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Organization:

Title:

Comments: I am writing in response to the proposed Rochford Mineral Exploratory Drilling Project (#67838) by Pete Lien and Sons, to express deep concern and firm opposition to any mineral exploration or development within this region of the Black Hills.

This land holds profound spiritual, cultural, historical, and ecological significance to Indigenous nations, particularly the Oceti Sakowin (Great Sioux Nation), among others. The Black Hills are not simply a geographic region but a sacred ancestral homeland-lands that were wrongfully taken in violation of the 1868 Fort Laramie Treaty. To this day, these lands remain unceded.

Any continued extraction or industrial activity-particularly without the free, prior, and informed consent of the Indigenous nations to whom this land belongs-constitutes a direct violation of our inherent rights, recognized under both U.S. law and international human rights standards, including the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP).

This project threatens not only the integrity of sacred sites and traditional cultural landscapes, but also the natural systems that sustain them. Drilling, even for exploratory purposes, introduces risks of contamination, environmental degradation, and long-term disruption to the spiritual and ceremonial practices that continue to this day in the Black Hills.

I call on the Forest Service to uphold its trust responsibilities to Tribal Nations and to recognize the sovereignty and rights of Indigenous peoples by denying Project #67838. True stewardship of this land cannot occur without honoring the original stewards and caretakers of these territories.

I urge you to halt this project and engage in genuine government-to-government consultation with all affected Tribal Nations, respecting their voices, treaties, and relationship to this sacred land.