

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 10/26/2024 3:23:07 PM

First name: Emily

Last name: Barrett

Organization:

Title:

Comments: I am writing to support the US Forest Service in proposing and expediting the withdrawal of mining from the Black Hills region.

While I'm writing from the other side of the nation -- Vermont, the unceded land of the Wabenaki and Abenaki people, and the home of the Green Mountain National Forest and Finger Lakes National Forest -- I respect and revere the connectivity and interrelationships of all things within our one planet, and the preciousness of our watersheds nationwide should be of concern to everyone. Water is life. The Black Hills face high risks if large-scale mining is allowed in the area, especially at the headlands of an essential watershed like Rapid Creek. Human activities, such as mining, pose significant risks to these water resources, and careful management is required to ensure their long-term sustainability. Once an aquifer is contaminated, remediation is challenging, expensive, and often takes decades. Preventing contamination through responsible land-use planning and careful management of water resources is essential.

Water quality is just one dimension of this issue. Thank you for considering the huge spectrum of impacts this moment brings and for expediting this withdrawal proposal to the Secretary of the Department of Interior.

With care,

Emily Barrett