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First name: BRUCE

Last name: ELLISON

Organization:

Title:

Comments: I have lived along Rapid Creek downstream from the Pactola Reservoir for over forty years including the raising of four children. Our domestic water supply is a well into the Minnelusa formation which begins to recharge from Rapid Creek a few hundred yards downstream from our house and land. I am also an owner of land along Nichols Creek, a western tributary of the Deerfield Reservoir, upstream from the Pactola Reservoir. There are extensive mining claims and/or exploration occurring to the west and south of the Pactola Reservoir and between the Deerfield and Pactola Reservoirs. See the attached map illustrating the proposed withdrawal in yellow and the upstream/flow tributaries showing the majority of tributaries are outside the limited withdrawal proposed. Also please not existing mineral claims within the Watershed but outside the proposed 20,000 acre withdrawal

The USFS and the BLM have ordered a mineral claims withdrawal for some 20,000 acres mostly upstream and upflow and adjacent to Pactola Reservoir. The Rapid Creek Watershed constitutes some 190,000 acres. A copy of the South Dakota State list of the components of the Watershed is attached hereto as an Exhibit. It is the major surface and subsurface water resource flowing from the central Black Hills east to the Missouri.

While I strongly support the proposed 20,000 acre withdrawal for the next two years to conduct an environmental study to ascertain the impact of a 20 year mineral claims withdrawal, in order to protect the water resources that flow into the 20,000 acres, I would strongly urge an expansion or additional mineral claims withdrawal to include the upstream and upflow areas of the entire Watershed.

I am looking forward to opportunities to provide further input into what will hopefully be an EIS of the entire Rapid Creek Watershed to ensure the study of and likely determination that the upstream/flow areas within the entire Watershed should be included in a 20 year mineral claim withdrawal.

Thank you for your time

Bruce Ellison