

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 6/18/2023 3:40:52 PM

First name: David

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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Dear Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management Folks: I have written in and commented on this process since learning of it last year, opposing any actions on Pactola's watershed. I have written to my federal legislators repeated asking them to be proactive in helping us prevent contamination of Pactola's watershed. I have attended meetings on Jenny Gulch including the most recent. I grew up East River but decided to retire here because the Black Hills is a jewel in this state. As you know, the Sioux regard it as a holy place. I know enough of mining processes and hydrology to foresee the great risk in any gold mining on Pactola's watershed (or any watershed in the Black Hills used as a drinking supply). I appreciate what seems to be some agreement in the FS and BLM to protect this watershed, Lake Pactola, and the drinking water of Rapid and surrounding areas that use this water. The Sioux in this action have repeated the truth that water is life. But in reality, you and I both know that this is a conflict between capitalism in the form of mining companies that mine for their profit--not jobs or a healthy environment or the safety of my drinking water--their lobbyists, and the politicians who benefit versus a healthy environment and a clean water source for the animals and people that live here. The profits are short lived and accrue to a small group and the potential negative effects of contaminations from mining and processing could be extensive, long-term and effect many people. I wouldn't trust a mining company with my drinking water: would you? In fact, not only should the proposed approx. 21,000 acres of the Pactola watershed be withdrawn from mineral actions for 20 years, the entire watershed should be protected. You know this. Other watersheds and water supplies facing similar actions in the Hills should be in a similar moratorium. You also know this. And while I guess not possible under current law or regulations, this removal should be permanent. I would guess you understand this as well. So, do the right thing. Protect us, the people and the environment, in this part of the Hills. Protect our basic right to clean, healthy water. This is how democracy is supposed to work. Government protects the people from harm. Thanks for all the good you do, and again, please--at least--support-- the withdrawal of the proposed Pactola Lake watershed from mineral activities. Sincerely, David Heikes