

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 8/22/2022 4:15:56 PM

First name: Helen

Last name: Tjader

Organization:

Title:

Comments: Thank you for notifying me regarding the completion of the Final EA and Draft decision. I had previously commented and encouraged the "no action" for protection of the water and the surrounding natural area.

I want to restate my recommendation for the "no action" alternative. There are significant risks to the exploration work in a watershed which is critical to water supply for Rapid City and to the Ellsworth Air Force Base. Clean water is critical for the area economy and our national security. Climate change effects make this water resource more valuable than in the past. It is in our best interest to be as conservative as possible in our management of this resource - more cautious and careful than our experience would suggest.

During the recent Black Hills Motorcycle Rally, I met a first-time rally goer who was so impressed by quality of the water and environment at Lake Pactola that he wanted to immediately investigate buying a lake house for boating. My husband and I explained that Pactola was such an important water resource for the area that there was no significant development around the lake so that the water quality was insured. He was amazed, and impressed, by that effort. This points again to the wisdom of preventing all activities in the watershed of the lake that might significantly degrade its water quality including mining and other potential development. While individually, or as a corporation, one might wish to directly take advantage of the lake and nearby resources, it is in the highest interest of the local communities, the state and the nation, to provide the utmost protection for the lake and the watershed.

I urge you again to adopt the "no action" alternative and halt gold exploration in Jenny Gulch.

Sincerely, Helen Tjader