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Organization:

Title:

Comments:

I do not support Golden Crest Exploration Drilling #62590.

I've been visiting the Black Hills regularly since I was a child. I continue to visit with my family several times annually to camp and recreate on these sacred and beautiful lands (specifically the northern Hills in and around Spearfish). Over these years I've witnessed development in the Hills through logging and mining. Mining the lands adjacent to Spearfish Canyon, a National Scenic Byway, is short-sighted and promotes economic utility of the land over its richer and longer-term value for exploration, enjoyment, conservation, and recreation. I have sought and explored (historic) old mines around the canyon rim by bike. I have been struck by the long-term scars left by even less-industrialized efforts of a hundred or so years ago. Industrial utilization of the land, even through exploratory drilling, would destroy the beauty of this area that serves as a refuge for wildlife and humanity alike.

Several user groups in this area include mountain bikers and ATV/UTV'ers. The Ridge Riders Mountain Biking Club out of Spearfish is engaged and invests a tremendous amount of time and effort to keep and maintain several trail systems in the area. Their premier annual event the Dakota Five-O runs through the immediate lands in question. The economic impact to Spearfish would be notable should these trails be impacted or closed. The ATV/UTV/snowmobile community also recreates in this area and takes advantage of many miles of trails that would also risk impact by this effort. Beyond mountain bikers and ATV/UTV users, countless others enjoy hiking, walking, horseback riding, fishing, and more on these lands.

The only benefits to this project seem to be the mining company and not the countless individuals and families that enjoy this area each year.

The US is rich in natural resources - but seriously - Spearfish Canyon? Anyone that ventures into the canyon or up into the many arteries of creeks and valleys along its path would question the value of drilling/mining on the canyon vs. the benefit to the community and greater good of saying no to this project. The noise, traffic, and watershed issues of mining up on the rim or nearby areas? Have you ever hiked the 76 trail to the overlook and enjoyed the vast canyon views? Have you also been struck by the blight that Wharf Mine is on that panorama? We should be preserving these hills and not extracting from them!

The environmental and societal/cultural impacts to mining exploration and the development of mining activities in this area would have a wide impact beyond just the lands themselves. Real people and families would be impacted and we'd have one less sliver of wild to call our own.

At minimum a full environmental impact statement should be developed to understand the impact to all stakeholders.