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Organization: Pennington County Board of Commissioners

Title: Board Chair

Comments: While the Pennington County Board of County Commissioners supports responsible mining in the Black Hills to support technology and our national defense, the integrity and longevity of our drinking water sources remains a priority. The County is opposed to the proposed withdrawal of 20,574 acres from the Pactola Reservoir-Rapid Creek Watershed at this time.

With that said, it is our understanding the withdrawal request was issued at the national level, after the local forest service had conducted the NEPA process and found no significant impacts from the proposed exploratory mining proposal. The Pennington County Board of County Commissioners supports local control of our federal lands and would expect any future management decision and / or proposed withdrawals be initiated by the Black Hills National Forest with consultation from state and local officials.

Thank you for accepting and considering our comments on this important issue.

Respectfully submitted,

The Pennington County Board of Commissioners