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First name: William

Last name: Thomas, PhD

Organization:

Title:

Comments: Dear SD Forest service,

I am a resident of Minnesota who visits South Dakota. I am writing to comment and to express my opposition to the Rochford Mineral Exploratory Project #67838. The exploratory site would be located in the sacred Black Hills and I am specifically concerned about the infringement of Oglala Sioux Tribe sovereignty as well as possible contamination of local drinking water. The Black Hills are significant for many reasons. Most prominently, they are one of South Dakota's most biodiverse areas and are highly valued and respected by the Lakota people. The proposed site of this project is near Pe'Sla, which is a sacred site where the Lakota people perform ceremonies annually. This project, along with the others that have already been approved, would only further contaminate these sacred lands and strip the Lakota people of their rights to the land. Therefore, I urge you to ensure that the National Environmental Policy Act is followed and a full environmental impact statement is conducted.