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Jim Ruby, Executive Secretary
Environmental Quality Council

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Environmental Quality Council,

The area in the Black Hills of Sand Creek Valley has much significance to the Northern Arapahoe Tribe with historical value along with Traditional Cultural Properties (TCPs) because this area was of migration to the Northern Arapaho and their bands. This area is of much significance to the tribes and through ACHP (Advisory Council on Historical Preservation <http://www.achp.gov/nrcriteria.html>) criteria eligibility through Section #106 of the Code of Federal Regulations under National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) through the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and Native American Graves Protection Act (NAGPRA) many of these eligible historical archaeological areas along with Traditional Cultural Properties (TCPs) should not be over looked and ignored. Many of these laws are mandated in order to protect and preserve the Native American's culture and heritage. Through following these laws we need to make sure BLM's (Bureau of Land Management) Resource Management Plans (RMP) along with the National Pragmatic Agreement (PA) also reflect the preservation of Traditional Cultural Properties (TCPs) which do include burial sites, Native American artifacts, cairns, stone circles, tipi rings, view sheds, buttes, and so forth. The significance of the Sand Creek Valley:

1.) Encompasses areas which were significant to the Northern Arapaho and Cheyenne. They used these areas to cross over to the other areas of ceremonial usage of Devil's Tower, Bear Butte, Belle Fouche, the well known Buffalo Jump, Blue Creek area, Sand Creek area and Bear Creek and lastly the Deer Creek areas which are of this area and encompassing.

2.) These areas were also known for their formations (view sheds and buttes) in order to harvest medicinal plants for ceremonial usage along for everyday medicinal purposes along with the grasslands for feeding horses.

3.) In many of these areas exists ceremonial areas of significance to the Northern Arapaho and Cheyenne that were of a spiritual connection which began according to seasons. To receive certain ceremonial blessings only happened in certain areas in this valley. To the tribes it was deemed as a place of one of the holy places, yet once these areas are destroyed and desecrated they will be lost forever. The artifacts or caches and so forth that were left behind as offerings during these ceremonies have a chance at being preserved if these Laws, regulations and guidelines would for once be followed. The companies of development need to follow these laws, regulations and guidelines yet time and time again we find they are out of compliance of said Laws regarding Traditional Cultural Properties i.e. Cultural Resources.

Please look into the Sand Creek Valley and other areas with caution and remember the significance these areas that are truly still held sacred to the first people of this land the Native Americans.

Thank You
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