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Comments: I am opposed to the proposed mineral withdrawal and support the NO ACTION Alternative provided in the Draft EA. Overall, the Draft EA is inadequate, provides no clear scientific basis to define the purpose/need for the proposed Administrative Withdrawal, and also fails to provide any analysis of alternative protections, as described in the Forest Service Manual, Withdrawals.

In addition:

*Comment period should be extended to allow time for the National Forest Advisory Board (NFAB) to include the proposed mineral withdrawal on their agenda at November's meeting and provide input, as they have with all previous mineral withdrawal proposals in the Black Hills.

*Are there any recent mineral exploration draft/final EAs in watersheds? If so, what was the finding for those proposed/approved exploration projects and why are they not referenced in the Draft EA?

*Critical Minerals occur in the proposed withdrawal area, including Antimony, a known strategic/essential mineral for the DoD and to U.S. National Security.

*The proposed withdrawal is in direct conflict with the administration policy on Critical Minerals.

*There are already existing mineral withdrawals overlaying all current recreational sites and water resources, which makes this proposed withdrawal redundant and unnecessary.