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Title:
Comments: Dear National Forest Service,

We are writing this public comment to express out wholehearted support for the proposed Pactola Reservoir mineral withdrawal, which aims to safeguard more than 20,000 acres of pristine land surrounding the reservoir. We firmly believe that it is our responsibility to protect and preserve these valuable natural resources for the benefit of both current and future generations.

First and foremost, We would like to advocate for the implementation of an Environmental Assessment (EA) rather than an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) for the proposed mineral withdrawal. An EA would allow for a comprehensive and objective evaluation of the potential environmental effects of mining activities, ensuring that all relevant factors are considered before making any decisions. By conducting an EA, we can gather the necessary scientific data to make informed choices regarding the protection of our natural environment.

It is crucial to recognize the potential impact of mining activities on aquifers, which are an essential source of clean water for both wildlife and human communities. Aquifers play a vital role in maintaining the delicate balance of our ecosystems, and any harm inflicted upon them could have far-reaching consequences. Therefore, we strongly urge the National Forest Service to thoroughly assess the potential risks associated with mining and consider the potential contamination or depletion of aquifers in the area surrounding Pactola Reservoir.

Moreover, it is essential to acknowledge the cultural and spiritual significance of water. Water is not merely a resource; it is sacred to numerous native communities and holds immense symbolic and cultural value. Our responsibility towards water transcends its utilitarian purpose, and we must ensure its protection and preservation in every possible way. By undertaking an Environmental Assessment, we can fully explore the potential impacts on water quality and availability, thus safeguarding the sanctity of this life-sustaining element.

In conclusion, we wholeheartedly support the Pactola Reservoir mineral withdrawal, which seeks to protect over 20,000 acres of land surrounding the reservoir. We respectfully request the National Forest Service to conduct an Environmental Assessment that comprehensively evaluates the potential impacts of mining activities, with a particular focus on the protection of aquifers and the sacredness of water. By doing so, we can uphold our commitment to environmental stewardship and ensure the sustainable management of our natural resources.

Thank you for considering our comments and for your dedication to preserving the beauty and integrity of our cherished public lands.

Sincerely,

Oaye Luta Okolakiciye