

Nevada officials alert as wildfire threat increases

By Jeff DeLong, Reno Gazette-Journal

After a particularly quick-moving wildfire burned more than 17 square miles east of Reno, danger posed by dry grass and brush is abundantly clear, fire officials said Tuesday.

While a late-season snowpack continues to dampen fire danger in the high country, heat-cured cheatgrass and drying sagebrush combine to produce a significant risk in the lower elevations of western Nevada.

“The probability of ignition is definitely getting higher,” said Paul Petersen, a fire management officer for the U.S. Bureau of Land Management.

The danger was demonstrated Saturday when a wildfire took off east of Reno near Nixon, quickly burning across miles of grass and brush. No structures were damaged and the fire was declared contained Monday after charring 11,195 acres.

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