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Organization: War Party

Title: Founder

Comments: I'm writing from Oklahoma as a Native person deeply concerned about the proposed graphite exploration project near Pe' Sla (Reynolds Prairie) in the Black Hills.

Even though I've never been there in person, I understand Pe' Sla to be a sacred site of immense importance to the Lakota and Dakota Nations. It holds a central place in their creation stories and ceremonial life, and it's recognized as a Traditional Cultural Property under the National Historic Preservation Act. Disturbing the land around it through drilling is not just a threat to the environment-it's a violation of Indigenous rights, treaty obligations, and the American Indian Religious Freedom Act.

This project puts multiple values at risk:

Cultural survival - No drilling should occur near a site this spiritually and historically important. This is about honoring the sovereignty of Native Nations and protecting what's sacred.

Water security - The headwaters of Rapid Creek are not a place to gamble with. Graphite exploration can release sulfides, leading to acid mine drainage that threatens drinking water and downstream ecosystems.

Wildlife and climate - Reynolds Prairie is one of the last intact meadows in the region, home to elk, pollinators, and other species. Heavy truck traffic and diesel-powered equipment will only further harm this fragile ecosystem and add unnecessary pollution.

I respectfully urge the Forest Service to:

Deny the exploration permit.

If not denied, require a full Environmental Impact Statement with robust tribal consultation throughout.

Extend the comment period by 60 days to give tribal governments and community members more time to respond.

Please keep me informed via email. I also reserve my right to participate in any future administrative review or objection process.