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Comments: The watershed above Pactola Reservoir is the source of domestic water for Rapid City and the farms below it. Tens of thousands of people depend on the clean water source, and the threat of mineral extraction in the water basin is too risky to allow. Any accident would poison the domestic water for towns, cities, the Air Force base, and farmers. No amount of bond money will be enough to clean the water and restore confidence in officials who say it's potable.

Cleaning up pollution to any water source is difficult, expensive, and time consuming. Consider the mining history of the Black Hills and the number of pollution sites already there. How many years were the creeks coming out of the northern Black Hills polluted and undrinkable? Mining companies' concerns about the environment extends only as far as regulations make them. The people of the Black Hills desire and deserve clean water preservation from those who care about the environment rather than those who will stop at nothing as long as their stockholders are happy.

Please withdraw the mineral rights in the watershed of Pactola. I urge you tondonthatbas quickly as possible. I encourage Congress to move on it as well. Treat the area the same as you would endangered species. Clean water sources are hard to find and should be preserved for perpetuity. Providing a water source for the upcoming generations is our best gift to them.

Thank you.