



GRAND COUNTY COMMISSION

Mary McGann (Chair) · Gabriel Woytek (Vice Chair)

Evan Clapper · Jacques Hadler · Trish Hedin Sarah
Stock · Kevin Walker

Tuesday, February 16, 2021

To whom it may concern,

The Grand County Commission is aware that the Radiation Exposure Compensation Act (RECA) will terminate in 2022. Since its inception in 1990, when Utah's Rep. Wayne Owens' and Sen. Orin Hatch's bipartisan bill was enacted by Congress, RECA has provided compensation to nearly 37,000 claimants exposed to radiation by the exploration, mining, transportation and milling of uranium, and numerous atomic bomb tests across the West. Some of these claimants have been residents of Grand County. Without Congressional action, RECA and the Trust Fund from which claims are paid are set to terminate in 2022. The Grand County Commission unanimously supports the extension and expansion of the RECA.

Grand County has a long history with the uranium industry, many of our residents have suffered and continued to suffer the health impacts of exposure due to mining, milling, and testing activities. Compensation under RECA has provided significant assistance for Grand County families struggling after radiation exposure.

We are also aware there are impacted claimants still waiting for their claims to be processed, 253 RECA compensation claims were pending as of January 10, 2021. With this in mind, we hope to see Congressional action to extend the sunset of this critical program well into the future.

The Grand County Commission fully supports Utah state Rep. Doug Owen's "Concurrent Resolution Supporting Extension and Expansion of the Radiation Exposure Compensation Act," H.C.R. 18, that is pending in the Utah legislature. We respectfully urge the State of Utah to join us in calling for the introduction of Congressional legislation to extend and expand RECA and to work with members of the Utah Congressional Delegation to ensure its swift passage.

Respectfully,

Mary McGann, Grand County Commission Chair



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David Ure

Director, School and Institutional Trust Lands Admin.

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Dear Mr. Ure,

I appreciated our recent conversation regarding the Utahraptor State Park. As I mentioned, Grand County has worked closely with State Sovereign Lands for several years to protect and manage this area, which includes outstanding resources that the State of Utah and Grand County want to preserve.

This area contains significant historical values related to the Conservation Corps Camp and a relocation center for incarcerated Japanese Americans during World War II. In addition, the Utah State Paleontologist has stated that this area is considered ***the most important dinosaur site in the United States***. It contains massive deposits of dinosaur bones from at least ten species found nowhere else in North America. The Utah State Dinosaur, Utahraptor, was discovered here!

Unfortunately, these irreplaceable resources are being damaged - both by uninformed visitors, and others intentionally vandalizing and looting the resources. These damages are occurring, in large part, because there is insufficient management of the area. However, this issue could be addressed by the increased presence of management staff of the proposed state park.

Grand County Commission fully supports the creation and funding of the Utahraptor State Park for this area to preserve the resources. To that end, I hope the School and Institutional Trust Lands Administration will support the current legislation HB 257 sponsored by Rep. Eliason to establish the Utahraptor State Park.

When we spoke previously, you mentioned SITLA's interest in pursuing workforce and affordable housing in Spanish Valley, in northern San Juan County. Grand County has recognized the serious need for such housing and has been working hard to address this issue; we have approved over 700 units of workforce and affordable housing in Grand County and the City of Moab over the past few years. We are supportive of housing proposals for Spanish Valley similar to those approved by both Grand County and the City of Moab. We can all agree that to have a thriving economy we must have affordable housing for our workforce.

Sincerely,