



Protecting the Land, Cultural,  
Heritage and Tradition for  
the Future Generation

## *Tribal Historic Preservation Office*

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**Russell Eagle Bear**  
Officer

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Administrative Assistant  
February 1, 2012

Mr. Alan B. Bjornsen  
Environmental Project Manager  
FSME/DWMEP/EPPAD/ERB  
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission  
11545 Rockville Pike  
Rockville, MD 20852

RE: Ross Project

Dear Mr. Bjornsen:

The Rosebud Sioux Tribe sends its greetings. We are in receipt of your formal request for consultation with our tribe concerning the cultural resource sites within the APE of the Ross mineral extraction project.

Due to conflicting scheduling with other agencies and projects around the extent of the northern plains, we have not been able to attend the meetings or site visits sponsored by your organization and the Forest Service. However, we are commenting on your request for consultation.

The Rosebud Sioux Tribe Office of Historic Preservation has serious concern for the cultural resources and viewshed of your project in relation to cultural sites we hold as essential to our cultural existence and continuity. The viewshed in particular is of great concern to our tribe as the proximity of your project is within sight of Matotipila (Bears Lodge) or as termed by the non-native culture- Devils Tower. Secondly, in the area between the Ross Project and Matotipila are the Missouri Buttes, which are another important cultural use area and site of spiritual import.

These landscape features are part of the rich and varied cultural history of numerous Plains Tribes of which the Sicangu Oyate (Burnt Thigh Nation) or as termed in common English- Rosebud Sioux. Numerous tribes have a regard for and a history associated with the area of the project and the landscape features which now can be termed as attributes of the cultural landscape. These tribes, inclusive of the Sicangu, are and have been associated with the region for millennia. The association, both cultural and physical in nature (landmark status, cosmological directional indicators, buffalo calling locations,) and other uses not privy for discussion with non-natives. The areas of exploration and extraction of mineral resources i.e. – uranium, will have a negative viewshed impact upon the integrity of those cultural resources important to our tribe.

We are in support of a Traditional Cultural Property (TCP) survey of the area that will be impacted by the proposed project. A TCP will provide expert information of the cultural resources associated and part of this area of the Black Hills. While geographically the area appears to not be a part of the Black Hills *in toto*, the Native worldview associates the watersheds (Belle Fourche River and others) and landforms as a part of the Black Hills.

The Section 106 requirements within an EIS establish the parameters for the consultation and ensuing requests for additional information such as that which will be provided by a TCP survey. The Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP) will need this type of information to fully consider the effects upon the properties within the viewshed of Matotipila and the Missouri Buttes.

We thank you for your attention and consideration of this communiqué.

Sincerely,



Mr. Russell Eagle Bear  
Rosebud Sioux Tribe  
Historic Preservation Officer  
PO Box 809  
Rosebud, SD 57570