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First name: Darrell

Last name: Fielder

Organization:

Title:

Comments: To whom it may concern,

I am a Lakota elder from the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe. (Eagle Butte, South Dakota) My name is Wanbli Sapa, that translates to Black Eagle. The Black Hills of South Dakota is protected for the Lakota Nation by the Treaty of Fort Laramie (1868) Pé Sla (Black Hills) are sacred to many indigenous nations, mainly the Lakota Sioux. To allow drilling, mining, excavation of these sacred hills not only is it a violation of The Treaty of Fort Laramie but it violates our spiritual religious rights as these hills are the center of our spiritual universe and have been for thousands of years. To mine/excavate/drill is like stabbing the beating heart of Mother Earth. Historically, when gold was found in the Black Hills, the Treaty was then violated and dismissed in order to take billions of dollars of gold out the the heart of our spiritual center. Please stop any and all exploration and drilling, we have suffered indignities far too long and it is time to not only adhere to the Treaty but let our mother earth heal. She is sick and needs our help to help her heal. When she heals, we all are healed. Philáu?yayapi.

1868 Fort Laramie Treaty:

Purpose:

To address the deteriorating relations between white settlers and Native Americans, and to establish the Great Sioux Reservation.

Signatories:

The treaty was signed between the United States and Native American bands known as the Sioux and Arapaho.

Key Provisions:

Established the Great Sioux Reservation, which included the Black Hills, and designated a portion of land as "unceded Indian territory".

Guaranteed the Sioux reservation "forever".

Aimed to settle the Sioux in a reservation for farming and to reduce the pressure of white settlers on their hunting grounds.

Closed the Bozeman Trail, a shortcut for white migrants to reach gold mines in Montana.

Included provisions for education, healthcare, and other services for the Sioux.

The treaty was considered broken by the US government when gold was found in the Black Hills, leading to the Battle of Little Bighorn.