

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 5/8/2025 6:00:00 AM

First name: Jacob

Last name: Adolpho

Organization:

Title:

Comments: OFFICIAL PROTEST AND DEMAND FOR HALT TO THE ROCHFORD MINERAL EXPLORATORY DRILLING PROJECT

To:

U.S. Forest Service

Mystic District Ranger Office

ATTN: Rochford Mineral Exploratory Drilling Project

8220 S. Mt Rushmore Rd.

Rapid City, SD 57702

From:-

Jacob Adolpho

-PII-

Date:05/08/2025

Subject: Formal Protest Against the Rochford Mineral Exploratory Drilling Project - Sacred Site Desecration, Environmental Risk, and Violation of Indigenous Sovereignty

Dear Mystic District Ranger and U.S. Forest Service Decision-Makers,

I write in strong and unequivocal opposition to the proposed Rochford Mineral Exploratory Drilling Project initiated by Pete Lien & Sons, which endangers Pe' Sla (Reynolds Prairie)-a sacred and ceremonial site of immense cultural, spiritual, ecological, and historical importance to the Oceti Sakowin (Lakota/Dakota/Nakota Nations).

Pe' Sla is not merely "land" or "wilderness"-it is the spiritual epicenter of the Lakota world. To propose exploratory mineral drilling in this sacred place is a direct assault on the religious freedoms, spiritual well-being, and cultural survival of Indigenous Peoples. This act represents a clear violation of federal trust responsibility, the American Indian Religious Freedom Act, and foundational human rights doctrines to which the United States is bound.

This project constitutes spiritual desecration. Where Western legal systems quantify environmental impact in tons and acres, Indigenous worldviews understand desecration as a rupture in the balance between human, ecological, and spiritual systems-a wound to the sacred body of Mother Earth. In Lakota cosmology, Pe' Sla is the Center of Everything That Is-disrupting it is like detonating charges under the altar of a cathedral mid-mass.

The exploratory actions proposed will:

Disrupt ceremonial landscapes central to Lakota identity, birth, and death rites;

Contaminate water systems tied to subsistence and ceremonial use through possible seepage into the Rapid Creek watershed;

Set a dangerous precedent for the ongoing commodification of Indigenous sacred sites under the guise of mineral "exploration".

I formally request and demand the following:

Immediate withdrawal of the Pete Lien & Sons RMED proposal.

A 60-day extension of the public comment period to ensure impacted tribal governments, elders, spiritual leaders, and youth may participate in accordance with their protocols.

A full Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) under NEPA, with mandatory tribal consultation in compliance with Executive Order 13175 and Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act.

Failure to meet these demands will further erode trust between federal agencies and Native nations, and escalate legal and social challenges grounded in treaty rights and the First Amendment.

This is not a protest of economic development-it is a defense of sacredness, sovereignty, and survival. Students from the Oceti Sakowin Community Academy have already submitted their hand-written pleas to protect their spiritual heritage. Are you prepared to look into the eyes of these children and tell them that your agency values mineral profits over their cultural existence?

I urge you to reverse course and do the morally, legally, and spiritually correct thing. Withdraw this project. Protect Pe' Sla. Uphold your duty.

With respect, but unwavering conviction,

Jacob Adolpho in solidarity with Oceti Sakowin

Kumu Kaula

Kanaka Oihi