

October 15, 2010

Environmental Quality Council
Herschler Building
122 West 25th Street, Room 1714
Cheyenne, Wyoming 82002

FILED

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Jim Ruby, Executive Secretary
Environmental Quality Council

Dear Sir/Madam,

This letter is in support of protecting the Sand Creek Valley of the Black Hills from the inevitable environmental damage of the proposed open-pit mining project by the Canadian company, Golden Predator.

I am a native of the Black Hills and a graduate of the South Dakota School of Mines & Technology where I earned bachelors and masters degrees in Civil Engineering. Over the past twenty years I have spent considerable time in the Sand Creek watershed. It is my favorite area of the Black Hills for many reasons, including its natural beauty, fishing, bio-diversity, history, water quality, hiking and the fact that it is unlike any other place I have been on the planet. The idea that such a beautiful and unique part of the world could be spoiled by cyanide and chemical spills, fish die-offs and overall environmental degradation for the sake of profits for a private foreign company is highly disturbing. History is replete with mines that have caused tremendous harm to their downstream neighbors – and this case will be no different.

Wyoming has benefited tremendously from its abundance of natural resources. Coal, oil, natural gas and minerals have brought wealth to the state. I understand completely the need to develop natural resources for the benefit of the state's people and companies. However, consideration must also be given to protecting truly rare natural areas – and the Sand Creek Watershed is definitely one of these uncommon regions. In the future, when the natural resources have been mined and the profits have been extracted to foreign companies and shareholders, what will the people of Wyoming have left if their land and water is polluted and spoiled?

As you make this important decision, please consider that there is tremendous wealth in preserving ecologically-rare areas such as the Sand Creek Valley. It is government's duty to balance short-term profits with the long-term preservation of biologically-unique areas. In this situation, the case is clear that the profits will primarily go to a foreign company and that a truly unique area of Wyoming will be lost for generations to come. Please make the wise decision.

Sincerely,



Jeremy Johnson