

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 6/6/2023 1:48:11 PM

First name: Jonathan

Last name: Reth

Organization:

Title:

Comments: I am a 15 year resident of Spearfish and an avid user of the recreational areas. I have been on most of the trails many many times over the years in the area proposed for mining-exploration. I am also the race director for the Black Hills Super 6 which raises funds for Northern Hills CASA. This event is held on the Big Hill trail system in August every year.

I really can't believe these exploratory drill sites are so closed to some of the most heavily used recreation areas in the northern Black Hills. I'm sure this first exploration-phase would be survivable, but then to what end? Ultimately if the ball gets rolling, those areas could become future mining sites with huge impacts to the area. I'm worried that once this step is complete, the goal of mining the area will be that much closer for out-of-state interests. What could that look like? To the best of my ability, I read the 90 page EA and nowhere did it mention what the possible outcome (mining etc) might look like! Could we have a dozen open-pits 200 feet deep? Could there be mountains relocated like those up at Terry Peak ski area leaving bare mounds of dirt? I think we need to step back and consider this only within the context of what could possibly happen if things move forward. And to that end, I think this area is NOT suitable for large-scale mining.

I also agree that having a full EIS would also be beneficial to the local residents and future generations.

Jonathan B Reth DDS