

Nevada state fair in jeopardy

By Jason Kellner, Reno Gazette-Journal

After a rebranding of the 136-year-old Nevada State Fair in 2010 as the Nevada Territory Wild West Fair, officials of the event say its finances may prevent the fair's return this year. It would be the first year without a state fair since it began in 1874, according to the fair's director.

Executive director of the nonprofit state fair, Rich Crombie, said that the organization already was on shaky ground before it went into the 2010 event and had been losing money. Crombie said that some situations with last year's fair hit hard, including a weak economy, and especially bad weather on the fair's peak days, which saw small crowds braving rain, overcast skies and temperatures in the low 50s – in the middle of August.

"I hate to point to it," Crombie said, "but (the weather) led to a lot of it. I've got pictures of where people were standing in line bundled up, and we rely on the weekends."

Crombie reported 2010 attendance figures at about 30,000. They had hoped to see closer to 50,000 visitors. But it wasn't the weather and economy alone that put the fair in danger, rather a combination of those things, including lackluster attendance and a lack of cash reserves that built up over the years, Crombie said. Vendors from 2010 still are owed money.

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