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First name: Patricia

Last name: Scarborough

Organization:

Title:

Comments: I am writing in support of the mineral claims withdrawal, and I urge the Forest Service to expand the area of the withdrawal to the entire Rapid Creek watershed. Expanding the withdrawal area upstream from Pactola will protect the tributaries that feed the reservoir, and downstream from Pactola will protect aquifers that the creek flows into. Withdrawing from the entire watershed is critical to surface and groundwater quality that Rapid City, Ellsworth Air Force Base, and surrounding communities rely on. I also feel that this withdrawal is one small step in helping to repair a history of neglect and disregard for the Oceti Sakowin, and their violated treaty rights. It is the least we can do to start moving toward healing and restoration of those rights by protecting such a critical cultural and natural resource.

We live within the Rapid Creek watershed and rely on groundwater as our water source. We are directly affected by the quality of the water in the watershed, and hope to be able to rely on it and feel safe drinking and using it for generations to come.

We also recreate in the Rapid Creek watershed; camping and hunting near, fishing, playing, boating in the creek and Pactola reservoir. If the watershed were impaired, it would greatly impact the eco-systems and Tourism, which the Rapid City area relies so heavily on.

Rapid City, EAFB and a large surrounding area, which is rapidly increasing in population, rely on high quality water and we hope that the Forest Service and leaders of the area recognize the importance of protecting this watershed, over aiding out-of-state corporations in their mineral and financial interests. I urge YOU- who is reading this- to use the power that you have to PLEASE continue with the mineral claims withdrawal, and consider expanding the area of withdrawal to the ENTIRE watershed. Please show up for our community, for our future and show us where your priorities are.

Thank you.