

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 6/7/2023 2:27:31 AM

First name: Daniel

Last name: Christensen

Organization:

Title:

Comments: United States Forest Service Committee,

As a supporter of Backcountry Hunters & Anglers, the voice for our wild public lands, waters and wildlife, I write to oppose the Golden Crest Exploration Drilling Project in the Black Hills of South Dakota. This drilling project would hinder my ability, as well as millions of others, 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 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. 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.

From a personal perspective, I would like to say that we enjoyed camping in the Black Hills when my children were young; it is a place of great beauty and has a special "presence" that should not be subjected to the desecrations caused in the search for the fleeting needs of modern society. Additionally, this area was sacred to the indigenous peoples who lived there before us, and we should not AGAIN violate these lands just because we can.

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,

Daniel G. Christensen

Thank you.