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Comments:

I have lived in the Black Hills since 1980. Recently there has been mis information spread about mining/exploration and its potential contribution to polluting local water supply. This is as easily researched topic and clearly fear baiting the public.

The proposed mineral withdrawal of 20,574 acres around Pactola is not necessary. Is there any fact-based evidence that hard rock mineral exploration on US Forest Service land has led to environmental and water quality degradation? There are much larger issues facing water quality in the Rapid Creek watershed including boating and other motorized recreational vehicles that are potentially spilling gasoline and creating exhaust as well as people dumping beverages or other liquid items into the water or using as the reservoir as a bathroom. Furthermore, what are the water quality impacts of housing developments along the creek as well as domestic wells and septic systems that are along the creek. These items are of far more concern that the proposed exploration project located inside the withdrawal boundaries