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Title:

Comments: As a citizen of this beautiful town that is known as Spearfish, SD, I do not support The Golden Crest Exploration Drilling Project for these reasons: the project itself will be detrimental to the Black Hills and its environmental habitat, the citizens of our town, as well as tourists, use Big Hill for the trails, outdoor sports, and to sight see.

Gold mining, in and of itself, is detrimental to the environment because it can lead to deforestation, soil erosion, and the release of toxic chemicals into the soil and the water. There are other ways to obtain gold that are less harmful, so why not take that route? What's wrong with recycling and reusing gold instead of intruding land that holds our community meaning and is valued the way Mother Nature made it.

By letting this project proceed, it is inevitable that air and water pollution would result, as well as health problems for both humans and animals arising in the distant future. Also, by stripping the land, you are stripping the hearts of our community. I, myself, have grown up going to Big Hill during the summer to mountain bike, stroll along the trails, and making memories - and that goes for many other residents of Spearfish as well. While taking apart this destination, you are taking apart the past, present, and upcoming future experiences and memories of the locals and even visitors.

I understand why gold drilling has been an important industry for centuries, but it is now coming to the point where it has been associated with numerous negative effects. Gold drilling leads to deforestation, and we cannot afford to have our beautiful Black Hills at stake for such a fate. Deforestation also contributes to climate change by reducing the amount of carbon dioxide that the Black Hills Forest could absorb. In order to access gold deposits, miners often have to clear large areas of forest, further leading to habitat destruction and loss of biodiversity.

Gold drilling can also cause soil erosion, which can lead to a number of problems. When soil is eroded, it can be carried away by wind and water, which can lead to the loss of fertile topsoil and the degradation of agricultural land. Gold mining often involves the use of cyanide, a highly toxic chemical that can cause serious health problems if it enters a water supply. Other chemicals that are used, such as mercury, can also be harmful to both humans and wildlife.

Gold drilling can also have negative effects on human health. Miners are often exposed to toxic chemicals and dust, which can cause respiratory problems, skin irritation, and other health issues. If Spearfish lives near this gold mine, the residents may also be exposed to the pollution and toxic chemicals.

It is vital to consider the long-term consequences of this practice and either seek out more sustainable ways of obtaining gold or find another location. By reducing our reliance on gold mining and promoting alternative methods, we can help to protect the environment, like the Black Hills, and promote a healthier future for all.