



SOUTH DAKOTA DEPARTMENT OF GAME, FISH AND PARKS

523 EAST CAPITOL AVENUE | PIERRE, SD 57501

September 3, 2019

Noreen Walsh
Region 6 Director
Mountain-Prairie Region
US Department of the Interior
Fish and Wildlife Service
PO Box 25486, DFC
Denver, Colorado 80225-0486

Re: Whitewood Creek Restoration Plan/Homestake Mining Co. Natural Resource Restoration Fund
Booth Society Proposal to Acquire 64.62 acres

Noreen
Dear ~~Director Walsh~~:

I am contacting you regarding our two agencies' efforts on the Whitewood Creek Restoration Plan, per our 1999 Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) which was entered into Federal Court. As a recap, the State of South Dakota and the U.S. Department of the Interior sued Homestake Mining Company for releasing hazardous substances into Whitewood Creek and downstream waters for 100 years. The MOA designated the Approving Officials to authorize expenditure of the settlement monies; Homestake Mining Company Natural Resource Restoration Fund (the Fund). The official for the State is the Secretary of the South Dakota Department of Game, Fish and Parks. The official for the U.S. Department of the Interior (DOI) is the Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) Region 6 Director. The Restoration Team was formed and consisted of State and DOI Trustees. In 2005, the Team completed the Final Conceptual Restoration and Compensation Plan for Whitewood Creek and the Belle Fourche and Cheyenne River Watersheds, South Dakota.

To date, our agencies, together with the SD Department of Environment and Natural Resources, the Bureau of Land Management, and the Bureau of Reclamation have approved funding of impressive restoration projects which were required to restore, replace, or enhance injured or lost public trust resources and services due to the release of hazardous substances. Restoration projects had to compensate the public and be available for public enjoyment in-perpetuity. The most shining example of restoration fund expenditures includes the acquisition of Roughlock Falls in Spearfish Canyon.

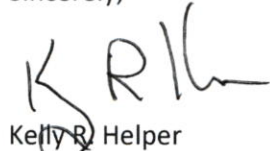
Over the years, restoration projects have been submitted to the Team for funding consideration and several have been denied for various reasons. I am pleased that the most recent funding opportunity is the acquisition of the Evon Breeding parcel (64.62-ac) by the Booth Society, Inc., Spearfish, SD. The acreage is immediately adjacent to the FWS's D.C. Booth Historic National Fish Hatchery and will be managed for public use such as youth mentored hunts and archery range, hiking trails, and interpretive nature programs. The Booth Society has a long history of fostering community ties with Spearfish. Area volunteers and donors heavily contribute to the continued success of the Booth Society.

The Restoration Team has toured the property, evaluated the funding proposal, and has met with the Booth Society's Executive Director and staff, and the FWS Hatchery manager. The Team's unanimous agreement concluded that the 64.62-ac parcel and proposed future management have met the Restoration Plan's evaluation criteria which include perpetual public benefits. The addition of this acreage will further enhance the Booth Hatchery as a visitor destination which I believe is the hatchery's primary function.

After consideration by the South Dakota Department of Game, Fish and Parks, I support the expenditure of the Homestake Mining Company Natural Resource Restoration Fund in its entirety (current balance of approximately \$172,600) held in trust by the South Dakota Parks and Wildlife Foundation. The entire remaining balance of the fund will be disbursed to the Booth Society, Inc., and the account will be closed. My concurrence signature in my capacity as the State's Authorized Official for the Fund is below.

Thank you for your consideration of the Booth Society's project, several years of cooperative working relationship, and successful closure of this case. In particular, I want to thank Matt Schwarz of the FWS Pierre Office for his leadership in this particular project. Please contact Shelly Deisch, Restoration Team Coordinator, South Dakota Department of Game, Fish and Parks at (605) 394-1756 or shelly.deisch@state.sd.us if you need further clarifications on this final project and the Fund.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "K R H" with a stylized flourish at the end.

Kelly R. Helper
Department Secretary

Cc: Shelly Deisch, Restoration Team Coordinator
Paul Coughlin, Restoration Team Member