

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 5/17/2023 4:35:17 PM

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Comments: I was born in the southern Black Hills and now live in the northern Black Hills. I am sincerely concerned about Solitario Zinc's proposal for exploratory mining. The Forest Service needs to complete a full environmental impact statement.

* Mining geologists tell us that exploratory mining is safe but there are no guarantees. An aquifer can be punctured.

* The interdependence of carbon, nitrogen, phosphorus and water cycles will be disturbed. As a result, our water, wildlife and environment will pay the full price.

* Solitario workers are already using up to 10,000 gallons of water multiple times a day from a Spearfish resource. That is OUR water used for their greed. *Endangered insects, bats, birds, wildlife and water sources will be disturbed.

* According to the World Gold Council, around 208,874 tons of gold has been mined throughout history. Gold is virtually indestructible, meaning exploring for gold is pure greed on the part of the mining company. Gold is used primarily for jewelry. How many rings does a person need?

* According to SZ's own website dated 5/11/23: "The project area is in a politically safe jurisdiction" and goes on to say that Homestake-Wharf mining has produced approximately 52 million ounces of gold. The Black Hills does NOT need another catastrophe like Wharf. That land will never be reclaimed. The land has already been destroyed purely for greed. It is abhorrent that the Black Hills of SD is considered politically safe for destruction.

And environmental assessment is not enough. A FULL environmental impact statement is warranted.