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First name: chad
Last name: dahlke
Organization:
Title:
Comments:
Hello,
I'm a concerned SD resident. I am worried about the imminent danger of pollution during the Newark exploratory drilling project. It is necessary for the Forest Service to conduct a complete and transparent Environmental Impact Assessment and for F3 Gold to exhibit 100 percent transparency of their past, present and future environmental impacts from mining. Most importantly this assessment and data should be available to the public in a form that is clear and understandable.

I am very skeptical of F3 Gold's intentions. A huge red flag was apparent at the Feb 16, 2023 public meeting of nearly 300 concerned citizens. Rob Hoelscher, Hells Canyon District Ranger said, "neither group had prepared any information to present."
The lack of F3 Gold's effort to address concerns of the public is the only transparent part of the company. F3 Gold's executives proved this by refusing to answer any questions from public and were reported by Hoelscher to have " left the public meeting early."

This disrespectful conduct by F3 Gold does not inspire confidence in their stated commitment to environmental stewardship. And begs the question of how they would react in the face of real environmental pollution from exploratory drilling and subsequent mining operations.

History often is our best teacher and the gold mining industry's history in SD is highlighted by polluted water. Arsenic concentrations that exceeded the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Maximum Concentration Limit of 50 microg/L for drinking water were found in water from Annie Creek, a tributary of Spearfish Creek, and from Whitewood Creek. Gold Run, a tributary of Whitewood Creek, and Annie Creek contained Se concentrations in water that exceeded the EPA Ecotox threshold of 5 microg/L and were classified as a high hazard for Se accumulation from water into the planktonic food chain and for resultant toxicity to fish and aquatic birds. Concentrations of As, Cd, Cu, Hg, Ni, Pb, and Zn in sediment exceeded EPA Ecotox thresholds in one or more of the watersheds suggesting potential adverse ecological effects. The Potential mining area is upstream from a city (Custer) that relies on clean water for tourism (French Creek, which the project would impact, runs right through Custer),

Please protect the sanctity of clean natural water in the black hills. Promptly halt the exploratory drilling process and require a complete environmental impact assessment.

Thank you for your time,
Chad Dahlke