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Comments: I support this withdrawal. The primary mission of the Forest Service is ensuring the protection and stewardship of the National Forest System through lands and realty management. Although mining may occasionally be approved, that ought to be the exception, not the rule. This 20-year withdrawal of mining from the Rapid Creek watershed is sound stewardship: it protects the natural resources and environment in areas that would otherwise be subject to mining.

Once mined, the environment is forever changed. Reclamation can never fully restore the ecosystems in an affected area. Preservation of the area is the most effective measure to retain and protect the watershed, prior to any mineral exploration and development.