

8/12/2022

RE: Jenny Gulch Gold Exploration Drilling Project Objection

Attn: Objection Reviewing Officer

Dear Sir or Madam:

I previously submitted comments on this project. Not surprised with your draft conclusion of "no significant impact", I felt a strong need to again object to this whole project.

I can see, especially with completed mitigation by F3, how you might come to the view that this process has no significant impacts even though the bighorn sheep, ospreys, and other wildlife in this region might disagree. I know that the Forest Service has a multi-use directive and that mining has a long history in the Black Hills. The Mining Act of 1872 is quite influential as is probably the revenue that the Forest Service gets from these projects and the high likelihood that gold will be found and a push to extract will occur.

I also realize that if gold is found, a mining company will do all it can to harvest gold from this deposit and the Forest Service will again have to do another EA. The pressure on the Forest Service to approve the mine will be tremendous, even with all the potential risks of using toxic and poisonous chemicals to leach out the gold that could find their way into the watershed and Lake Pactola, a primary high-quality drinking water source for approximately 100,000 people.

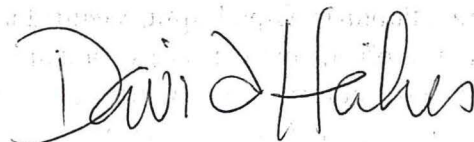
I would cite the Clean Water of 1972 as a clear and controlling piece of legislation that should prevent any mineral mining in the Jenny Gulch watershed. If this and the dangers of gold mining and toxic spills from gold processing is not enough to stop this from ever happening, the city's water plant does not have 24 water quality monitoring nor does it have the ability to remove cyanide, arsenic, mercury etc. so this whole process, including the exploration drilling seems like a waste of time and resources as well as a clear danger to the water supply and the health of citizens in the Rapid City area.

I have college degrees. I understand logic and reason. I can guess at the pressure being put on the Forest Service that this exploration goes forward. What I can't understand is how the scientists and wildlife folks at the Forest Service either can't see the dangers of finding gold in this region, let alone the threat of actually mining. I would not throw toxic chemicals that could kill me into my drinking water. Would you? No, you wouldn't. And I suspect many of the Forest Service folks involved in this process live here. Why would they endanger their drinking water supply and the health of themselves and their families? Why would they risk an entire city, it's people and it's future? Why would they risk it's health and economy? And should they do this for a few jobs and lots of money going into the coffers of the company that extracts the gold?

Seems pretty greedy and shortsighted, don't you think? Please, do the right thing and stop the Jenny Gold Exploration Project from becoming a reality.

Respectfully,

David Heikes

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David Heikes". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large, stylized "D" and "H".



Mr. David A. Heikes  
3621 Jefferson St.  
Rapid City, SD 57702

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Black Hills Nat'l Forest  
Supervisor's Office  
Attn: Objection Reviewing Officer

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