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First name: Mykenzie

Last name: Eliason

Organization:

Title:

Comments: Hello,

The Black Hills area is one of the most underrated national treasures in the United States, in my opinion. I grew up visiting the park and surrounding area and this project, the Rochford Mineral Drilling Project, threatens the watershed and therefore the ecosystems that make up this wonderful area.

Some of the proposed drill pads are way too close to streams and there is a potential for contamination. I would think that with this project having so many potential environmental impacts that an Environmental Impact Statement would have to be required and until there is one, this is not a project I can get behind, no matter the amount of graphite that could be mined.

Not to mention that this project is also very close to sacred Lakota land and the development for drilling would be a serious negative impact to their already dwindling sovereignty and traditions. This sacred territory has been used forever by the Lakota for ceremony and was returned once in 2012 to Indigenous care, why take that away now?

I know that this project was not brought forth by the Forest Service and I understand that due process has to be followed, but if the Rochford Mineral Exploratory Drilling Project is passed without further environmental assessments conducted and without more consideration for the Lakota People, it doesn't seem like you are 'Caring for the Land and Serving the People' like your tagline says you are.