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"LandSpeed" Louise Noeth
LandSpeed Productions
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Re: Ongoing Scientific Research on the Bonneville Salt Flats

Dear Louise,

As you know, I am actively involved in extensive ongoing interdisciplinary research exploring the geology, hydrogeochemistry, microbiology, and environmental processes of the Bonneville Salt Flats (BSF). This work involves collaboration with several other academic researchers, who bring great expertise in groundwater modeling, geomicrobiology, dynamics of social systems, and communication, which provide a strong compliment to my field-oriented and observation-based research. I have had opportunities through this work to work closely with the BLM, the local potash mining industry, and the racing community, and value the opportunity to be a part of the diverse community of stakeholders interested in understanding this continuously changing environment. My current research involves intensive field observations and sampling of sediments, surface water, and groundwater, and thus we have a vested interest in understanding the impacts of any experimental efforts aimed at driving the system towards some desired state. In September of 2016, my team drilled ~70 sediment cores from across BSF that we are now actively working on analyzing as a part of the "2018 Salt Crust Thickness Study". In addition, we have been collecting and analyzing the geochemistry of brines from BSF groundwater wells bi-annually since ~2014. With funding from the National Science Foundation, we anticipate conducting a detailed study on the impact of the Salt Laydown Project in the winter of 2018. Based on examination of past research on the Salt Laydown and our current understanding of the BSF hydrogeochemical system, we have many questions about the overall efficacy of this mitigation effort towards growing the salt crust. However, as we have discussed, if the amount of total dissolved solids introduced to BSF through the Salt Laydown project were to change, it would not impact my research in a negative way. My team is dedicated to observing all of the various inputs, outputs, pressures, and processes that influence the BSF system, and plan to closely monitor all activities taking place for at least the coming ~5 years. I am happy to discuss the details of this research, and look forward to helping to inform data-driven decision making as our understanding of BSF continues to improve.

Thank you,

Brenda B Bowen

Dr. Brenda B. Bowen

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