can this project be stopped?

Audience: Yeah. Yes.

Speaker 3: Oh, that's a good question. And I think it was just discussed right here. [00:09:30] It's not my discretion to stop this project.

Speaker 4: You're interpreting the...

Speaker 3: Well. I am the one that's responsible for seeing that the analysis is done, the laws are followed that we currently have on the books and that I'm...

Dr. Jarting: My name is Dr. Lilias Jarting and I'm with Black Hill's Clean Water Alliance.

Speaker 4: Yeah.

Dr. Jarting: Okay. Is [00:10:00] that better?

Audience: Lift it up.

Dr. Jarting: All right, is that better? What the Ranger is referring to is the 1872 Mining Law. That is only one law that needs to be enforced here. There's also the National Historical Preservation Act. There's the Clean Water Act. There's a Clean Air Act. We need to enforce all the laws, not just one.

Speaker 10: Isn't there [00:10:30] already a lithium mine underway off Lynn Creek?

Audience: Yes. Yes, yes.

Speaker 10: So we've already got mining.

Speaker 3: Yeah, that mine is not on the National Forest of lands.

Speaker 10: Whose land is it?

Speaker 12: Private.

Speaker 3: Yes, sir. Back there.

Speaker 13: I have a question for these people about the water issue. Can any one of you and I may, I just haven't heard about it. Name one [00:11:00] incident where cyanide or anything else has got into the water table from here...

Speaker 5: All over the southwest. Southwest.

Speaker 4: Navajo Nation.

Speaker 13: What's I don't know.

Speaker 4: Cheyenne River.

Audience: [00:11:30] Whitewood.

Speaker 4: How much time do you have?

Audience: Sioux Falls.

Speaker 13: Do you want to be dependent on China and Ukraine and Russia for all of our minerals?

Speaker 4: For our gold?

Audience: We're getting our minerals from-

Speaker 3: All right. We have another question right here. Ma'am.

Speaker 14: I want to know how we've gone this [00:12:00] far without going to the Native American-

Speaker X: We were here first.

Speaker 1: Why did it take them so long to discuss this with him? They have rights that are not being respected-

Speaker X: Treaty rights. Yep.

Speaker 1: ... at all.

Speaker X: That's right.

Speaker 2: I agree. And this project-

Speaker 1: [inaudible 00:00:11].

Speaker 2: ... is actually in the very early stages. We have to wait for a proposal before we can start analyzing the project and-

Speaker 1: Why aren't they involved in all of the steps?

Speaker X: You started in May.

Where's the people that want to drill? Why aren't they here?

Speaker 1: It's their sovereign nation. They're not even considering-

Speaker 4: Why aren't they out here to answer these questions?

Speaker X: It'll never be stopped. It'll never be stopped.

Speaker 4: Yeah, we don't want to scar that you can see it on Google and look down like Deadwood. [00:00:30] We don't really want that here at all.

Speaker 2: Understand.

Speaker 3: [inaudible 00:00:42].

Speaker 2: Yeah, go ahead.

Speaker 3: Where is state government's opinion on the project? Are you aware of what's taking place and how maybe the local community feels?

Speaker 6: I'm sorry.

Speaker 5: Can you announce, tell them that the [inaudible 00:00:42] to come over here?

Speaker 2: Yeah. To those of you out in the hallway, [00:01:00] there are some chairs and there is some room in here if you wanted to walk in through here.

Speaker 6: Sorry, I keep bumping you.

Speaker 2: So, the state-

Speaker 7: What is the municipal source of water you're going to take from and to supply 5-10,000 gallons per rig, 39 rigs, for 24 hours a day? How many days in a year? That's a lot of water and where you getting it from?

Speaker X: It sure is and [inaudible 00:01:26].

Speaker 11: I have [00:01:30] an attorney here who wants to speak on behalf of the Oglala Sioux Tribe. I have an attorney here.

Speaker X: Give him the mic.

Good.

Give him the mic.

Give him the mic.

Speak loudly.

You got to tip it up.

Hold it close. Tell him to hold it close.

Speaker 9: I guess we're concerned-

Speaker X: Closer.

Louder.

Louder.

Speaker 9: ... because this is a spiritual area and if you pollute the water tables, it's not going to be spiritual. You can make something that's holy, unholy by polluting the water. You got to keep it [00:02:00] as much as a natural condition as you can.

We have some concerns here, because we have the Black Hills Act of 1877, and in Article A it says that each individual suing in the tribe, each individual suing, it'll be protected in advice of property, person and life. And that's the Black Hills Act and we think that that includes protecting cultural sites and the [00:02:30] people here also. We're all in it together you now and we all depend on that water.

So we do have a paper here we're going to hand out, but I think at some point here, if the government doesn't listen to us anymore, we go through this legal process, the environmental laws, and they do it anyway. So I think at some point we're going to starting suing these energy companies.

Speaker 10: This isn't even energy though. This is just gold for pure profit. It's not going to help anybody and they're not here.

Speaker X: And who's going to get the profit from it?

Speaker 10: Yeah.

Justin Pulier: Hello, [00:03:00] I'm Justin Pulier, fifth member Oglala Sioux Tribe Executive Board. I work hand in hand with the treaty organizations of Oceti Sakowin. We [00:03:30] disputed the Jenny Gulch exploratory mining and now we're going to be disputing this and coming together to help support each other, because once they, as you guys say, they're going to exploratory mine, we all know what that's going to lead to.

They already ruined most of your guys's water up here already and they're just going to ruin more of it, because this is [00:04:00] the fight that we've been having on the reservation. And it's sad, but it's in a good way that it's getting to you guys now. So now it's getting everybody's attention. These guys are going to come. They're going to say they're just exploratory and simply exploratory, the wordings that are read.

Speaker X: [inaudible 00:04:19].

Justin Pulier: We all know that's not going to happen that way. So we're having our meetings with [00:04:30] the other tribe, with the Oceti Sakowin, and the treaty councils. The Oglala Sioux Tribe has legitimate concerns that F3 Gold's proposed Newark Exploration Project may impact the tribe's treaty rights to land, water, fish, wildlife, and other natural cultural and other resources in the Black Hills. The tribe has legitimate concerns that the proposed gold exploration may cause [00:05:00] environmental harms to the land, natural resources and fish and wildlife in the Black Hills, including surface land, subsurface structures, water, threatened and endangered species and other natural resources.

These issues should be addressed through government to government consultations with the Oglala Sioux Tribe. So, consultation is required by federal law, including [00:05:30] but not limited to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, Executive Order 13007 and Executive Order 13175. Consultation must be carried out in accordance with the tribal law, including OST Ordinance number 11-10.

At a minimum, the Black Hills National Forest [00:06:00] should contact targeted site visits or conduct targeted site visits with the proposed exploration site with the cultural and natural resource experts of the Oglala Sioux Tribe and engage with the tribe's cultural and natural resource experts on a meaningful survey of cultural and religious resources at and near the proposed exploration site and consult the Oglala Sioux [00:06:30] Tribe before, during and after the site visit and survey work.

The tribe asks the Black Hills National Forest to deny F3 Gold's request for categorical exclusion. The tribe asks the Black Hills National Forest to prepare a formal environmental impact statement under the National Environment Policy Act, [00:07:00] not an environmental assessment, considering the significant accumulative impact of the project. The tribe asks BHNF to complete the historical and cultural survey required by the NHPA prior to issuance of an EIS. The tribe also asks BHNF to complete all consultation with the tribe [00:07:30] prior to any and further actions on the project. I want this to be, we want this to be submitted on record.

Speaker X: Thank you.

Nick Tillson: [foreign language 00:07:51]. My name is Nick Tillson. I'm a citizen, member of Oglala Sioux Tribe and the President and CEO of NDN Collective [00:08:00] and I just first wanted to say for the folks, our relatives here that are living up here in the Black Hills, that we stand with you on this issue. That we are prepared to mobilize our communities in support of protecting the safety of Black Hills and water.

And then we recognize that these processes have been in place to never really hear the true voices [00:08:30] of the people that most of these processes have been in place, and you've all experienced this over and over, that they're not actually interested in taking what we have and making decisions from it. They're interested in just saying that they talked to us, saying that they care about what we have to say, and then going and letting these corporations do whatever they want to do.

And I also want to recognize [00:09:00] that we're dealing also with an issue here of the 1872 Mining Act and even questioning its legality in the first place, that the Treaty of 1851 and 1868 Treaty was signed in 1868 and the Mining Act came in 1872 and so that was created afterwards. [00:09:30] And then if you fast forward to the 1980 Supreme Court decision, that Supreme Court decision said that the stealing of the Black Hills was in fact illegal. So then how if the stealing of the Black Hills was illegal according to the Supreme Court of the United States, then how is it that the 1872 Mining Act is legal in the first place?

And I bring this up because many of these regulations that require, quote/unquote require these meetings [00:10:00] to happen are based on that act. That act is what gives the corporations the right to state mining claims in the Black Hills and so I think that we have to continue to explore the legality of this process in the first place.

The last thing I'll say is this, and this is a message to the people here, that whenever these laws that have, supposed to be created [00:10:30] for the purpose of hearing our voices, are created for the opposite purpose of representing corporations outside of our state, outside of our country, outside of this, for the purpose of profiteering, then we have to think about what extent that we want to do and what we want to sacrifice to do, to stand up against these corporations, because we can't expect that the United States government is going [00:11:00] to stand up to protect us from them.

And I think that it's a recognition that we can come together as a people here. We can come together, both Indian people and non-Indian people, united for the purpose of protecting the Black Hills and the sacred water.

Speaker 12: I [00:11:30] just wanted to add that the federal courts have held that there's a federal trust responsibility to protect Indian tribes and there's court cases say that [inaudible 00:11:43] here are bound by that trust responsibility. This is our trustee here, these are our trustees but are they protecting us?

Speaker X: No.

No.

Speaker 12: They don't know that they have a duty-

Speaker 1: And there is a... This was part of our Indian reservation at one time, 1868, all of Western South Dakota and before the Black Hills Act, 1877, they allowed miners in here to, Homestake miners created. There was a court, Supreme Court case, the Catalina mining company case that later came down and said that they tried to justify the illegal mining, justify it under the, it'd be the 1872 Mineral Location Act, [00:00:30] the Mining Act they call it. So the mining in the Black Hills was done originally by trespassing miners and then later they try to justify. But here we go again, another gold rush and who's doing it this time? It's bond corporations. They come in here, the state allows these permits. They seem to be co-mining and grant these permits and these guys here instead of protecting us [00:01:00] I guess Park Service or Trustee. They go along with it and-

Speaker 2: They're supposed to protect.

Speaker 1: ... there they do this categorical exclusion. They don't even want to do cultural surveys. They want to circumvent that with this categorical exclusion. And then they did this with the [inaudible 00:01:18] money southern Black Hills. They're trying to get out of doing the surveys. What's the name of that?

Speaker 3: Community Burdock Project.

Speaker 1: Community Burdock Project. We're fighting them on that to say do these cultural surveys. Now these guys come along [00:01:30] and say, "Oh, I go to exclusion. We don't have to do surveys here." Just come on in just come in and start mining, polluting our water. So, add that. Add that.

Speaker 4: One more thing I want to add on to Mr. Tillson or Indian Collective is I'm also the Chairman of the Great Plains Tribal Chairman Association, which we're, I'm the leader of 16 [00:02:00] tribes appointed. I was appointed the Great Plains Tribal Chairman. So with that I'm going to be contacting them to help to reach out to our relatives out here to help you guys in this fight. So we'll stand with you if you stand with us.

Speaker 5: I just want to thank these folks [00:02:30] for their words and appreciate what they have to say. I really do. I hope you understand that we are not avoiding doing cultural surveys and we have contacted our THPO agencies as well as the tribal leaders for all the tribes. And we're moving forward judiciously that way. We're looking for cooperating or government to government cooperation on this project. The decision memo doesn't [00:03:00] avoid that. We will move forward to try to work with the tribes on this project as we move forward. And again-

Speaker 2: Why move forward?

Speaker 5: And I just want everybody here to know. I do hear you. I really do. And I-

Speaker 6: Get the three up here. Let them hear it. I want some answers from them.

Audience:

Speaker 5: So I would like [00:03:30] to just have my mining expert kind of just explain a little bit about what the project is because that's really what people are interested in. What is the project? What will they go through?

Audience:

Speaker 7: [00:04:00] Why are we finding out about it now, two and a half years later?

Speaker 5: So my understand, and again, this is what I know, I just know that we have the final approved plan of operation was submitted to us this last fall.

Speaker 7: How [00:04:30] did you approve-

Speaker 8: Because they put him on the spot.

Speaker 5: Well-

Speaker 8: They didn't tell you, did they? They didn't tell you two years ago.

Speaker 5: So in order to have a meeting like this, we have to have as much information about what the proposed action is. So again, this is just the beginning. Whether we started this meeting last year or we have it at this year, this is the beginning of the analysis process when [00:05:00] we start looking at all of the issues.

Speaker 2: It says beginning in May 2023 so what were you saying?

Speaker 5: So I was just corrected. We don't have an appro, approved. We just have the plan of operations. That's-

Audience:

Speaker 2: Tell us about this plan that starts in 2023.

Speaker 5: Excuse me.

Speaker 2: How is it on the paperwork then that the project [00:05:30] begins May of 2023? If it's so far in the future and you didn't know when, so on and so forth, then how is there already a date established to begin operations?

Speaker 5: That date was established based on the normal process of going through the analysis and when we would get a permit signed this-

Speaker 8: At the beginning you said this project's going through, right?

Speaker 5: According to [00:06:00] current law that we are to follow, this is a project that is ... It's a right that the claimants have to find their minerals through the 1872 bylaw.

Audience:

Speaker 6: That's a good question. Hey, can we all get a dividend on that since this land belongs to all of us? Get some of that. Here's my question. Here's my question. [00:06:30] Let's get up three up here and I want hear what they're going to do for our community when they're destroying our water and killing our animals.

Audience:

Speaker 6: [inaudible 00:06:39] that's going to pay for my $20,000 horse or his $30,000 cow. This is crap. Because the first time you figured out that they aren't following the law is when my animals die. Or worse than that, my mother-in-law decides to croak because she's drinking the water. Get up. Where's that [inaudible 00:06:59] I want to see them.

Speaker 5: [00:07:00] Sir? We're, we sir?

Speaker 6: Well, I should think so here's the problem. Here is the exact problem. You're telling us it's approved and it's going forward. And now you're backtracking and telling us it's not moving forward. No. Bullshit.

Speaker 5: I, I-

Speaker 6: No, no, no. Don't interrupt me here. I want to know where if you say that three was here to answer questions. Where are you? Quit being a weasel. They're from Minnesota. They ain't giving nothing to this community. They're taking everything out and here's the deal. [00:07:30] They're going to say it's municipal water until they hit one of our springs and they got enough water and then they're going to take it out of there and my horses are going to go thirsty. So where's the answers? I'm tired of hearing this. Well, we don't know yet. We don't know yet. Crap you don't know. You've got a proposal sitting on the board. You're telling me it's already going forward. I want answers. I don't want you to stand here telling me you don't know no more. Get somebody who does.

Speaker 9: These are not replaceable things.

Speaker 2: We don't want it.

Speaker 5: So [00:08:00] I am trying to be ... I am trying do my best to honor-

Speaker 6: How come I can be heard but can't be with with a mic? Speak up. Grab a pair buddy talk.

Speaker 5: We have another comment.

Speaker 6: [inaudible 00:08:26] taking my water away.

Reno Red Cloud: Good afternoon. My name is Reno Red Cloud. I'm [00:08:30] the directly sixth generation descendant of Chief Red Cloud. But today I'm going to just bring up this issue with Black Hills National Forest. We have our treaties here, the Black Hills. Our position is this is sacred ground. Everything here should be [00:09:00] considered cultural. It should be an automatic environmental impact statement in the NEPA process. Anything so we could do a cultural survey to see where our ancestors are out there. There's a lot of graves here, a lot of ceremonial traditional cultural properties. But we need the opportunity to survey our own land. And right now what's in jeopardy is the land and the water. One mess up with drilling [00:09:30] or uranium mining or coal mining, our aquifers are done. We're going to have to live with it. So we're taking the position that this is treaty land. This was a treaty signed before the state of South Dakota was created.

And even before the treaties, this was ancestral land to the Lakota. So this goes back to generations and generations. But today we're here. We did meet with the Black [00:10:00] Hills National Forest in a consultation. In that consultation we expressed ourselves from our history or our culture and we wanted, there was a resolution that stated we wanted an environmental impact statement, not a categorical exclusion. This is a slap in our face today. And I think I would really like to see Black Hills National Forest uphold its trust responsibility to the treaties. [00:10:30] Article Six of the treaties is the treaties are the supreme law of the land. We need to enforce that and we need to fix that part of protecting our sacred ground.

[inaudible 00:10:48] I would like to see a response on these NEPA process because you've got congressional acts out there, you got NAGPRA, you got NHPA, national [00:11:00] Historic Prop, Preservation Act. And what are good are those acts when you can't even get past the NEPA process? So I think it just needs to really be reviewed legally, culturally, and with us environmentally because once our water's contaminated that's it.

Speaker 5: Thank you for that. I have another question up front here.

Speaker 7: Same question I asked earlier. What does [00:11:30] the state government feel about this and where do they stand on approving this project knowing that the local community feels this way?

Speaker 5: So I don't think the state has any idea of how the community feels at this very moment.

Audience:

Speaker 5: But any permit, water permits or anything like that would go through the state and they would have to approve those permits.Move forward.

Speaker 7: [inaudible 00:11:56]Shut down. Yeah.

Speaker 1: I'll go right here in the middle. Yes, ma'am.

Speaker 2: I have just a couple of comments. One, is I want to go back to the point that there were no aquifers that would be involved in this, any damage. In Section 32 where there is one lay down pad and 13 drill hats, drill sites on my street? Yeah. I'm an MBI. Here on my street, there are 14 residences and on Pilot [00:00:30] third street over, there's another 10. So that's roughly, I don't know exactly. We're 25 people. 25 residences. All with private wells. All in section 32. There's only a mile on each side of each section. So we're right in there. Right. To think that those 25 homes are not going to have some impact on their water supply, in my mind is out of line. Yeah.

The second thing that I wanted to find out is that when I came here tonight, I [00:01:00] expected F three to be up here showing me how they were going to protect the water. How is the drainage, how is the drilling set up? How is it lined? How is it all prepped and taken care of? So that contamination or the elimination of water, if we hit a cavern and it all goes blood glove, how is that going to be protected? I will see that they're here. They [00:01:30] were here. They are not prepared. And in my mind, that gives me no confidence and confidence in a company.

Speaker 3: I live on Wood Guard Road, but where Lean lives our neighbor, he took his four-wheeler out his back gate to get some bug trees out of the way. Fire danger. What A permit [00:02:00] and a little stretch between his house and the road. They saw the Forest Service saw it. They find $500 for that little stretch that he went with his four-wheeler. But now they're telling me they're going to rip up our whole backyard. That's okay. The Forest Service acts like they own the forest. No, you work for the government with our taxpayer's money. You work for us.

Speaker 4: I wanted to announce something just so folks understand [00:02:30] all of the comments that we say verbally unless we write not on record. Record. Just making sure that every single comment that we say verbally, that we make it on record because they're not documenting any of the things that we're saying in Correct in here. And they're not required to. They're not required to. So we got to make sure that every single comments that we have that we put them in writing too. So just wanted to ...

Speaker 5: Don't forget to [00:03:00] give us the names of the people we need to contact to raise our concerns. What government names? Can you give them to us so that we can type them in our phone and talk to them? Who's policing them and who do we need to talk to? These gentlemen have quite a good idea and I collected their paperwork, but a number of people are saying we need to know the names of the people that we need [00:03:30] to go to in the states, in the government, in the BLM to raise concerns and to ask questions. We want the names. We figure you ought to be able to give them to us. Who are they?

Speaker 6: You have our paperwork.

Speaker 5: We're ready. Seriously, we want to know,

Speaker 1: I don't have the names right on you right now, but we can certainly put something on our webpage where this whole project is at that talks about who is responsible for [00:04:00] permitting [inaudible 00:04:01]

Speaker 5: And we'll have number and names?

Speaker 7: Send it in the mail like you did these. Send them in the mail. I want, we shouldn't have to go to the website. [inaudible 00:04:08].

Speaker 8: Okay. I've been very patient. I just have a couple of comments. Who's going to work until 7:00? At 7:05 I'm going to tell you what you need to do to make a difference and he's going to explain to you how you can do a few ... what? [00:04:30] What?

Speaker 9: It's not working.

Speaker 10: No no.

Speaker 8: Okay, I turned it on. All right. At 7:05 I'm going to explain to you what you can do to make a difference in addition to all the tribal members that are telling us how to do it. And I'm not going to take the time to do it in this meeting, but after he gets done, I'll explain to you what you need to do and in the meantime, he's going to tell you how you can do a Freedom of Information request through the internet and get all the information [00:05:00] that they haven't shared with you that's available out there. And if every one of you does a Freedom of Information request, you're going to find out a lot of things that you already think you know and you're going to learn one hell of a lot more.

And the last thing, this is not a grassroots deal, this is a Ground Hornet deal. I appreciate You.

They're not endangered, but you're going to find out you got your hands full.

Speaker 11: [00:05:30] I want to tell you a little something about the Black Hills National Forest and the Freedom of Information Act. Our organization has filed a number of requests and we have had a couple answered in a timely fashion, but in order to get others answered, we've had to go to court after months of stalling. So I would suggest that you check [00:06:00] with us and we have some information. Most of you got a yellow card and we are happy to share what we've got. But you also need to do other things in addition to Freedom of Information Act requests.

Speaker 12: Black Alliance has a website that we have public hearings and we have them out there. We have them separated out to federal, state, county, and municipalities, and the federal, we [00:06:30] have all the information that these guys have put out that we found on their website so far. So if you go to BlackHillsCleanWateralliance.org, you can ...

Speaker 13: Black Hills what? Water?

Crowd: Clean Water Alliance!

Speaker 12: It's on the back of the yellow card.

Speaker 13: Thank you. Thank you.

Speaker 12: Pass out those cards, please. Those yellow cards, can you send them around?

Speaker 14: [inaudible 00:06:50] Has he said anything because we've already been told it's going through no matter what. So why [inaudible 00:06:57]

Speaker 1: So the studies [00:07:00] and the environmental assessments are done to disclose the effects. And so let me kind of explain a little bit about, so a decision memo, like I said, again that was my first step. I mean, I've got a raft of information here and I'm going to get a whole nother boat load of information. I'm sure when the comments are brought in. So we will take a look at those. And if I have to go to an EA or [00:07:30] an environmental assessment, that's what I'll have to do. And so with an environmental assessment, they have a decision notice and all of the effects, the resource effects that are negative have to be mitigated. So what's that?

Speaker 14: Who is responsible? [inaudible 00:07:50]1

Speaker 15: Public controversy.

Speaker 1: So that would be in the decision how they mitigate those [00:08:00] negative effects.

Crowd: [inaudible 00:08:07]

Speaker 1: So as far as the above ground, it would be the forest service and the mineral side would be the BLM.

Speaker 3: The water side

Speaker 1: Water. So I also wanted just to add that an environmental impact statement comes with a record of decision, the record of decision basically outlines what the effects are and they don't necessarily, [00:08:30] with an EIS, we assume that there's going to be negative effects that are just going to happen and we disclose what those negative effects are. In an EIS you don't necessarily have to avoid them. They can't be avoided. So there's the three tiers of analysis. One is ...

Speaker 16: There ever a tier where you find something really just terrible, this bad thing going to happen? Oh well, you have to do it anyway?

Speaker 1: No, but the [00:09:00] 1872 mining law, like I said, gives the companies, or those individuals who have claims for the mineral resources below ground. It gives them their right to access their minerals.

Speaker 17: How do you mitigate the people's wants here? You say you're going to mitigate, but you're going to mitigate everything and still go forward. What about these people that don't want it? You're [00:09:30] not saying that if they don't want it, we're not going to do it. You're saying you're going to do it regardless.

Speaker 1: Correct. I have to research that some more. I'm going to work with my planners. The local interest is something we take into account. However, like I said at this moment, my understanding is the law requires me to approve [00:10:00] a claim. The claim of minerals.

Speaker 18: Sir, excuse me. A comment here. Can I get the mic, please?

Speaker 1: We have a question right back here.

Speaker 18: So my question is pretty simply, you're talking about everything above the room said all you're caring about is the tree that's out there, right? Unlike us, right? We care about the BLM side of this, which is the mineral rights and all the other crap that they're going to do to our underground water and everything else.

Speaker 19: But they're taking the tree down too.

Speaker 18: So where are they [00:10:30] at? Why are they not here? Exactly. To talk about that. I don't care about this tree. I'm not worried about a couple of trees being taken down for a pad. I'm concerned about what's going on in the ground.

Speaker 6: Where are they?

Speaker 1: They weren't invited for tonight. That's something I'm obviously take a look at moving forward. There was a question over here

Speaker 20: I want to make it very clear that even as we're talking, [00:11:00] thank you. I want to make it very clear that the tribes and our people have clearly stated they want an environmental impact statement, not just an environmental assessment. So you need to factor that in to your thinking, your rhetoric and the decisions that you're making going forward or you're otherwise just giving lip service to working with the tribes, with honoring the trees and upholding the actual federal responsibility that's part of your job. So we are to ask now demanding [00:11:30] a full environmental impact statement.

Crowd: Right. Yeah, Yeah.

Speaker 21: So, currently French Creek Road, Upper French Creek Road is closed for elk habitat by the National Forest Service. Correct?

Speaker 1: Correct.

Speaker 21: I can't go up there. But you are going to avoid drilling in that same area.

Female Speaker ...: To five years. Do you see a [crosstalk 00:00:03] conflict of interest?

Multiple Audien...: 24 hours a day!

Yeah [inaudible 00:00:06].

Female Speaker ...: Secondly, the plan of operations itself says that there will be no activity within 500 feet of a historical or archeological site. Are you familiar with that?

Rob? Officer (S...: Yes.

Female Speaker ...: Okay. So without a study with your categorical exclusion, none of that has been done. Is that correct?

Rob? Officer (S...: [00:00:30] There has been a great deal of that done already, yes.

Multiple Audien...: [crosstalk 00:00:34]

Female Speaker ...: And none of those glory holes that are there are a concern to historical sites?

Multiple Audien...: [crosstalk 00:00:41] Who wrote the ASR?

Rob? Officer (S...: Isn't completely done yet, but it...

Multiple Audien...: [inaudible 00:00:43].

Female Speaker ...: Do you consider yourselves the prime mining activity from the original mining, would exempt most of this area.

Rob? Officer (S...: So I just want...

Female Speaker ...: And the elk habitat.

Rob? Officer (S...: So I just want to point out, I feel like I'm [00:01:00] being put between a rock and a hard place here. On one hand.

Multiple Audien...: You are. [inaudible 00:01:03]

It's your job.

Rob? Officer (S...: On one hand I'm being told that I didn't get people involved early enough.

Multiple Audien...: That's right.

You didn't.

Rob? Officer (S...: And on the other hand, I'm being told that I don't have the information...

Multiple Audien...: We know.

Rob? Officer (S...: That is needed. So this is the very beginning of the process.

Multiple Audien...: Then why is it approved [inaudible 00:01:21].

They're going to be drilling.

Rob? Officer (S...: So we still...I'm facing the moving forward and that on the law, what I have, [00:01:30] what the law tells me I have to do.

Multiple Audien...: So can you answer that?

The state's not involved.

[inaudible 00:01:35]

Female Speaker ...: Are there prior mining sites in the state's historical.

Rob? Officer (S...: Yes. Yes.

Female Speaker ...: Thank you.

Female Speaker ...: On that constructive note. Okay. Those are historical sites. I'd like to say as communities, what can we do to remain constructive? We're having this meeting where we get to let off a bunch of steam, but look how many [00:02:00] people here we can get together and do keep doing something. So do we need to tie this up in court? If we're in court, does that stop this until that's resolved? You sir, know the regulations, you know everything to achieve what as, as communities, can we actually do and provide to change this?

Multiple Audien...: [inaudible 00:02:24].

Female Speaker ...: I mean, I know there's this act, but there's all, I mean the system, is the system broken? How do we work within [00:02:30] the system to just suing people? Is that the solution here? Because I don't see, I'm hoping that as we leave, we don't leave our passion at the door for this.

Multiple Audien...: Do we petition?

Got less than 30 days.

Female Speaker ...: This is the teapot and we're letting off steam. What do we actually do? I mean, Goza Lala tribe, they were ready. They handed out...

Rob? Officer (S...: Right.

Female Speaker ...: They know they got a script for you, right?

Rob? Officer (S...: Yeah.

Female Speaker ...: So what do we do? What can we do? Do we support them? You know the paperwork, [00:03:00] you're part of this community. I can't imagine you live in the Black Hills cause you hate trees. You're in the heart of it.

Rob? Officer (S...: Right.

Female Speaker ...: So what do we do?

Rob? Officer (S...: I'm part of a fifth generation South Dakotan myself.

Multiple Audien...: [inaudible 00:03:10] What?

Rob? Officer (S...: What he said came out garbled.

Multiple Audien...: [inaudible 00:03:20].

Rob? Officer (S...: So, what I will say, the question is what can we do moving forward to...

Multiple Audien...: Right.

To [00:03:30] stop this.

Historical site.

Rob? Officer (S...: Stop this, right?

Unknown Speaker: What are the advantages? How are there advantages to this? Why are we here? Are these going to...

Rob? Officer (S...: Again, I tried to get this meeting as soon as I can. Soon as I could. As this process fully began rolling and we had the information that we have now. So what I'm asking everybody to do is to provide comment.

Multiple Audien...: [inaudible 00:03:58] for you.

Rob? Officer (S...: Very good, well thought [00:04:00] out, constructive comment. I'll just say right now I don't want this to happen. While we'll take those comments, that's fine. That really doesn't provide any information or solution that we can use. So water tables, wildlife...

Multiple Audien...: How much time do we have?

[inaudible 00:04:19].

Female Speaker ...: A lot of people have address the water pollution issue. But, if you're in close proximity, is there not going to be a no-noise pollution issue either?

Rob? Officer (S...: Correct. There's another issue you can bring up.

Multiple Audien...: Absolutely.

Female Speaker ...: [00:04:30] So what's threshold we have to hit? How much of how many?

Rob? Officer (S...: There isn't a number, it's not a...

Female Speaker ...: Well right, but your saying...

Rob? Officer (S...: It's a informational.

Female Speaker ...: So we have one historical site, that's enough. Or do we need eight historical sites and five water pollution issues?

Rob? Officer (S...: As far as, no, if it's an issue, this is a historical site that's important and you need to look at this. That's why...

Female Speaker ...: So then later, they'll look at it and then they'll say, "Oh, mitigate it." So they're going to put some gravel back in [00:05:00] and say it's mitigated? Or is that, I mean, I know how some of these work.

Rob? Officer (S...: Right.

Female Speaker ...: I'm a biologist, you can't just put anything back.

Rob? Officer (S...: I'm trying...

Female Speaker ...: It doesn't make the same ecosystem.

Rob? Officer (S...: I'm trying to be helpful here.

Female Speaker ...: Yeah, no constructive criticism.

Rob? Officer (S...: That is the first step, right?

Female Speaker ...: Okay.

Rob? Officer (S...: Providing that information. The next steps, and you talked about litigation or whatever. If it goes in EA or an EIS, there is a process where we'll have a draft of [00:05:30] a decision or draft of an EA or EIS or whatever, and people can make comments on that. That's another step in the process. And then when there's a draft decision in an EA or EISs, then you have the ability to object. And I'll just, it brought up, what do we do next? Does the litigation go to law? The problem with litigation is until there's some sort of a proposed decision out there, there really isn't [00:06:00] anything to litigate.

Multiple Audien...: Okay.

Rob? Officer (S...: Right? So I have to move forward with the process as best I can. Come up with some sort of a draft decision. Draft EA.

Multiple Audien...: Yeah.

[Inaudible 00:06:17].

Happened before [inaudible 00:06:17].

Rob? Officer (S...: EIS, whatever then...

Female Speaker ...: And if we object, then what?

Multiple Audien...: There's people with questions.

Female Speaker ...: Does that get recorded that we object?

Rob? Officer (S...: No, then you, there'll be a meeting where you talk to my boss about your objections.

Female Speaker ...: What's his name?

Multiple Audien...: What about [inaudible 00:06:29].

Rob? Officer (S...: Jeff Tomac.

Multiple Audien...: What about having the Senator or Congressman and all them here?

Rob? Officer (S...: Jeff Tomac.

Multiple Audien...: We need the state government here.

Yes we do.

We need Kristi Noem here, we need to be able to talk to them.

Rob? Officer (S...: Right. Okay.

Male Speaker 1 ...: [00:06:30] Rob, [inaudible 00:06:37] So why isn't this being recorded? But you go back to the office, this is all forgotten because it's not recorded. This doesn't mean much to you guys.

Rob? Officer (S...: [00:07:00] And that's why I've been saying if you have all of these things that you've said, we are asking that you provide them to us in writing or on the website.

Male Speaker 1 ...: Why can't this be recorded, and you use that for information? That's why we're here.

Person Recordin...: We are recording it by the way.

Male Speaker 1 ...: To give you information.

Rob? Officer (S...: Yeah.

Male Speaker 2: Would you remind everybody that the timeline started February 8th and you've given 30 days for comments?

Rob? Officer (S...: Correct.

Male Speaker 2: That's a very short window of time.

Multiple Audien...: Yeah that is too short.

[00:07:30] That's on purpose.

Rob? Officer (S...: And I have the ability to extend that comment period.

Multiple Audien...: You do?

Do it.

Rob? Officer (S...: Bill.

Bill: When I first noticed all these stations around my property there were dozens of them, and I went down to the county office and I tried to find out what they were. And honestly there's tons if not thousands from F3 Gold all around Black Hills. This is the very tip, my questions to you is, how many other stealthy activities are going on behind the scenes that we don't get to know [00:08:00] about?

Multiple Audien...: Yes.

Bill: When will we get to address those?

Rob? Officer (S...: Yeah, so..

Bill: One more question. I'm sorry, that Roger question I was asked to ask. Is a petition an appropriate way to go forward to stand up against this?

Rob? Officer (S...: Petition, petition, certainly a group letter signed by a bunch of folks sent in as part of our scoping process, it can't hurt. I mean that's that. [00:08:30] Yeah, whatever. Again, I don't have the ability...

Bill: And truthfully I'm, and no disrespect related to the question. My interest is in the hundreds if not thousands, and please go down and take a look at it. Don't take my word for it. What's going on behind the scenes with all those claims that are down there? Are we going to do this a few more times? A thousand more times?

Rob? Officer (S...: Yeah. Correct. So I'm glad you brought that up. The whole claims process, that's those stakes that you see out there [00:09:00] with the little bottles and the information in it. Those are claims that are stake again, that go to the BLM or are registered in the county courthouse, I believe.

Speaker Support...: Yes. Register of deeds.

Rob? Officer (S...: Register of deeds. And we don't hear or see anything about them. However, we all hear in the forest service, I hear multiple times, what are all these stakes in our yard, behind our house or out in the forest? Well they're claims they're being claimed. They go to the BLM, they go to the county [00:09:30] register office and we don't hear anything. There's nothing that comes to us until there's a plan of operation proposed.

Bill: And how many of them are ongoing? That's the question. That's that's the thing I want to zero in on.

Rob? Officer (S...: I only know, I only know right now of this one.

Multiple Audien...: What?

Male Speaker 3: Bull shit! You know about the [inaudible 00:09:53] gold and you know about the one that it was four years ago. And you know that they've got over 4,000 claims [00:10:00] filed in the Black Hills. Now, let's be honest with these people.

Rob? Officer (S...: I'm sorry, I was talking about on the Hell Canyon Ranger District. That's the area I am...

Female Speaker ...: So you say that you have power to extend the amount of time for the comments. Can you guarantee that you'll do that for us? And how long will you give us?

Rob? Officer (S...: How much more time does a person, do you need?

Multiple Audien...: In order for them [inaudible 00:10:23].

Sixty days.

We need more than 30 days.

How about 90 days? That's [00:10:30] between six months and 30.

Yeah.

Six months.

[inaudible 00:10:33].

We're already halfway through February.

Rob? Officer (S...: I'll have to take a look. I mean...

Female Speaker ...: You said you have power to do that. Why can't you guarantee this large group of people that have concerns to do that?

Rob? Officer (S...: Well, I also have responsibilities to the proponent to make sure this moves along [inaudible 00:10:50] [00:11:00] in a reasonable amount of time.

Multiple Audien...: Booo.

[inaudible 00:11:04].

We know.

[inaudible 00:11:04].

What are we going to get out of this?

Rob? Officer (S...: I could not tell.

Multiple Audien...: Bad water.

She asked a question...

Rob? Officer (S...: Sorry. We've got plenty of people asking questions here.

Let's go.

Male Speaker 4: Okay. We're talking about all these thousands of claims around. As far as I know, in order to keep the claim balance with the BLM, you have to do a hundred dollars with the assessment work every year on [00:11:30] that one client.

Rob? Officer (S...: Correct.

Male Speaker 4: Is that all done with the BLM and have they paid their hundred bucks a claim?

Rob? Officer (S...: I don't know that information. That's something that the BLM keeps track of; what type of work is being done. I do understand that on a yearly basis there has to be some sort of working of every claim that's out there.

Male Speaker 4: I know, but I see all those claims out there. Boy, that's a lot of money [inaudible 00:11:59].

Rob? Officer (S...: That's correct.

Multiple Audien...: And they can get a [00:12:00] waiver, they can get a maintenance waiver on those.

Speaker 1: Yes, sir.

Speaker 2: [inaudible 00:00:09] It's time for you to switch ponies, start working for the people.

Speaker 3: Agreed, yeah. Your on the wrong side.

Speaker 1: Yes, ma'am.

Speaker 4: I have a question. The plan of operation for this particular trial, says it's start date is May, 2023. Is that correct?

Speaker 9: [inaudible 00:00:38].

Speaker 1: That's, that's the [00:00:30] proposed start date. Yeah.

Speaker 5: So we need to sell our house really quick before May, so we can [inaudible 00:00:43] property values. That's another concern that's a big issue.

Speaker 6: I need to sell my paddle because [inaudible 00:00:51]

Speaker 7: [inaudible 00:00:51] Environment

Speaker 8: Downtown business.

Speaker 9: Yeah. What's the economic impact of where we live beyond the [inaudible 00:00:58].

Speaker 10: Stand your sacred ground!

speaker 11: [00:01:00] Where are they going to get the water from to drill? Yes.

speaker 11: helicopter, Minnesota, they got a lot of water.

Speaker 1: [inaudible 00:01:13] Right. They would have to acquire the water, elsewhere.

Speaker 2: [inaudible 00:01:18].

Speaker 3: Gallons of water a day.

Speaker 12: One more thing, we're talking about [00:01:30] water, obviously. That's the hot topic. This water, as I understand it, you correct me, is being pumped down and recycled. And what I read, and it may have changed, is that the requirement for them is to visibly or visually inspect that water to make sure it's okay. When I turn on my taps at my campground, I have to have a chlorinator, put a test every month, and if I fail. I get shut down. I get a nasty poster [inaudible 00:01:54] but I get a nasty poster on my front door to tell people that they have a risk. E-coli. [00:02:00] And I mentioned earlier, the Fox's garden. The hen house, because these guys are looking at their own water. They're making their own decisions. They've got proposed tanks that they're going to keep this water in. What if we have a flood like we did three years ago and that stuff pours over and it's not secured? What if the walls of that tank busts, this is why it's not appropriate to have this categorical example. No matter what it gives you or takes away from you. There has to be more work done there. There's animals back there. I've seen all kinds of animals and enjoy it. We [00:02:30] have tourists coming into town for that reason. They don't want to hear drilling, they don't want to see drills. They don't want dust. And surely [inaudible 00:02:42]

Speaker 14: I don't want dirty water.

Speaker 3: No, and I don't mean to just focus on the tourists. I don't want dirty water either. And I'm held to a very high standard as I should be. So why are they, not wherever they are, why are they not being held to a high standard?

Speaker 1: And again, I [00:03:00] might sound like a broken record. I appreciate that, Bill. That's perfect type of comment to be sent in to our sites.

Speaker 15: [inaudible 00:03:21] Tax dollars we have to pay in this county, why can't we get our voices heard?

Speaker 1: It was, I believe in the scoping letter. We talked about four to 10,000 gallons a day.

Speaker 2: I just like to say if anyone needs help entering their comments, I'm willing to [00:03:30] type them in for you or help you with that.

Speaker 12: Maybe Rob can give us a name to send our comments or concerns too. That will be helpful.

Speaker 16: What's up? And who actually cares.

Speaker 17: For somebody to do something about.

Speaker 1: So it is on our website the comment. It's called Cara comment.

Speaker 17: This has information

Speaker 2: That was found the last time I tried to oppose it when I clicked on opposition.

Speaker 18: It Should be Working now, right out the right-hand side. [inaudible 00:04:06].

Speaker 19: This [00:04:00] should have been handled a long time ago

Speaker 1: Ladies and gentlemen, one thing I'm happy to see here is everybody uniting. This is what we need to do. Waters life, waters life. And in this situation it's going to be critical, not only for us here, [00:04:30] but the future for our next generation.

Speaker 2: And don't sleep on it. It's not going away.

Speaker 1: Yeah.

Speaker 2: It doesn't end when you go through the doors here.

Speaker 20: [foreign language 00:04:48] Tyler Star comes out. [foreign language 00:04:51] I hear all of our concerns and I sit here and listen with a open heart. I know I hear our talk of tourists [00:05:00] and our own families and our land and our livestock, our animals. But my biggest concern is our future generations. Us young ones. What about us? We want clean water. This is going to affect our livestock. And we know we eat this meat too. And our fishing, our medicine. This is really important to us as children. As youth.

Speaker 20: [inaudible 00:05:36].

Speaker 21: [00:05:30] Are you the district ranger?

Speaker 1: I am.

Speaker 21: So, this impact is forest wide. Why isn't the forest supervisor here?

It just doesn't just affect your district.

Speaker 1: Right.

Speaker 21: But you're acting like it does, [00:06:00] to us.

Speaker 1: Well, I'll be honest about this too. My forest supervisor asked me if he should come tonight. And I said, no, I'll take care of this meeting.

Speaker 22: How's it going?

Get combat pay.

Speaker 23: You got a phone Number?

Speaker 1: I've got Bill, I've got a question up here. You've been hogging the floor. So.

Speaker 24: I got told that I was coming here to [00:06:30] go around to different moves and find out information about what was going on. Not just be opposed or for, to learn. And I haven't heard one thing positive. I haven't heard anything except this craziness. What is this? Why are you for it? Who's benefiting from it? There hasn't been any information put out there for.

Speaker 25: Corporation.

Speaker 24: For us that came here to learn about it.

Speaker 1: [00:07:00] So

Speaker 24: Pretty simple ask.

Speaker 1: Yeah. The comment for those of you that didn't hear was that she came here to get information going around to different booths and getting information, specifically why am I for it or against it or whatever. That was our intention tonight. But I also know that when we have a large group like this and there are high emotions on this particular project, that it is worthwhile [00:07:30] to maybe change plans and hear what people have to say, right? I want to hear what you all have to say, like I said before, and I want to be able to document that moving forward. So you said something about you wanted to hear whether I'm for it or all this stuff. I am not for this, I am also not against this. What I'm doing is.

Speaker 24: [inaudible 00:07:57] But that's what I came here for.

Speaker 1: I am following [00:08:00] what my job asks me to do.

Speaker 25: You sound like a politician.

Speaker 26: Just let him talk.

Speaker 1: I have worked for the Forest Service for 30 years. I don't always appreciate things that go on in the forest service. I don't always appreciate a $500 ticket that's been given to someone for driving a few feet off of a road. I have in the past. I have addressed those issues. I've changed things like that. What I'm here to do is I'm [00:08:30] here to do my job the best I can, the best I know. And get information from you all moving forward so I can do that job better. And what I've heard tonight from everybody is they want more information. They want to talk to more people that are responsible in this decision making process. They want this process to be analyzed at a greater detail.

Speaker 27: Stop!

Speaker 1: Sorry, [00:09:00] Well analyzed at a greater detail and stopped, so it doesn't move forward. And I've heard that there is probably an interest. I used the word probably. There is an interest in more public meetings, more information shared going down the road.

Speaker 27: Decision Making.

Speaker 28: Yeah the governor.

Speaker 7: For people who have decision making, the state, BLM. Want them all here.

Speaker 29: When's the next meeting?

Speaker 7: And have three.

Speaker 1: [00:09:30] So we don't have another next meeting planned, but I will commit to having another next meeting.

Vicky: Can it be in a bigger space.

Speaker 30: [inaudible 00:09:50]

Speaker 1: Vicky wants a bigger space next time.

Vicky: Yeah!

Speaker 1: I will also share with you all that [00:10:00] the next time we have a meeting like this. I think what we're having here is kind of what I wanted to avoid and that's a bunch of talking and lots of questions being fired up. There's a lot of people in this room that I have not talked to personally. I have not heard your interests or your concerns or anything. And that's what I was hoping to do tonight. So what I would like to do is propose that we have another meeting. We will do that and maybe [00:10:30] that next meeting will be more clear on what it'll entail.

Speaker 32: Well You have to extend the scoping then.

Speaker 1: Yeah.

Speaker 32: Yeah good.

Speaker 8: You've had meetings at Crazy Horse Memorial before. That's a bigger space. Can you have a meeting up there?

Speaker 1: Are you with Crazy Horse?

Speaker 8: No.

Speaker 1: Oh, I will check with them before we -

Speaker 8: Before the service has had meetings there before.

Speaker 1: Okay.

Speaker 33: Could I ask you to -

Speaker 1: So like I say, we'll have a bigger space. Yes sir.

Speaker 33: Could I ask you to have a show [00:11:00] of hands of the audience, those that are against proceeding on this completely at this point in Time.

Speaker 1: A show of hands of those that are against proceeding with this?

Speaker 2: [inaudible 00:11:06].

Speaker 33: I think this is an answer you were looking for.

Speaker 34: There's a lot of hands [00:11:30] in the hallway too!

Speaker 35: Who's supporting it?

Speaker 36: [inaudible 00:11:35] We keep getting higher and higher taxes every year. We keep getting higher water bills and what are we showing for it, nothing. That's the way I feel about it. I'm retired, I can't afford all this stuff, but yet Minnesota can move in here. What are they paying? What are

Speaker 37: Somebody getting some money from them, just not us.

Speaker 10: [inaudible 00:11:58] Its a question [00:12:00] to be asked

Speaker 1: I would like to say something. You know what triggers this process is major federal action has be major federal action. Once there's major federal action and that triggers NEPA. And so NEPA requires public open meetings. So they don't have to just have one if they're in Shining River in the primary. But in here, we don't have to just have one scope of media.

And so then NEPA requires that you do a [00:00:30] study on the impacts of historic properties and cultural resources. Historic properties don't have to be just Indians. It could be non-union historic properties too, but 50 years or more, it qualifies as a historic property. So then once you start this process, you should be recording this. I don't know how he's going to remember, all scoping meetings. I've been through the [inaudible 00:00:59]. Can you recap everything? [00:01:00] Why are you saying this? You want to hear from people but you don't remember what they're saying.

Anyway, what happens is in the NEPA process then you bring in all these under act, other acts under it. [inaudible 00:01:20] Protection acts. Endangered species acts. Next one. All these are considered in deciding what the impacts on destroyed properties [00:01:30] and cultural resources. We haven't got to that point.

We're now in the scope of the beginning of the scoping phase. Now we're looking at split estates here. They handle the surface. The other end is going to handle the subsurface, but I can almost guarantee you if they do a categorical exclusion, BLM is going to just follow [inaudible 00:01:50]. They're just going to follow these guys. So we got to make sure that we get rid of this categorical exclusions. Just a fast way to get on this and make [00:02:00] sure they do a full environmental impact [inaudible 00:02:05] this situation here.

So we got to make sure that they follow procedure, not shortcut. Because right now what I see is that the energy companies are behind us and they're just pushing us. They want to shortcut the process, starts doing those drill wells and you say you're going to do cultural [00:02:30] resources, you don't do them under categorical exclusion. You don't do cultural resources [inaudible 00:02:39]. I think you need to get rid of categorical exclusion. At some point I think you should join this project. It's not necessary.

Speaker 2: Yes.

Speaker 3: If we did have another meeting, if we do, we have it toward the spring. Considerable amount of our [00:03:00] people that live here are Snowbirds right now. They're now in town right now.

Speaker 4: Correct. Okay.

Speaker 5: Mr. Ranger, sir?

Speaker 4: Yes.

Speaker 6: I had my hands up before you.

Speaker 5: I'm new here so I don't know your full name and title, but I have the same concerns. Will you commit to bringing in a representative from the BLM, from F3, from the state legislature, from local government to the next meeting so that we can have people [00:03:30] here who know they need to be prepared to answer questions intelligently.

Speaker 6: Need federal government.

Speaker 7: We need federal.

Speaker 5: All right.

Speaker 8: He's Federal.

Speaker 5: Last I heard we had a couple senators. Let's see if we can get one.

Will you commit to trying to do that?

Speaker 4: I was going to answer your question with those words.

Speaker 5: Okay.

Speaker 4: I will commit to trying to do that.

Speaker 5: That's good.

Speaker 4: I can't always align everybody's schedules, but yes. We had one back here.

Speaker 9: I just piggyback [00:04:00] on Ridge, when we have another meeting. It must be mandatory that F3 stands up there and faces the music, or they just don't get the opportunity. It's just as simple as that.

Speaker 11: Last time they kicked me out.

Speaker 10: Today is a different day.

Speaker 4: Yes.

Speaker 12: If an impact study were done, [00:04:30] who pays? Does the drilling company required to pay for that then?

Speaker 13: And then do they get to choose who they want to do it?

Speaker 12: I don't know. Do they?

Speaker 4: I'm sorry. Say that again.

Speaker 12: If an impact study is to be done, is it the responsibility of the mining of the drilling company to pay for that?

Speaker 4: Yes.

Speaker 12: It's not like it's coming out of your funding.

Speaker 4: No. [inaudible 00:04:55].

Speaker 12: Do they get to pick who does the EIS? Since they're paying?

Speaker 4: We do.

Speaker 12: So why do you [00:05:00] not want to commit to do that?

Speaker 4: Again, there was an EA, an environmental assessment done for the [inaudible 00:05:17] project.

Speaker 12: That's not...

Speaker 4: I understand. I understand. It's different, but it is very close. And my initial read with the types of NEPA that are [00:05:30] done showed me that a decision memo or a categorical exclusion would be sufficient for here because we had a lot of information. That was already done in [inaudible 00:05:46].

I am hearing that it's not the same from all you. And I am hearing that there is a great deal of concern now with a decision, a categorical exclusion. You have to show [00:06:00] that there are no substantial impacts that will occur. And those substantial impacts include things like public interest. All right.

Speaker 14: I think you already lost that deal.

Speaker 15: Substantial?

Speaker 16: Isn't it funny, Rob?

Speaker 4: Substantial.

Speaker 15: What makes the criteria for substantial?

Speaker 4: Well, I'll just tell you right now that this public meeting [00:06:30] to me seems awful substantial.

Speaker 17: Have the ability to require that or is that done and gone? And what you're saying is you've already done this other thing and we can't have an environmental impact.

Speaker 4: No, I'm saying what we're doing here tonight is feeding my information thing so I can fully describe what I'm going [00:07:00] to do and why I'm going to do it.

Speaker 17: Okay, so you're going to make that public knowledge to us.

Speaker 4: Yes.

Speaker 17: Okay.

Speaker 4: Yes sir. Yes, sir.

Speaker 18: If you don't have this, someone making notes, subscribing this or recording it, and I guess there's one guy, maybe not for us. How in the hell when you get back to your office, can you gather all of this input? You could have a hundred of these and it wouldn't mean anything.

Speaker 19: [00:07:30] That's why we have to submit written comments. [inaudible 00:07:43].

Speaker 20: We have exploratory rights. What happens after they find gold? Now they've found gold. Now I'm from Williston, North Dakota, so they found oil. The whole town of Williston, North Dakota is not my own town anymore. It's 50,000 people taken for-

Speaker 4: So [00:08:00] I'll just add this. I mean, it's hard for everybody back there to hear this, but the question was what happens if they do this exploration and they find gold? I just want to point out that this project, this analysis only covers exploration. If they were to find gold, that's a whole nother process that would have to happen down the road.

Speaker 19: Well, then we have to stop the exploration.

Speaker 4: Yes.

Speaker 21: So basically they can just do it. I have a procedural question for you, sir.

Speaker 4: Yep.

Speaker 21: So [00:08:30] after the EIS, let's say there is one. Let's say they go and they find something. Let's say there's some damage done from the EIS we know what the state was supposed to be in. But what we often see when it comes to remediation is that area, the EIS, just tells us what we're missing and then there's no guarantee of any sort of equivalent [00:09:00] remediation.

Now you can't get the water back. You can't undisturbed something. You can't get the trees back the same way. And that takes a toll because we talk about protecting an animal or trees, but it all works together. And if you take it all apart, it doesn't work together anymore the same way.

And so what is the guarantee that you're going to have something that's functionally equivalent for the ecosystem on the backside after there's damage? [00:09:30] And two, who's going to pay for it when the company goes broke like they did in lead and doesn't finish cleaning it up?

How do we proceed? So that doesn't, what do we do? I mean, how do we get a guaranteed remediation so the ecosystem's functional again? There aren't too many places like here.

Speaker 22: And they made laws against protesting so we're [00:10:00] not able to do that once we leave this room, right? So we'll go to jail because we want it to stop.

Speaker 23: Our way of life.

Speaker 4: I don't know how well this will answer your question, but anybody that does engage in this type of activity would have to submit a bond for that remediation after the fact.

Speaker 21: They have their reclamation act but being held to it. I mean, we know about [inaudible 00:10:33], but [00:10:30] I think that's something we're we're pushing for this EIS, remember the process is still going forward and that is something that's important, but it's really only telling us what we're going to lose. Exactly. What we're going to lose.

Speaker 4: Yeah.

Speaker 21: No, accountability.

Speaker 4: That in and of itself is another, a very good comment.

Speaker 24: Money can't fix what she's talking about.

Speaker 4: [00:11:00] Yeah, I understand.

Speaker 24: Can't un-grind the mountain.

Speaker 9: Just to piggyback on that, do you guys vet the bond or the liability carriers, do you have specific limits, terms? Can you disclose to us who carry that liability coverage? Can we contact them and say, "This is a bad deal because you're going to be paying out sooner or later?"

Speaker 4: I couldn't provide you that right now. I mean, the bond would [00:11:30] have to come when the time came to get a bond.

Speaker 9: So then required to [inaudible 00:11:35]. The damages that will... It appears likely.

Speaker 4: That would have to be something. It would be public information, I'm sure. The bond. [inaudible 00:11:54].

Speaker 25: Somebody over here has a question.

Speaker 26: People are trying to talking over so I'm sorry I'm not-

Speaker 1: Said, what's going to happen when they find gold? You know what happened to my people? We were removed by force, by an army. We were held in concentration camps for five decades. Five. Our children were taken and put in boarding schools. I'm a product of a boarding school, but I'm also a third party beneficiary and now I'm a descendant of the people who signed those treaties and look what happened [00:00:30] to us. They removed us, they forgot about us. So if you want to talk about reparations to be given something for the damage and the destruction and the effect of the land and the minerals and the timber, then you have to go back to where it started. Because when you all first came here, when the army first came here, there wasn't anything wrong with this place. There wasn't anything wrong with this place because we caretaked it.

Speaker 1: We were chosen [00:01:00] to be here to caretake for these lands-

Speaker 2: And let's learn from that lesson. Let's take care of it now.

Speaker 1: We were removed. Our people were killed. We were massacred if we didn't go to where we were supposed to go to at a certain date and time. There's blood all over these lands, my people's blood. Everybody in here that's indigenous, our blood is all over these hills. We have ceremonies to try to maintain the balance and the healthiness of these lands, and we've been going to all the ceremony [00:01:30] places and having our ceremonies that have been happening for centuries and we have to go to a park and we have to get permit and we have to get permission.

Speaker 1: The Creator already chose us to go there to have those ceremonies. We shouldn't be having to ask for our permits. We want this place to remain whole so whoever's here can reap the benefits of clean water, clean air, the deer and the elk, all of this. We're not doing it for us. We're doing it for the land because [00:02:00] we were chosen and we were given that direction and that responsibility and that duty. And we're still here trying to do that. So listen to us and listen to the people who are here and stop gold mining, all mining in the Black Hills because that's the only thing that's going to restore the balance. That's the only thing that's going to bring back healing to the land, to the people, to my ancestors.

Speaker 2: Yay.

Tom Swiftburg A...: Yeah. Thank you for that.

Speaker 4: Progress isn't always progress.

Tom Swiftburg A...: [00:02:30] Hello, my name's Tom Swiftburg Al Lakota from the Pine Ridge Reservation, from a place called Wolf Creek, something you might know. I've lived around the Black Hills, the plains my whole life. Been involved with standing up against extractive industries, gold, uranium since I was a teenager. It's one of my proudest achievements. [00:03:00] My little brother is pursuing his PhD at School of Mines in Colorado to do something against the extractive industries here and all around the country. I guess I just have to say it's great to see everyone here because some of these hearings you go to, it seems like it's five of us against these multi-million dollar Shell corporations of just multinational companies [00:03:30] and it's very hard to stand up to that when they have the money to pay off professors and you're just a rag tag crew struggling with gas money to get there because you cared about the earth, about your spiritual practices, about your ancestors that might be buried over the hill under the trees.

Tom Swiftburg A...: And I just want to say the game plan for these things is very similar. A lot of times, all these promises these companies make [00:04:00] that we can clean this up, that we have new methodologies that are better than what we see in the Superfund sites. It all tends to be lies as one of the most powerful things I saw was a company was testifying up in Deadwood about some of the proposed mining in Spearfish Canyon and just painting such a rainbowy rosy picture of how this will not affect anything. This will be fine, this will be cleaned up. But some people [00:04:30] at a place where they had mined before and gave them these promises and completely wrecked their community, had followed them to this hearing and brought pictures of everything they did.

Tom Swiftburg A...: And I just want to say that we can't believe this stuff because look at the history of any extractive mining. It's all the same. The game plan is the same, come in with so many promises of jobs, of helping communities, of cleaning up, but all it really comes down to his [00:05:00] profit hearings. It's maybe making 10 people rich someplace else outside the community at the expense of tens of thousands, hundreds of thousands of just everyday people. But I just wanted to say very encouraged to see everyone here from the Native American tribes and all those angles and everyone else. It's just good to see people caring about this. And [00:05:30] I even have it tattooed on my arm here from the time at Standing Rock some of us were there for. Matrimony water is life. What are we without our water? We depend on it. Letting anything poison the water is a bit like sawing off the limb that you're standing on over at a chasm. You're only harming yourself.

Tom Swiftburg A...: There's just nothing good about letting terrible things happen to the water. And I just want to say these things are much easier [00:06:00] to defeat when they're a concept, when they're an idea, when there's something they're trying to sneak through rather than when they're a Superfund site. So let's do everything at our disposal. Even if something is a law, laws aren't always just. They can be challenged, they can be changed, they can be resisted. So all means we have at our disposal, let's unite. And I look forward to seeing all of you in this fight to come. [00:06:30] Thank you.

Speaker 5: I did get a note and I wanted to share what that note said. It said, "Would you tell the folks that this is a federal undertaking and writing letters to the governor or state officials is not appropriate." That's what the note says.

Speaker 6: Neither is a categorical [00:07:00] exclusion.

Speaker 2: Inappropriate.

Speaker 5: I just wanted to read that note. It is a federal undertaking, but there are other folks that are involved in that undertaking. So yes ma'am.

Speaker 7: I'd just like to again ask if you would extend the comment period. I didn't feel like you were going from that as much as maybe we need that and I'd just like a more solid commitment that you would look at that because the 30 days [00:07:30] is not enough and so we really need longer. And I know that you have to take in consideration the other side and what's timetable for them, but we really deserve a more longer comment than the time. We really need that because we all have busy lives and it takes some of us time to get our thoughts down and stuff. And we really need a much longer period to comment about this project. And the 30 days is just [00:08:00] not enough.

Speaker 8: I agree. We would also like time to contact some of our neighbors that are Snowbirds. Allow them a chance to comment.

Speaker 5: So for those of you that didn't hear, there's a request for me to commit to a longer comment period. I thought I did that. What I did commit to-

Speaker 7: I wasn't reassured enough.

Speaker 5: What I didn't commit to is a how much longer I can extend that. So I'm going to talk to my team. We will extend it so [00:08:30] there's more time. Right now I'm thinking another 30 days, but-

Speaker 7: It's minimum 90, 60 days.

Speaker 5: So we'll talk about that.

Speaker 7: Okay. The other thing is that some people got letters, some people got emails and you had a little announcement in their chronicle, your advertising needs to be multi-level much more because there's some of us that didn't get that information or it's either fine print and [00:09:00] classified, so-

Speaker 9: Put it on Twitter.

Speaker 7: And some people aren't that savvy with the internet stuff so you need to reach out to everybody in multiple ways for the next meeting, for how long the comment is going to be. You need to do a little bit of better job of that communication.

Speaker 9: How can they get on your mailing list? How can they get on your mailing list?

Speaker 5: So there was a question, how can a person get on our mailing list? [00:09:30] You just need to call our office. You can call our office and say, "I'm interested in the Newark project. I want to be included in all the future mailings. Here's my name, here's my address."

Speaker 10: What's the phone number?

Speaker 8: And I'm sorry, you do that where?

Speaker 1: Here.

Speaker 8: You would do that where?

Speaker 5: You could call the forest service office.

Speaker 8: Call the office?

Speaker 5: Yes.

Speaker 8: What's the number?

Speaker 10: Do you have a number?

Speaker 5: It's 673-9200.

Speaker 11: Keep in mind that [00:10:00] this is just... they might have just got the surface from it. And who issued that? The state. So you might want to reach out to the state.

Speaker 7: That's right.

Speaker 11: And ask them why they're doing this. There's a reason behind this. Why are they bypassing the people? That's the question that needs to be answered.

Speaker 5: [00:10:30] I need to find out. Another comment came up or another whatever, about the BLM's responsibility and moving forward, and that's information that's been shared with me before, but that is another piece of information that I need to research more and talk in a more fluent way about that. So Bill-

Bill: Somebody asked me to ask you this. [00:11:00] What is the amount of bond? Can you once confirm that statutory amount [inaudible 00:11:09]?

Speaker 5: The bond is basically based on the project and the extent of the project and the number of holes. There's a formula. Again, I'm not sure. It's not a set number for an exploration project. It depends on what the exploration project says.

Bill: [00:11:30] Does that include [inaudible 00:11:33]?

Speaker 5: It includes the recommendation of the sites that they work for.

Bill: [inaudible 00:11:44].

Speaker 5: Correct. I don't. Yes ma'am.

Speaker 8: Because it hasn't been mentioned yet. I had a concern about Jewel Cave and the cave system that extends well beyond their above ground boundaries. And does Jewel Cave not get a say in this as well?

Speaker 5: [00:12:00] So I've had conversations with them.

Speaker 1: Of this area is not connected with dual cave

Speaker 2: As far as they know.

[inaudible].

Speaker 4: The connections are unexplored.

Speaker 2: They are all connected.

Dr. Rock: But the surface water is. Remember there was a fire out there, remember?

Speaker 1: Gasper?

Dr. Rock: Yeah. And there was ash all over the cape [inaudible]

Speaker 2: Goes all the way to Yellowstone cape

Dr. Rock: Because the water brought it in. Well that didn't just all happen right over the Cape. There's wind cave involved. You get to talk about this water system.

[inaudible]

Speaker 5: It's aquaphor

Dr. Rock: [00:00:30] Wind cave. I mean when you do, many of us know this, but when you do gold mining, if they find gold, cyanide is there. And if their extraction ponds overflow. A couple of years ago we had the propane tanks floating. That flood. That's what's going to kill stuff. That's what's going to really do the damage.

Speaker 1: And again, Dr. Rock [00:01:00] this is an exploration, this isn't the mine and I just wanted to point that out.

Dr. Rock: And I realize that, but I'm trying to show the bigger picture about how important it is, as this gentleman said, to stop it as an idea.

Speaker 1: I agree. So there's a gentleman back here that I have not heard from

Speaker 6: The company that is behind all this. Are you familiar with the company?

Speaker 1: I am somewhat familiar with company.

Speaker 6: Are they a Canadian company?

Speaker 7: No, Minnesota

Speaker 1: Minnesota

Speaker 2: [00:01:30] Via Canada

Speaker 4: I think they also are going the Canada and [inaudible] three.

Speaker 4: So I want to know what the face is for the company. I don't think we should allow a company from the other country to come here, the sheriff [inaudible]

Speaker 1: So thank you. I just wanted to say one thing. We had this place, we had the school until seven o'clock and we're getting close to seven [00:02:00] o'clock right now and I want to respect the school and make sure that we're leaving by seven o'clock.

Speaker 8: What's the phone number and where do we make our comments?

Speaker 1: So the comments can either be sent in via letter to the forest service that's up on the [inaudible]

Speaker 2: The address. What's the address?

Speaker 9: It is on the yellow card.

Speaker 10: It's on that yellow card.

Speaker 1: Yeah, it's on our forest [00:02:30] website. It's on that yellow card, evidently.

Taylor Gun Hamm...: Thank you. Hello everybody. My name is Taylor Gun Hammer. I'm from Pine Ridge, South Dakota and I work for Dakota Rural Action. Now, I'm an environmentalist, but I want to speak real quickly to everyone who is not an environmentalist. Okay. So these numbers come from visit Rapid City. I didn't make these up. These [00:03:00] are from fiscal year 2021. Now in that year, mining and its related industries brought into South Dakota, 74.5 million dollars. Not a bad sum of money. Tourism and its adjacent industries brought in 4.4 billion. B, B, Bu, billion. Yeah. Okay. Now the workforce in South Dakota, 8.7% of it is in tourism, which in an ag state is crazy high. Mining, [00:03:30] less than 1%. So unless you work for F3 Gold, if you are one of the 99 plus percent of people, you do not benefit from this. There is no incentive economically, environmentally, and this company will [inaudible]. Do not let these sell your future. Thank you.