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Organization:

Title:

Comments: I write to oppose the Golden Crest Exploration Drilling Project in the Black Hills of South Dakota. This drilling project would hinder the ability of millions to recreate in South Dakota.

This project would have a number of significant impacts on recreational opportunities, water quality, wildlife, and the economy of the surrounding region. In similar mining practices around the country, Backcountry Hunter & Anglers, to which I am a life member, has seen foreign mining companies promise jobs and a boom to the local economy, only to offer those jobs to foreign entities that strip our land of its resources for short-term economic gain and leave the region with nothing but a permanent scar on the landscape.

Drilling would cause critical damage to aquifers that provide water to local residents and potential pollution to Spearfish Creek that runs through Spearfish Canyon. It is important to the Black Hill's elk herds and the turkey populations, both of which have seen recent declines. As a hunter who holds points for deer and antelope in South Dakota, I am concerned that this project will be a determining factor if it is to go through of whether I continue to collect points in order to hunt in my neighboring state. It is likely that the additional development of roads and 24-hour activity at the drill pads will impact the wildlife. Additional disturbance could further harm these populations. Not only could the project have detrimental effects to hunting and fishing opportunities and wildlife populations, but could impact hiking, camping and mountain biking, all of which contribute to the local and regional recreational economy.

Thank you for your support of public lands, waters, and wildlife of South Dakota, and to your commitment to the hunters, anglers and outdoorsmen and women that recreate there. I appreciate you taking these concerns into consideration and hope that you will oppose moving forward with the Golden Crest Exploration project.

Sincerely,

Rochelle Gravance