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First name: William

Last name: Stodden

Organization:

Title:

Comments: Dear Forest Service,

I have long been connected to the Spearfish area. I moved to Spearfish in 1994 to attend BHSU, and then returned when I left the USMC in 1999. I got two degrees from BHSU in 2003 and 2005. I may live in a different place now, but I always will consider Spearfish my home.

I have heard about proposed gold drilling on the western rim of Spearfish Canyon, going from Cheyenne Crossing to north of Bridal Veil Falls. And I have to say, though I am not a biologist, or a geologist, I am a person who LOVES that part of the country, and the wildness of the national forest land is a major draw. I have spent hundreds of hours in that canyon, driving, hiking, climbing, observing wild animals, and just being out in nature. That area contains the 11th Hour gulch which is a popular spot for locals to climb. If you permit this company to come in there and prospect for gold, you will absolutely destroy that natural area for me and those who live there for generations.

You all cannot trust companies to do the right thing by the environment. They will wipe out the forest, they will harm the water supply, potentially fouling it not only for wild animals but for the people of Spearfish who depend on that water, and they will destroy nature. The forest service asking for public comment seems like a joke, because by this time, it's probably already a foregone conclusion that you all will just allow this company to come in and waste that land in the pursuit of profit. But this is something that you all HAVE to stand up against.

Anyone who has ever been in that canyon knows what a precious eco system that is. Not only will a gold mine in Spearfish Canyon wreck that for nature lovers and the people of Spearfish, but it will also wipe out one of the greatest draws for tourists to the Northern Hills.

Please vote NO when they ask you for permits to ruin Spearfish Canyon. This cannot be allowed to pass.

Thank you for your consideration, and I hope you all do the right thing.

Sincerely,

William Doc Stodden