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Comments: I strongly object to this project. New gold mining in the Black Hills provides virtually no benefit to the community and its citizens but does introduce risk and potential harm. Public lands are intended for a wide variety of uses by citizens, and the area in question is heavy utilized year-round by residents engaging in all manner of activity. Exploratory drilling and subsequent mining operations will certainly interfere with the intended use of these lands.

There is a long and sordid history of mining operations stripping resources from the land and leaving environmental ruin in their wake. Lawrence County alone has two Superfund sites, which are some of the most polluted areas. Both of these are the result of mining operations, and both have been left up to the tax payers to attempt to remediate.

Again, there is virtually no benefit to allowing an out of state company to begin the process of exploiting our open spaces to extract gold. Our society does not require additional gold to be extracted from the ground; the only purpose is to enrich a small number of already wealthy individuals.