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First name: Todd
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Organization:
Title:
Comments: March 1, 2023

Wendy Schuyler

Wendy.Schuyler@usda.gov

US Forest Service

Black Hills National Forest

1019 N. 5th Street

Custer, SD 57730

Dear Ms. Schuyler or Black Hills National Forest Representative:

I'm writing as a long-time user of the Black Hills National Forest region west and northwest of Custer, South Dakota out of concern for its preservation in light of imminent prospecting by F3 Gold in that region. Since the 1970s I have returned to this unique and irreplaceable area during my vacation week most summers to commune with nature, bike, hike, enjoy the flora and fauna of the wild spaces, and breath in relative silence. I have hiked and biked many miles of forestry roads around Bull Spring from Peniel Valley to Hell Canyon, Bear Mountain, and Bear Spring and treasure this extraordinary place. I write on behalf of my family and others in our circle for whom this place has meant a great deal and who intend to continue to be stewards of it.

My request is simple. Please do whatever it takes to make certain that the mining activities (including drilling) do not scar this land. Please ensure that prudent steps are taken to monitor the impact of the upcoming mining exploration activities of F3 Gold. I understand F3 Gold currently has been granted a "categorical exclusion" that involves little oversight of their exploration projects. An environmental impact assessment and ongoing monitoring of their activities may be essential to conserve the land and I respectfully ask that this be included. Major permanent landscape-altering mining, such as open pit or strip, should be off limits in the long term so as to preserve this public resource.

Please don't hesitate to contact me if I can help in any way to preserve one of my very favorite places or if you seek clarification.,

Sincerely,

Todd Bartholomay