

Experts: Climate change-wildfire link unsupported

By Paige St. John, Los Angeles Times

The ash of the Rocky Fire was still hot when Gov. Jerry Brown strode to a bank of television cameras beside a blackened ridge and, flanked by firefighters, delivered a battle cry against climate change.

The wilderness fire was “a real wake-up call” to reduce the carbon pollution “that is in many respects driving all of this,” he said.

Brown had political reasons for his declaration.

He had just challenged Republican presidential candidates to state their agendas on global warming. He was embroiled in a fight with the oil industry over legislation to slash gasoline use in California. And he is seeking to make a mark on international negotiations on climate change that culminate in Paris in December.

But scientists who study climate change and fire behavior say their work does not show a link between this year’s wildfires and global warming, or support Brown’s assertion that fires are now unpredictable and unprecedented. There is not enough evidence, they say.

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