

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 2/19/2023 7:00:00 AM

First name: Mary Kate

Last name: Nelson

Organization:

Title:

Comments: Mr. Hoelscher,

I was in attendance at the Custer meeting on the 16th of February.

I agree with my neighbors in the room that this project will NOT move forward.

You work for the Forest Service and as the title says, you are in Service to care for the land.

The people who live in your district have spoken and will continue to speak about how to handle the claim to mine gold.

You spoke about following the law. It sounds like the laws need to be changed if it is just a matter of paying a small sum of money to rape the land of its resources.

Large, foreign corporations whose aim, ultimately is to profit and leave our area. They are looking for Gold! Need I say more?

The earth can never be restored to it's original pristine condition.

Then there is the unanswered questions about a resource more valuable than gold. WATER!

You did not say where they would get the water for drilling these test holes except from a municipal source. If you haven't noticed, we have been in drought conditions for many years.

The questions about how to handle the leach ponds, if a cavern is drilled into, and pollution to the ground water during the process of machinery on the land and the diesel and other chemicals that are used. These are surface concerns.

The answers are vague. Nobody can bring back what is there now.

Then there is the noise pollution, the trucks bringing water in and out. The air pollution.

I have a personal question for you.

Do you believe that allowing this to move forward is in the best interest of those of us who live here including you and your family?

Can you face your neighbors even after this first meeting and look them in the eye and say that you are doing your best to steward the land in what is best for the next seven generations?

You didn't convince me.

This has to be stopped before any drilling begins.

NO MINING IN THE BLACK HILLS.

Mary Kate Nelson

redacted