



Southern California Timing Association

To: Kurt Ernst Editor – *Hemmings Daily*
 Hemmings Motor News
 222 Main Street
 Bennington, VT 05201

From: SCTA/BNI Boards of Directors

Re: *Hemmings Daily* article by Daniel Strohl article November 30, 2018

The Board of Directors for both SCTA and BNI take strong issue with Daniel Strohl's inaccurate article title ... "Study finds racing partly to blame for long-term decline of the Bonneville Salt Flats". Prior to publishing this article, we believe that Mr. Strohl should have performed the due diligence of a responsible journalist and contacted individuals on the Boards of Directors of SCTA and/or BNI. Mr. Strohl failed to make contact with any SCTA/BNI Board Members. As stakeholders in the health and well-being of the Bonneville Salt Flats, we believe his lack of contact showed more interest in hyperbolae than responsible reporting.

In his article, Mr. Strohl appears to have ignored the findings of Dr's. Bowen's and Kipnis' paper published by the Utah Geological Association (UGA Publication 47 pp 287-303) titled "*Observations of Salt Crust Change from 1960-2016 and the Role of Humans as Geologic Agents at the Bonneville Salt Flats, Utah*". UGA published a companion paper by Dr. Bowen *et. al.*, in the UGA Publication 47 "*Observations of Salt Crust Thickness Changes at the Bonneville Salt Flats from 2003-2016*" pp 247-285. Although e-linked in Mr. Strohl's article, it appears that Mr. Strohl did not review this companion paper in detail as both papers refute Mr. Strohl's title in *Hemmings Daily*.

Instead of reporting on the actual findings of the report, Mr. Strohl took a single paragraph from the UGA article about the dragging of the course for track preparation to build his title for the article. The actual UGA-Publication 47 article began the paragraph on page 299 used by Mr. Strohl by stating ... "The impacts of racing on the salt flats have not been quantified, but possibly play a role in the changing salt crust". Dr. Bowen and Dr. Kipnis did NOT state anything closely resembling "Study finds racing partly to blame for long-term decline of the Bonneville Salt Flats" as Mr. Strohl chose to title his article. Bowen/Kipnis go on to say on page 299 "The role of this [racing] presence in modifying the landscape is unknown, but perhaps not insignificant". This statement means that more research is needed to determine the extent to which racing may or may not impact the salt crust thinning. SCTA/BNI supports further research. The salt crust is thinning in the area that racing occurs but Bowen/Kipnis point out in their paper that natural processes such as tectonic lowering along the western edge of the racing area may have an impact and it is clear to the UGA article authors that saline mining has likely had the greatest significant impact on the racing area.

There just is no clear nexus at this time that racing has had any significant impact on the salt crust thinning. What is clear by the work conducted to date by Bowen/Kipnis is that returning brine to the area of racing by Intrepid Potash Products has had a positive impact on the salt crust thickness in both quantity and quality and should be continued.

We wish that Mr. Strohl would return to reporting the facts rather than hyperbolae in his future articles regarding the Bonneville Salt Flats. He has written many articles on the salt flats that presented facts so we know he is capable.

SCTA/BNI Boards of Directors

cc: Louise Noeth, Save the Salt