

[REDACTED]
September 22, 2024

Shawn Cochran
Forest Supervisor
Black Hills National Forest
1019 N. 5th. St.
Custer, SD 57730

RE: mineral withdrawal

Dear Mr. Cochran:

I have lived in Rapid City for the last 25 years, and retired from the practice of law over two years ago. I enjoy the recreational assets of the Black Hills, including Lake Pactola, and also depend on the Rapid Creek watershed for my drinking water.

I am writing in strong support for the proposed withdrawal of 20,574 acres in the Rapid Creek watershed from mining or mineral exploration for a period of twenty years. If the Forest Service saw fit to withdraw the entire Rapid Creek watershed from potentially destructive mineral development, I would support that even more.

As you know, the Black Hills are a fairly dry climate, and may grow even dryer as the global climate warms. Our domestic and recreational water resources are finite. Rapid Creek does supply Rapid City and Ellsworth Air Force Base, as well as a number of smaller communities, with a supply of fairly pristine water. The threat of mineral exploration, and eventual mining, close to Rapid Creek or Lake Pactola should cause all local residents serious concern.

It would be foolhardy to allow new mining claims in the Rapid Creek watershed when our population is booming and the climate is warming. Protection of our precious water resources is an absolutely vital priority. While it is possible that a domestic water pipeline from the Missouri River will be constructed in a decade, or even further into the future, this is highly speculative. A pipeline would involve the appropriation of billions of dollars of federal funds, and is not an acceptable alternative to the excellent supply of high quality water that we currently enjoy.

Please add this letter to the comments from the public that you have received on this issue. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,


Jeremiah (Jay) Davis

HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH
HRW.org

Mr. Jeremiah Davis



RAPID CITY SD 577

23 SEP 2024 PM 1 T



RECEIVED

SEP 24 2024

BHNF

Shawn Cochran
Forest Supervisor
Black Hills National Forest
1019 N. 5th St.
Custer, SD 57730

5773088214

