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### **(S.D.)-State Allowing Company To Explore For Gold**

By: Chris Fankhauser Posted at: 12/06/2012 08:16 AM

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) - State environmental officials are approving the exploration for gold and other minerals at two sites in the northern Black Hills.

The South Dakota Department of Environment and Natural Resources is allowing VMC LLC to explore in an area about 6 miles west of Lead near Savoy and another area about one mile northeast near Ragged Top Mountain.

The exploration includes the use of existing trails, construction of just over 2 miles of new trails, the drilling of up to 100 test holes to a maximum depth of 100 feet and trenching for surface samples.

Blasting may be required in some areas to allow for trenching.

The company has posted a \$20,000 reclamation bond for the exploration project. That's the maximum allowed by state law.

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