

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 6/8/2023 2:50:29 PM

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Organization:

Title:

Comments: The Black Hills has a unique ecosystem, unlike any other place on earth. It is an isolated ancient mountain that has evolved over 60 million years to the harmonious state we see today. It is where the fauna and animals from the western mountains meet the fauna and animals of the prairie, it also was a raft of life, as the glaciers scoured the prairies in the ice age and flooding that accompanied it making even more unique.

At the heart of this ecosystem lies Spearfish Canyon. It's porous lime stones, and ample crystal clear springs have created a true beauty. I can think of no other area as special as where they want to drill, with the intent to mine.

24 hrs operation would significantly harm the public's enjoyment of hiking, camping, mountain biking, and hunting in these areas. The public's recreational use of these areas far exceeds any benefit that would come from doing exploratory wells. The constant noise and vibration would negatively impact all the animals in the area.

The limestone formation they wish to drill through has many unknown cave systems and voids, the probability of permanently altering aquifers is simply too high to allow this. It is not realistic to be able to plug all these wells given these caves and voids.

One thing that further makes the canyon rim where they wish to explore so unique it that as stated in the Mining Act of 1872 that no "locatable minerals" have been discovered in the majority of the areas they wish to explore. Obviously, it was not due to a lack of trying since so many other areas have been mined. Now 151 years since the 1872 Law, to come in and drill wells 1,600 ft deep was not what was envisioned by this law. The bottom line is that it is in the public's best interest to preserve this land and not allow the drilling on this public gem.