Data Submitted (UTC 11): 10/23/2024 2:58:31 AM First name: Blake Last name: Estep Organization:

Title:

Comments: I fully support the withdrawal proposal to remove mining operations in the Pactola Resevoir - Rapid Creek Watershed area, and urge the USFS to expedite the withdrawal proposal to the Secretary of the Department of the Interior. Mining operations cause significant runoff and pollution, and given the environmental and cultural importance of the region, all mining operations should withdraw from the Pactola Resevoir - Rapid Creek Watershed. A polluted watershed would devastate the fragile balance of the local ecosystem, and thereby cause irreperable harm to indigenous and rural communities in the region who rely on clean water to drink and for food. This area is also located in the Black Hills region that is sacred to the Lakota Sioux and other indigenous tribes who have overwhelmingly expressed their disapproval of mining in this region. The USFS must consider the voices of the people who inhabit the land that is affected by mining operations and the impact such operations have on the environment. Thus, the USFS should move forward with the withdrawal proposal and cease all mining operations in the Pactola Resevoir - Rapid Creek Watershed.