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Organization:

Title:

Comments: I support the Pactola Reservoir 20,574 acre mineral withdrawal from the settlement, sale, location, or entry under the public land laws, location and entry under the United States mining laws, and leasing under the mineral leasing and geothermal leasing laws, subject to valid existing rights, for 20 years, or more.

Our family has enjoyed this area for fifty years and owns residential property in the area. Protecting the environment of Rapid Creek and the surrounding area is a top priority for us, both because of the possible effects on us personally and because of the greater potential impact on recreation and the multiple use of the National Forest.

If the area is not withdrawn, the inflows to Pactola and the outflows to Rapid Creek will be vulnerable to the byproducts and contaminants of the mineral exploration, affecting the cultural and recreational value of the area, as well as the drinking water supply for Rapid City, Ellsworth Air Force Base, and rural communities all the way to the Cheyenne River. In addition, the counties surrounding the watershed get more than HALF their tax revenue from outdoor recreation businesses, broadly speaking and it is in the public interest to NOT reduce their tax revenues through degraded recreational use of the area. In addition, considerably increased traffic and heavy equipment moving on the narrow, winding roads in the area would be detrimental to safety and public use.

Mineral exploration and mining do not have a clean record when it comes to spills. Their argument that "exploration is not mining" is specious because the next step after exploration would obviously be to develop and exploit any suitable resources found.

Please make this withdrawal proposed by the US Forest Service just the first step.