



Journey sends message on Parkinson's

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SIOUX FALLS USPS

Delivery improves, regional hubs pose issues

Vanessa Carlson Bender
Sioux Falls Argus Leader
USA TODAY NETWORK

Although the United States Postal Service (USPS) mail service in Sioux Falls is now delivering packages at more than 90%, according to U.S. Rep. Dusty

Johnson, regional "choke points" still pose significant issues overall.

In Sioux Falls and South Dakota specifically, service has slightly improved during the last 18 months, Johnson told reporters following a private tour Thursday, April 2, at the Sioux Falls USPS Distribution and Processing Center, ac-

companied by Pete Sessions, Texas Representative and chair of the House subcommittee overseeing USPS.

The tour comes about 3.5 months after Johnson led a roundtable discussion surrounding the mounting frustration with USPS delays, missed medications, lost checks, overflowing mailboxes and

long lines at the post office.

During that previous roundtable discussion, Sessions pledged immediate involvement to make sure South Dakotans' voices are also heard.

Sessions, having traveled to Sioux

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A September 2021 view looking toward Spearfish Canyon in South Dakota's Black Hills.

PROVIDED BY BONNIE JONES, BLACK HILLS NATIONAL FOREST/USDA FOREST SERVICE.

Uranium drilling plan sparks Black Hills tensions

Meghan O'Brien
South Dakota Searchlight

A plan to drill exploratory holes in search of uranium near a southern Black Hills canyon lined with ancient Native American rock art has raised tensions ahead of a hearing next week to determine the project's fate.

At a procedural hearing in January, a tense exchange with project opponents led to an outburst by a member of the board considering the project's permit application.

"Your goal in life is to be a jerk," board member Bob Morris told a member of the public attending the hearing.

The comment was directed toward

Taylor Gunhammer. He's an Oglala Lakota community organizer.

"It was just profoundly unprofessional," Gunhammer said afterward, reacting to the exchange.

Gunhammer and other project opponents were arguing for the relocation of a permit hearing from the state capital city of Pierre, in central South Dakota, to a location closer to the proposed project in the southwestern part of the state. Morris' fellow board members ultimately agreed to the move and scheduled a five-day hearing to begin Monday in the city of Hot Springs.

The hearing will be a continuation of a long-running struggle over proposed uranium mining in the southern Black Hills.

Why drill for uranium in South Dakota?

Uranium is a metallic, radioactive element used as fuel in nuclear weapons and nuclear power plants.

Uranium mining became common in the 1950s to supply the United States with materials for Cold War nuclear weapons. That included the southern Black Hills of South Dakota, where mining and milling occurred in the Edgemont area until the 1970s. Much of that mining took the form of open pits, some of which were never reclaimed to a natural condition.

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Chances of 'super' El Niño growing

Climate models point to possibility later this year

Brandi D. Addison and Kimberly Miller
USA TODAY NETWORK

Recently released climate models are pointing to what could be the most powerful El Niño event in recorded history – raising the possibility of a rare "super" episode developing later this year.

A "super" El Niño – also referred to as a "Jurassic El Niño" by Colorado State University hurricane expert Phil Klotzbach – typically refers to unusually strong warming of sea surface temperatures across the central and eastern equatorial Pacific Ocean. That warming can disrupt global weather patterns, shifting storm tracks, rainfall and temperatures for months at a time.

Forecasters stress it's not a certainty yet. But multiple long-range models are now trending warmer, with some pushing into territory rarely seen in modern records – a signal that has caught scientists' attention.

El Niño occurs when Pacific Ocean waters in the central and eastern regions are warmer than average, according to NOAA. This warming changes global weather patterns in different ways than La Niña. In the United States, El Niño winters usually bring wetter, cooler conditions to the southern states and milder, drier weather to the Pacific Northwest.

Not all El Niño events are created equal. Some are mild and have only localized effects, while others can dramatically reshape weather patterns

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