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Organization:

Title:

Comments: FIRST AND FOREMOST WE BEG OF YOU, DO NOT ALLOW THIS PROJECT TO PROCEED. ONCE GOLD IS FOUND THIS AREA WILL NEVER EVER BE THE SAME[hellip]..We also ask for NOT GIVING A CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION TO THE NEWARK PROJECT. And before the project is allowed to proceed we would like to request an Environmental Impact Study to be done as this is a big project with many repercussions.We bought our property a little over 3 years ago after looking in 5 states (NM, CO, WY, MT, SD) over 7 years while we lived in an RV. We bought this place because it had flowing water, a pond, good well, peace and quiet and touched forest, while also having medical facility in town. At the meeting held at Custer High School we learned that all of those qualities are now endangered as we live at *redacted* Road, right at the end of Upper French and CrowCreeks, smack in the middle of the 39 drill sites F3 will drill for the Newark Project. I, Dawn Porter, left in tears and fearing all the improvements we made on this property were for naught as this project was going to likely cause damage immediately and ongoing for possibly many, many years, and even likely longer than we would even be able to live here as we are each in our early 70s. Right now, when we step outside our house we experience deep quiet that is such a welcome and soul feeding experience. That will be gone, for a minimum of at least for a full year.Issues we see: 1) This is being presented as some smaller project, but it could involve some 390 drill holes off 39 original core drills in a rather small amount of space circling the forest around us.2) The project as presented will not be able to be complete within the one year time frame, so it will end up being extended, and extended to our detriment and with little chance for those impacted to rebuttal.3) This project has high likelihood of mpacting the water that the city of Custer uses the flows through the middle of town from Upper French and Crow's Creek impacting tourism and all the residential homes along those waterways, as well as further down, all the way to Pine Ridge4) Doing this mining, just for core samples, involves construction of more than 1/3 mile of road and clearing of more than 1 acre of ground, and will grow to far more with each extension and finally a full fledged mining operation and that alone will cause much disturbance to the forest all around our neighborhood on Diamond Road.5) That the 24 hr drilling just for core samples will create continuous noise for a full year when we now experience deep quiet that drew us here.6) That drilling could enter into our water table and dry up our pond and flowing water along Crow Creek. This would also impact most neighbors on the same side of our street.7) That once this water table is accessed, we would be forced to pay for water and access water from a Cistern, which we never wanted and made us turn away from many, many other properties.8) That drilling could create damage to our water by poor removal or just a simple slip up while handling the water they "bring in" and remove and then our well is worthless, maybe forever but at least for the life of our time living on this property.9) We are reliant upon inspectors from the same company that is profiting to oversee all safety issues of this project.10) There will be much MORE dust flowing into our property which ruins our outdoor experience and can cause health issues for anyone with asthmatic leanings or conditions.11) All of this will devalue our property - who is going to pay us for that loss, besides the loss of attributes that are likely to be damaged?12) The tourism that keeps Custer prospering and growing will dry up, so we could be in danger of decreasing population that would also result in less amenities in town - like the medical facility could close, the grocery store close, and so on. This would make living here far less desirable and safe.13) If water is negatively impacted, the ranchers that use USFS land all around us for grazing their cows would lose their watering areas, have less grass from less water and create hardship on animals and ranchers alike, raising the cost of beef, etc.14) There will be roads and pads made which will remove natural brush, landscape, trees in a forest that has been damaged already by fire and beetle kill. The hills will need to change their names to BALD HILLS.15) The drilling, that will literally surround us, is highly likely to impact the views for which we chose this property (besides the noise, dust and endless traffic from mining vehicles - 24 hrs a day)!Then, if core samples show gold or other valuable minerals are available, a large mining enterprise would be set up and this lower/southern area of the black hills would be stripped of its beauty and natural resources - while only benefitting the very few who own F3 and/or whatever company performs the actual full mining.As it seems we are unable to stop this project, we offer the following suggestions to lessen the negative impacts as outlined above:A) Space out the locations for drilling

further apart in the forest and further from property lines - like at least 1000 to 2500 feet between, as F3 drills can go down and out a good distance in 9 directions from each site.B) Limit drilling times to daylight or possibly 6am to 10pm during weekdays and none on weekends to lessen noise disturbances.C) To required F3 to perform dust abatement on Upper French Creek Road and forest areas where their trucks go in and out.D) To require F3 to perform improvements and regular maintenance on Upper French Creek Rd as their big equipment will cause far more damage and issues on the road for locals that use it to live their lives.E) To require F3 to sample waters in Crow and Upper French Creek and some of the residential wells closest to their drilling sites before beginning and on a monthly basis for negative impact, giving test results to county commissioners, and to stop immediately if any changes are found until abatement or drilling changes are made.Thank you for serious consideration of the above from people who will be impacted, rather than those who will benefit,Dawn & Robert Porter*redacted*