

# Erosion issues from Douglas County fire concern officials

By Jeff DeLong, Reno Gazette-Journal

As crews mop up smoldering terrain torched by one of this summer's largest wildfires, experts are readying efforts to prevent erosion and restore a charred landscape.

More than 3,800 acres – roughly six-square miles – were burned by the Ray May Fire in southern Douglas County.

It's a checkerboard of remote and rugged land owned by the U.S. Bureau of Land Management, Bureau of Indian Affairs and private property owners.

"We'll determine the severity of the fire and brainstorm what needs to be done," said Alan Bittner, a supervisory natural resource specialist with the BLM, the largest landowner in the fire area.

An early priority will be controlling erosion in the fire area – much of which is particularly steep – during the coming rainy season. Re-seeding burned areas in the fall will likely be a major focus of that effort.

"I know that's one of our concerns – erosion," Bittner said. "If we need to keep soil from hitting ( U.S. highway) 395, that would be more of an immediate thing."

Crews are still digging fire lines around some isolated parts of the fire. Once it is declared 100 percent contained, the BLM has seven days to submit an emergency erosion control plan. A longer-term restoration strategy is required within 21 days, Bittner said.

"What we've got to figure out is where it burned hot. From there we'll determine treatment," Bittner said.

The BLM will discuss fire restoration needs with the Bureau of Indian Affairs, the Washoe Tribe, Douglas County and other stakeholders, Bittner said.

**Read the whole story**