



Norbeck Society

June 20, 2023

Carl Petrick, Supervisor
Black Hills National Forest
1019 N. 5th Street
Custer, SD 57730

RE: Pactola Reservoir - Rapid Creek Watershed Withdrawal #NP-3479

Dear Sir,

As part of our mission to advocate for sustainable use of public lands, Norbeck Society comments reflect a desire to support a management approach for the Black Hills National Forest (BHNF) that recognizes the imperative of protecting and enhancing the biocomplexity of forest ecosystems that serve and support growing numbers of people. A vision for long-term sustainability of all aspects of the land is paramount.

We Support the Mineral Withdrawal proposed for a portion of the Rapid Creek watershed.

Further, we encourage that the Forest Service immediately undertake an additional and larger withdrawal of the entire Black Hills. If for some reason that is not possible, then as part of the current Forest Plan, the Black Hills National Forest should immediately resume work on the mineral withdrawal that was commenced a few years ago to protect Botanical Areas and Research Natural Areas of the forest.

We advocate for these actions because the value of the *high-quality and irretrievable* natural, cultural, and environmental aspects of the Black Hills that are enjoyed by people from a very wide region is of far greater value than the extracted minerals that would serve few for a relatively short term.

In the global context, we simply cannot afford to trade the livability of our planet for an ephemeral flush of unsustainable living and caring for the land starts here in the Black Hills. The Norbeck Society wishes to ensure that benefits flow perpetually to those who come after us. People in the future will rely on the graces of the Black Hills National Forest just as we do.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input on this important issue.

Sincerely,
The Norbeck Society