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Organization:

Title:

Comments: I'm a long-time resident in the Black Hills, drawn here by the beauty, the climate and the lack of crowds. Over the years, I taught science classes in the public schools and worked as a seasonal ranger with the Park Service. My wife worked in an environmental lab testing water quality. Our son has become a botanist in the area. Throughout the years we have enjoyed the camping, hiking and exploring the Hills offer.

Much of the attractions have remained the same, but the pressures of an increasing influx of population are becoming obvious. Many of these newcomers are arriving for the same reasons that attracted our family. It is important that these beauties be protected for recreational opportunities.

Also, of major importance is being certain that we have quality water available for the burgeoning population.

Pactola, beyond its' scenic loveliness, is a valuable source of that needed water.

For these reasons, and concern of any environmental degradation, we strongly support the Forest Service's proposal to protect the Pactola area from mineral withdrawals. Our only regret is that the area can't be larger and the protection couldn't be in perpetuity.