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Mr. Boley and Mr. Smith,

I read with interest your article in the Fort Mill Times entitled "Bounty Potash Project Threatens Historic Trail According to OCTA" and wanted to reach out to you to describe more fully the nature of the Bounty Project. Additionally, we would like to work with your organization to insure that the Hastings Cutoff is protected during the development of this project. I also want to make clear to you that I am jealous of our reputation as good stewards of the environments where we work, your implication is that we will destroy Pilot Valley which is not the case. We've spent good time, money and effort maintaining and building a good reputation where we work, I trust that can be respected as we shall respect the trail.

Currently, the Bounty Project simply involves the application for an exploration permit. At this point in time, we have not adequately identified the characteristics of the potash resource within the Pilot Valley. Our current application requests that we be allowed to pursue an exploration plan that will have little or no effect on the entire valley. This exploration will occur over a matter of a few weeks, and will simply involve the drilling of shallow auger holes in various places throughout the project area. Reclamation will return the playa floor to its original condition and there will be little or no trace of this activity. Moreover, this exploration plan will avoid the Hastings Cutoff route altogether and must go through an adequate NEPA process before any activity begins.

I can assure you that we are aware of the Hastings Cutoff and its significance and it has never been our intention to damage the trail. We are working with the BLM to develop this project in a manner that fully considers environmental and historic resources. Thank you for your interest in our project and I look forward to learning more about your concerns.

Sincerely,

Foster Wilson
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