

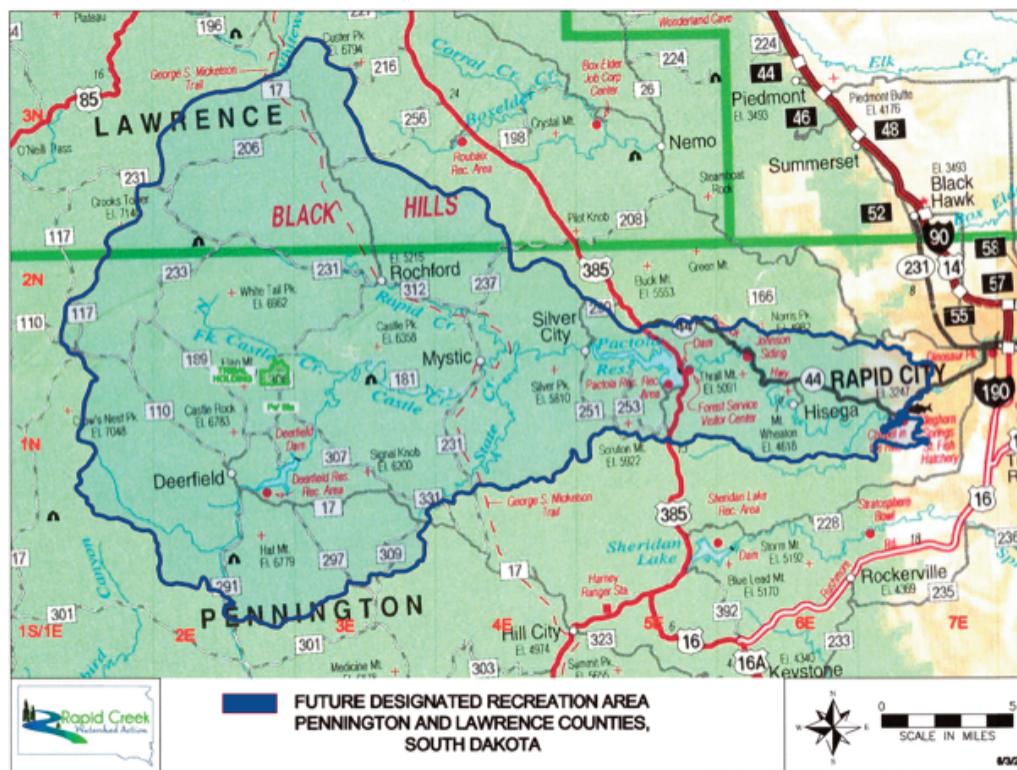


Support Recreation in the Central Black Hills

Rapid Creek Watershed Action was formed to protect the Rapid Creek watershed west of Rapid City for recreation permanently. This area is currently primarily used for recreation, so there would be few changes. Current activities include hunting, fishing, bicycling, motorcycling, bird-watching, boating, swimming, hiking, camping, snowmobiling, equestrian activities, and ATV/UTV riding.

Outdoor recreation brought \$2.27 billion from out-of-state visitors and 48,000 jobs to South Dakota in 2017. Direct spending on hunting alone in the Black Hills is about \$89 million per year.

Rapid Creek Watershed Action is a coalition of groups and businesses that are working to pass a bill in Congress to designate the Rapid Creek watershed upstream from Rapid City in the central Black Hills



as a recreation area. Currently, Sheridan Lake in the Spring Creek watershed is designated by Congress as a recreation area. This provides strong, permanent protection for outdoor recreation in that area. Pactola Lake and the surrounding areas are not protected for recreation permanently by Congress.

This is a problem both because recreation is the base of the local economy and because the Rapid Creek watershed needs to be kept clean because it is the source of Rapid City's water supply.

The designation of the Rapid Creek watershed upstream from Rapid City as a recreation area would include a "mineral claim withdrawal." This means that mining claims would be eliminated in that area – exploration and mining would not be permitted. This would be true wherever the subsurface of the land is federally-controlled. **This would protect recreation and the water supply for Rapid City from potential gold mining. Ellsworth Air Force Base, which gets its water from Rapid City, would also be protected.**



Currently, F3 Gold of Minneapolis has almost 2500 mining claims in the Black Hills, including claims surrounding Pactola Reservoir, which is Rapid City's water supply. Mineral Mountain Resources of Canada has over 7500 acres of claims near Rochford and Pe' Sla and has been drilling for gold. These two companies' mining claims cover about 24% of the entire Rapid Creek watershed west of Rapid City. If these or other companies started mining in the area, it would negatively impact Rapid City's water supply. A map of the mining claims can be found on our website:

rapidcreekwatershed.org
The time to act is now!

This project is not just about recreation. Pe' Sla, an important cultural site for the Lakota people, is located in the Castle Creek area in the central Black Hills. Castle Creek is part of the Rapid Creek watershed. The tribally-controlled land at Pe' Sla would not be directly impacted by the recreation area designation. But it would be indirectly impacted, as exploration and potential mining would be stopped on surrounding lands where the federal government allows mining claims.

Many people who enjoy outdoor recreation in the central Black Hills enjoy the time alone and the peace of the woods and waters. Casting in the early morning. Hiking until there are no human sounds. Others enjoy motorized activities. Leaning into a curve. Flying along on the open water. Everyone enjoys the beauty of the area.

We want to keep the central Black Hills for outdoor recreation, clean water, and a strong economy.

Support the effort to designate the Rapid Creek watershed upstream from Rapid City as a Congressionally protected recreation area. We need your help! See our website to contact Senators Thune and Rounds and Representative Johnson. Ask them to introduce a bill to designate the Rapid Creek watershed west of Rapid City as a recreation area with a mineral claim withdrawal, so exploration and mining would be stopped.

Belong to a group? Encourage them to become partners in this effort. See our website for information on donating and to sign our petition. Talk to your friends about preserving the Rapid Creek watershed in the Black Hills for recreation. **Protect the woods and waters. Protect outdoor recreation. Protect our economy.**



Contact Rapid Creek Watershed Action:

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