

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: March 17, 2009

STATE OF UTAH

SCHOOL & INSTITUTIONAL TRUST LANDS ADMINISTRATION

675 EAST 500 SOUTH, SUITE 500

SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH 84102

DANGEROUS ENCROACHMENT INTO FORMER BLM MILITARY ORDNANCE RANGE

The State of Utah School and Institutional Trust Lands' (SITLA) has closed its land abutting the Winchester Hills subdivision – near St George – because of possible dangerous conditions. The land was formerly owned by the BLM and was transferred to the State in 1983.

The parcels to the north and east of the Winchester Hills subdivision were used as a military ordnance range when owned by the BLM. In February 2007, a live M28A2 rocket round was found approximately three-tenths of a mile north of certain Winchester Hills' residences. The M28A2 rocket round was fired from a shoulder-fired weapon. The M28A2 warhead is a highly explosive round capable of penetrating 11 inches of heavy armor. The rockets have a range of approximately 900 yards.

Because of the significant risk to public safety, SITLA has closed the trust lands parcels near Winchester Hills. This closure is in effect until such time as the parcels can be properly remediated by appropriate authorities. This closure affects all use of these lands, and entry onto the land is strictly prohibited.

SITLA hopes to reopen these parcels to public use as soon as possible. Please show respect for the closure and report any violations that you may see to the Washington County Sheriff's Office or SITLA. Violations may be reported to the Washington County Sheriff's Office at 435-634-5730 or at SITLA's Washington County Office at Coral Canyon Town Center at 435-652-2950. The main office in Salt Lake City at 801-538-5100 will also take reports.

SITLA is an independent state agency that manages 3.4 million acres of Utah trust lands for the benefit of Utah's schools and other public institutions. Money generated from the school trust lands is deposited in the state Permanent School Fund, a perpetual endowment that annually distributes income to each K-12 public school in Utah.

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