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First name: John and Valerie

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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Dear Mr. Manning,

My husband and I attended the public meeting, last Thursday night in Custer, hosted by Hells Canyon District Ranger, Rob Hoelscher, regarding the Newark Exploration Project.

As Project Leader, where were you?

In fact, where was any F3 Gold representative? We were told they actually were present, but left shortly after the meeting started without ever being introduced.

We fully expected we would learn the plans and details of the Newark project at this meeting, hoping to make an informed opinion. Instead, we were shown immediately that our presence there was not really wanted, by the ill-preparedness of the forest service's choice in a meeting place, lack of adequate seating and inefficient PA system. The ranger apologized and told us they were overwhelmed by the number of people that showed up. How did he expect people to react when they learn a project that could potentially destroy life as they know it is in the works for just a few miles west of the town?

Then, after being told in Ranger Hoelscher's opening statement that this project would go through, despite public opinion, we lost all respect for the forest service, F3 Gold and their parent company, Big Rock, and any other local, state or federal official who should have been there in the interest of the people they serve. We were fortunate to have the indigenous people there to point out how the forest service has already broken the rules of the treaty of 1868 and the General Mining Act of 1872. The categorical exclusion amendment in the 1969 NEPA, is not appropriate in this situation, yet the forest service is going ahead with it.

Based on the misconduct of the forest service and lack of transparency and lack of common courtesy demonstrated by F3 Gold, we are most definitely opposed to this project and any other project introduced by either party in the future.

Sincerely,

John and Valerie Ziolkowski

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