

Standard-Examiner

Ogden Standard-Review Editorial, Monday, March 23, 2009

OUR VIEW: GSL Mineral incentive a good deal

An \$150,000-plus tax incentive Utah is offering Great Salt Lake Mineral Corp. has the opportunity to pay a healthy dividend for Weber County.

The incentive will allow GSL Mineral to move ahead with a \$40 million-plus plan to improve its solar evaporation system in the Great Salt Lake's north area. That is a particularly salty part of the lake that is located just west of Ogden.

What GSL Mineral wants to do over the next 10 years is get a better return from 43,000 acres of ponds. What these ponds produce via evaporation is salt, magnesium chloride and sulfate of potash fertilizer.

The upgrade, according to GSL Minerals -- which is owned by Kansas City-based Compass Minerals, will bring 50 new jobs. That's good news for Weber County because the new jobs would be considerably higher than the county's average wage, which is slightly higher than \$32,000 a year. GSL's payroll is about \$16 million a year. The company, which is the U.S. leader in producing magnesium chloride and sulfate of potash, employs 330.

The tax incentive, offered through the Governor's Office of Economic Development, comes with conditions. To allow the state to refund some taxes, GSL Minerals must prove it has reached arranged goals. Only then will it receive the tax credit. If GSL Minerals fails to meet the goals, taxpayers have not lost any money.

State officials hope that if GSL Minerals meets its upgrade goals, receives the tax credits and employs 50 more workers, it will total about \$27 million in new wages over a decade.

These are tough economic times. We need successful companies such as GSL Minerals to maintain a long-term commitment to the Top of Utah. We have what many companies need. We support Utah's efforts to keep these companies here.

The tax incentives help the companies, and the resulting growth and dollars injected into the community helps everyone.

It's a good deal. We hope it succeeds.