

Nev. AG wants judge to dismiss fire lawsuits

By Scott Sonner, AP

Nevada's chief legal adviser wants a judge to dismiss all but a narrow piece of a series of lawsuits accusing state forestry officials of mishandling a prescribed burn that turned into a raging wildfire and destroyed 23 homes along the edge of the Sierra.

The homeowners say they suffered more than \$80 million in damages in the fall blaze. They contend the government illegally took over their property and left it "valueless and virtually unusable."

Officials with the Division of Forestry "breached their duty by negligently, carelessly and recklessly failing to operate, manage and supervise the prescribed burn," according to each of five lawsuits filed in the past two months by a total of 38 plaintiffs.

Nevada Attorney General Adam Laxalt and his deputy attorneys said in a motion this week that the homeowners may be entitled to some compensation for unintentional damage. But they argue the state judge should dismiss all claims related to property rights or the "takings" clause of the Fifth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution.

Read the whole story