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Comments: I am writing to voice my concern about the Spruce Vegetation Management Project. I understand the need to thin our forests and require prescribed burns to decrease fires and encourage plant diversity but it sounds like the goal of this bill is to support the logging industry at the expense of tourism and the forest itself.

Jerry Krueger, deputy forest supervisor for the Black Hills National Forest indicated that we may see up to 40-acre gaps put into spruce stands. That's the size of 380 basketball courts, folks! Many of the targeted areas are around favorite tourist areas in the Black Hills! Can you imagine visiting your favorite spot to find it razed to the ground? We are told that mechanical removal of material would be preferred, keeping prescribed burns to a minimum. That does not sound like care will be taken to preserve other vegetation that resides in the spruce forest.

I don't think we can assume favorable and predictable environmental results will come from clearcutting or eliminating 1/2 of the spruce forests in the Black Hills during this time of climate change.