



1002 N. 5th St.
Bismarck, ND 58501

9 March 2011

ND Public Service Commission
600 East Boulevard Ave,
Department 408
Bismarck, ND 58505

Dear Public Service Commission,

I am writing to submit my comments on the South Heart Coal Mine application and to request an informal hearing on the issue. I stand firmly against this South Heart coal mine, because it goes against everything we believe in as North Dakotans.

This is not a partisan issue. I have asked Republicans, Democrats and Independents - including people who work in the coal power plants in ND- and all of them have said that allowing a coal mine right next to our state's largest tourist attraction is bad for our state. I believe it would harm our state's economy, identity and people.

Theodore Roosevelt National Park is a large part of our identity. It is a source of pride and inspiration to our people, and it is a large source of revenue to our state. So is our farming and ranching way of life. My parents grew up on farms. My grandparents grew up on farms. I have spent enough time on farms and in the cities of ND to know what N. Dakotans value. We believe it's important to take care of our land, air, water and animals. We take care of our neighbors and stand up for them, instead of allowing an out-of-state coal company to come in and poison our land and people. I have seen the goodness of small communities and know how important they are to our state. This proposed mine will destroy the livelihood of hundreds of farmers and ranchers.

I have been to South Heart and met many of these farmers and they know that water is no joke in Western ND. We all know this as farmers, ranchers and business people. Right now we are desperately shipping water to the West of the state for the oil drilling. There is more water being pumped into the ground for fracking (and wastewater) than we are getting oil out of the ground, according to Lynn Helms (Bis.Tribune 3/5/11). Water is very rare in Western North Dakota. It is worth much more than oil. Much more than coal. Beyond the water contamination the coal industry causes, coal-fired power plants use massive amounts of water.

The problem of water scarcity will only get worse if this mine is allowed. Once the coal is dug, the shallow aquifers that these ranchers and their livestock rely on will be gone. But even worse is the fact that worse losses will follow in the form of contaminated water, sludge, coal ash pits, and other runoff from the coal industry, such as mercury and arsenic.

My family, just like so many North Dakotan families, goes to Medora and Theodore Roosevelt National Park every summer. If there is a coal mine with erionite, coal dust, and uranium blowing around in the air, we will no longer go to Medora. It's that simple. It will be a lot less desirable for many out-of-state visitors as well. They will spend their money somewhere else, where they're not exposed to toxins or hazardous waste. This is millions of dollars worth of income ND would lose. And this is not temporary income for a few decades like the coal mine has been tempting you with. Our national park offers permanent income that will continue to bring in revenue and a sense of state-identity and pride for thousands of years.

We can replace coal and oil and other energies. But there is no replacement for water. If our groundwater is gone, we're not living here anymore. Our animals aren't living. I urge you to vote against this mine so we have a sustainable future for our people.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "James Kambeitz". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial "J".

James Kambeitz