



Replacing Alienation with Cooperation on Track for Bonneville Salt Flats Restoration

FOR RELEASE JANUARY 29, 2016

Contact: Louise Ann Noeth | 805.312.0893 - C.S.T. | louise@savethesalt.org

Salt Lake City, UT - - Back-to-back years of wet weather, coupled with years of federal mismanagement, has created unsafe surface conditions and ramped up frustrations among the land speed racing community. **Save the Salt Coalition** and the **Utah Alliance** recognized that adversarial postures would contribute nothing to the restoration of the **Bonneville Salt Flats**, an *Area of Critical Environmental Concern*, and instead spent the past six months cultivating new, productive relationships with the **Bureau of Land Management (BLM)**, Intrepid Potash-Wendover, and elected representatives on city, state and federal levels.

The result was an unprecedented improvement in communication and cooperation between the **BLM** and the land speed racing community. Numerous substantive conversations percolated a vigorous exchange of information, ideas and documents. Chief among them is the possibility of withdrawing all 10 mineral leases located north of Interstate 80 from future mining.

The racing community contends that Bonneville lost millions of tons of salt over many decades due to the leases. However, only three percent of Intrepid-Potash's current annual production is derived from all 10 leases combined. The mining company is willing to abandon the leases altogether so long as no other competitor is allowed to take them over.

We have asked the **BLM** to investigate the appropriate process to withdraw the 10 leases from all future mining. Normally it is a cumbersome federal process that can take years, but we are working with both **BLM** staff and elected officials to speed the effort.

Additionally, we are patiently waiting for the delivery of the Bingham Report, a comprehensive engineering document commissioned by the **Save the Salt Coalition** and **Utah Alliance** with short- and long-term recommendations for restoring Bonneville. This document forms the basis of the land speed racing community's position statement.

Among the action items will be: a plan to maximize the brine return program volume as well as control the brine return by creating a containment area; protect the already fragile salt surface from additional mud drift; closing the I-80 culverts to retain laydown brine flow; shift from voluntary to mandatory salt return; require measurement, monitoring, reporting, and analysis of the salt return amounts as well as salt extracted from areas that could impact the international speedway; actively evaluate alternative mechanisms and processes for salt return.

*The **Save the Salt Foundation (StS)** is a nonprofit organization whose mission is to restore the world-famous Bonneville Salt Flats. The **Utah Alliance (UA)** is a volunteer Utah-based advocacy group using its expertise and contacts at the local level to protect this Historic Place listed on the National Register. The **Save the Salt Coalition (StSc)** is an umbrella group comprised of automotive and motorsports companies and organizations with a vested interest in this national treasure. All three organizations are collaborating to keep the Bonneville Salt Flats available for future generations.*

"Refuse to settle for the status quo and defy the powers who loathe to have it disturbed." - S. Hendrix