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Comments: I strongly object to the USFS permitting this type of exploratory drilling on such a key watershed area as Hot Creek. The exploratory drilling itself will create an unacceptable level of long term damage to the semi-arid sagebrush environment and will likely disrupt the geothermal springs in the area. If gold is discovered in the samples it will be almost impossible to prevent a full-scale industrial mining operation. Hot Creek and the Long Valley area will be forever altered if our public lands are not protected.