



# Utah Legislature Supports Land Speed Racers

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Salt Lake City, UT - - The Utah House Natural Resources, Agriculture, and Environment Committee unanimously passed a resolution urging the federal government to take immediate action to restore the Bonneville Salt Flats (BSF). The message is directed to the U.S. Bureau of Land Management, which has controlled the land since 1946 and allowed millions of tons of salt to be withdrawn from this unique venue for land speed records dating back to 1914. The historic racetrack was once over 13 miles long and in 2015, racers were unable to identify a 3-mile track.

House Concurrent Resolution 8 is sponsored by Rep. Stephen Handy and will now be considered by the House. Before the Committee vote, a number of land speed racers representing the Utah Alliance, Save the Salt Coalition and Utah Salt Flats Racers Association provided supporting testimony. Participants included Dennis Sullivan, Larry Volk, Robert Rampton, Ron Christensen, Lloyd Parry, Richard Thomas, Val Thomas, and Gary Wilkinson.

It is rare that a resolution passes through committee with 100% support, which allows it to be fast tracked through the remaining process culminating in a vote by the Utah Legislature – hopefully before the end of the current legislative session in, mid-March.

Representative Timothy Hawkes asked only one question regarding past geological survey statements noting that there had been no measurable decline in salt on the flats since 1988. Sullivan explained that geologists and racers interpret “crust” in two different ways.

*"It's no longer white; it's brown," observed Sullivan of the flats. "You can't even see the salt. Some geologists say this is a natural occurring event. To me, that's like saying we know that they're taking dirt out of the copper pit, but we don't know if that's what caused the hole."*

Committee Vice Chair Rep. Douglas Sagers then went on record saying that he acknowledged that the salt studies have conflicting viewpoints, but that all conclude that the top salt (halite) crust layer is being depleted.

*"This is one of the issues we face when we as a state see issues out there with regards to public lands management but we don't control the land," said Mike Mower, Deputy Chief of Staff for Governor Herbert. "Something is happening that we feel is very negative out on our Bonneville Salt Flats."*

A strong Senate sponsor is being sought to help the resolution continue making its way through the legislative process – another step toward restoring the Bonneville Salt Flats, a national treasure.

*"If the salt flats are allowed to go away, it is not only a travesty, but a tragedy," said Utah Alliance Rep. Robert Rampton who is well aware that it is an Area of Critical Environmental Concern and listed on the Registry of Historic Places.*

*The Save the Salt Foundation is a nonprofit organization whose mission is to restore the world-famous Bonneville Salt Flats. The Utah Alliance 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 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**

