

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 7/13/2026 5:00:16 PM

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Comments: Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on the Roby Forest Management Project.

As someone who lives in the Black Hills and regularly hikes and recreates in this area, I value the scenic beauty, wildlife habitat, and sense of quiet that forests like these provide. Intact forest ecosystems offer important benefits to the public, including recreational opportunities, aesthetic value, watershed protection, and a high quality of life. They also provide essential food, shelter, and connectivity for the plants and animals that depend on them.

I am concerned that continued overharvesting in the Black Hills is degrading these ecosystems and diminishing wildlife habitat. Harvesting larger, mature trees for timber production often leaves dense, overcrowded stands that are more susceptible to disease, insect outbreaks, and severe wildfire. The removal of mature trees can also increase ground-level temperatures, reduce habitat diversity, and negatively affect watershed function rather than improve it.

I urge the Forest Service to prioritize long-term ecosystem health, wildlife conservation, watershed protection, and public enjoyment of these lands. Our public forests should be managed for the benefit of all who depend on them-not solely for short-term economic gain. Please ensure that the needs of wildlife, native plants, recreationists, and future generations are given equal consideration in management decisions.

Thank you for your consideration of these comments.