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First name: Claire

Last name: Hickman

Organization:

Title:

Comments: Hello, my name is Claire Hickman although I live in Minnesota I have been a frequent visitor to the Black Hills since I was a kid. My dad would take us camping there, and now I've continued the tradition with my family and friends. One of our favorite spots to camp are in the area surrounding the proposed Rochford Mineral Exploratory Drilling Project. I strongly oppose this project and urge the Forest Service to reconsider the effects this project will have not only in the surrounding watershed but to recreational facilities, tourism, sacred sites, wildlife and surrounding communities that rely on the water in the upper Rapid Creek watershed.

I believe the very short term profits that will be made from this project do not justify the potential long term damage to the ecosystem. If this project were to go through the potential 24 hour nearby traffic, noise and light pollution would permanently alter our favorite spot to watch the Perseids meteor shower every August, one of the main reasons we come to the black hills. This has been a family tradition for us since my dad first took us the hills as children. This spot in the black hills is also important for its historical significance and its proximity to creeks to local waterways. I believe this more than justifies that the Forest Service does a thorough Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and a 60 day extension to the public comment period to give the wider community a chance to voice their opposition.

Thank you for your consideration.