

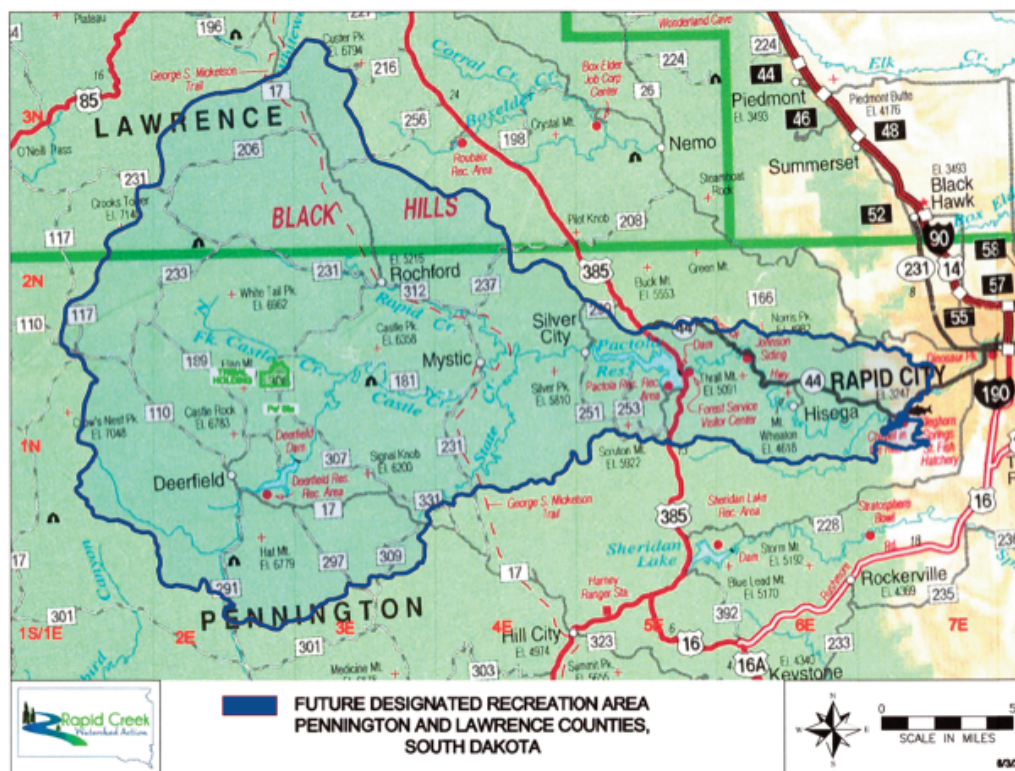


Support Recreation in the Central Black Hills

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.**

