Data Submitted (UTC 11): 6/19/2023 6:32:03 PM
First name: River
Last name: Junge
Organization:
Title:
Comments: Hello,
I am writing to say that I fully support the proposed mineral withdrawal around Pactola Reservoir and Rapid Creek. I would even ask that the protected area be expanded to include all areas upstream from Pactola on Rapid Creek, and include Deerfield lake and Castle Creek both above Deerfield lake and below it. I feel the entire Rapid Creek watershed both above and below Pactola needs to be protected, and I'm also including Castle Creek as well as that feeds into Rapid Creek. Ideally, even Box Elder Creek and all of the watersheds and aquifers within the Black Hills should be protected from mining and included in the mineral withdrawal.

The Black Hills is such a small area and it's most valuable resource is it's clean water. It is my opinion that the Forest Service should do everything in its power to protect the clean drinking water for the entire Black Hills and EAF Base. Having clean water for everyday use and for drinking is vital to all human and animal life in the area, and any kind of mining or mining exploration threatens that.

I am also in support of, and asking that the Forest service do an Environmental Assessment as well.

Please stand up and protect the water of the Black Hills for its residents, for the millions of tourists who visit the area every year to see its natural beauty and experience its natural resources. Any kind of mining or mining exploration threatens the safety of the water for all those who call the Black Hills home, but it also creates irreversible eyesores where there was once beautiful land and water. Water is our most precious resource. Nothing that all of these mining claims throughout the hills are trying to extract is as important to clean water and beautiful land.

Lastly, it should be mentioned that this is Lakota land still to this day. The Lakota people should absolutely be given the respect of deciding what happens on their land, and whether or not mining should every be allowed here again.

Thank you,
River Junge