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Comments: I strongly object to the draft decision notice and finding of no significant impact (DN/FONSI) by the USDA Forest Service, regarding the Golden Crest Exploration Project located in the Northern Hills Ranger District of the Black Hills National Forest. I am a resident of the Black Hills, with my home and primary residence in the Aspen Hills neighborhood, just a few miles from some of the test drill sites. Notably, along with every resident in Spearfish, we get our drinking water from an aquifer that will be breached during test drilling operations based on the proposed depths described, with potential contaminants seeping into our water source through other surface feeds in the greater Spearfish Canyon watershed. I am particularly concerned that the Environmental Assessment (EA) performed is not sufficient to evaluate the full impact of this project, and am appalled that the USDA Forest Service did not require a much more comprehensive Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) that I have previously raised prior to this DN/FONSI. The desecration of the land and disruption and abasement of this vital natural resource for all who visit or call the Black Hills their home is an abomination and I am ashamed that our federal tax dollars are misused by the USDA Forest Service in such an egregious act of bad faith and outright corruption.

Although this stage of the project is only "exploratory drilling", the real end game is obviously a large scale commercial mine similar to the Coeur d'Alene Gold Mine. The Solitario Zinc Corporation has no interest in conducting this activity for anything other than the sake of constructing such a mine to get to these precious minerals for their own profits. And although such profits will be capitalized by the Colorado-based Solitario Zinc Corporation and its shareholders, the costs in terms of damage to water quality, ecosystems, property values, quality of life, tourism, roads, recreation trails and countless other aspects will be all be socialized by the local and regional residents of South Dakota. The track record for this type of mining in this and nearby areas (such as the Superfund cleanup sites in Butte Montana's Berkeley Pit, and our very own Gilt Edge Mine superfund) should be a clear wake up call for citizens to stand up and put a stop to this before it has a chance to get started. This proposal has been widely criticized and should never have proceeded this far in the process - clearly the USDA Forest Service is a corrupt and captured agency doing the bidding of the very wealthy at the expense of local residences and communities who call this area their home.