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Comments: These are comments against the proposed clear cutting plan for the spruce forest in the Black Hills.

1) From my experience as a life long resident of the Black Hills area, the spruce trees grow in a moister, cooler part of the Hills. The forest needs these diverse areas of plants and the animals that they support to thrive. Why would you consider encouraging pine and aspen in a habitat that spruce thrive in?

These spruce forests in the cooler, moister parts of our Black Hills are special botanical areas where specific plants and animals thrive. Locals and visitors come for this experience.

2) I understand that machines will be used for this operation. I have seen evidence in person and in photos of the damage left by machine thinning. They can churn up and damage the soil that has been built up for hundreds of years. The roads left behind will be ripe for abuse from the ATV's currently flooding the Black Hills.

Please do not allow this clear cutting of the spruce groves in the Black Hills of South Dakota.