
File Code: 2810; 1950
Date: August 14, 2017

Greetings from your Black Hills National Forest:

A large portion of the Black Hills area is managed by the Black Hills National Forest. These are public lands and it is important that you help us manage them for the benefit of all Americans and area residents. I ask that you spend a few minutes reading this letter to learn what actions are being proposed for the Mineral Mt. Resources Rochford Exploration Project on the Mystic Ranger District.

Mineral Mt. Resources has submitted a Plan of Operations to conduct exploration on their claims located on National Forest System (NFS) lands. The area of the proposed exploration is located southeast of Rochford, South Dakota (see map).

This project involves constructing 21 drill sites for the purpose of collecting core samples with a track or rubber tired mounted drill rig. In addition to the drill rig, the claimant proposes to use all-terrain vehicles or a 4x4 pickup truck to shuttle materials to the drill sites. A mini excavator or skid steer loader will also be used for conducting reclamation at the drill sites. The total surface disturbance will be approximately 2 acres; which includes a 1-acre staging area (see map) where vehicles, spare parts, core boxes, fuel, etc., will be stored. Main access to the exploration area will be via South Rochford Road and then onto NFSR 238. From this point Forest System Roads that will be used for access include NFSR 238.1C, 238.1A, 238.1E, 181.1A and existing unnamed trails off of 238.1C and between 238.1E and 181.1A. Mineral Mt. Resources would also be required to work with the South Dakota Department of Environment and Natural Resources (SD DENR) Minerals and Mining Program to obtain the necessary exploration permit(s). The Rochford Exploration Project includes a reclamation plan as part of their Plan of Operations. Further mitigating measures would be put in place by the Forest Service and the SD DENR Minerals and Mining Program. Bonding for this proposal would be a joint effort of the SD DENR Minerals and Mining Program and the Forest Service.

Our initial review indicates that this project may be categorically excluded from documentation in an Environmental Assessment (EA) or Environmental Impact Study (EIS). The proposed action falls under Category Number 8 in Section 31.2 of the Forest Service handbook 1909.15 – Environmental Policy and Procedures which includes short term (1 year or less) mineral, energy, or geophysical investigations and their incidental support activities that may require cross-country travel by vehicles and equipment (36 CFR 220.6(e)(8)).

If you have questions or want to provide comment on the activities proposed, please contact us. Those interested in or affected by this proposal are encouraged to simply fill out and mail the enclosed comment form or email: comments-rocky-mountain-black-hills-mystic@fs.fed.us with “Rochford Exploration Project” as the subject. Comments can be written within the text of emails or attached and must be readable in one of the following electronic formats: plain text (.txt), rich



text format (.rtf), portable document format (.pdf), or word document (.doc). Comments are due within 30-days of the date of this letter. Comments submitted, including names and addresses of commenters, are public information.

If you have questions or need additional information, please contact Ruth Esperance or Gary Haag at the Mystic Ranger District office in Rapid City at (605) 343-1567, or write to us at the above address.

Sincerely,

/s/Ruth Esperance

RUTH ESPERANCE
District Ranger

Enclosure: Project Location Map
Project Comment Form