

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 4/21/2023 7:09:18 PM

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Comments: To the U.S. Forest Service:

I wish to encourage the permanent protection of the Black Hills and its water resources from depletion and pollution from extractive industry activities. The Black Hills are unique, sacred to Native Peoples, and by treaty still possessed by Native Peoples. But they are also a unique and sacred place for generations of other peoples in past and future generations.

Decades ago I was deeply involved in the struggle to protect the Hills from gold surface mining. We failed, and the affected areas are essentially destroyed for all times. In spite of promises from public officials at the time, taxpayers have already paid millions of dollars in remediation efforts, and there is no end in sight.

In my years as managing editor of South Dakota Magazine, I had many opportunities to learn more about the Black Hills, our history there, and how precious they are. Thousands of people and many industries rely on uncontaminated water from the Hills. It would be nothing short of foolish to allow further destruction and contamination that is the inevitable result of mining exploration and extraction. Please, let's Save the Hills for future generations to enjoy.

Thank you,
Jerry Wilson