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Crews continue to battle Pole Creek and Bald Mountain Fires

By Myrna Trauntvein

Times-News Correspondent

The Pole Creek Fire, which began in Juab County, continues to grow with only 2 percent containment as of Monday, and has burned 71,873 acres and the forecast is that critical fire conditions will continue with continued high winds, warm temperatures and low humidity challenging firefighting efforts.

Suzie Tenhagen, Public Information Officer for the Pole Creek Fire and the Bald Mountain Fire, reported that the two fires grew to 86,107 acres, with additional evacuations put in place during the day.

"The Pole Creek fire crossed over Highway 6 and moved approximately five miles northward in the Diamond Fork area," said the press release she provided. "The fire moved very little in the area."

Firefighters have been successful in point protection and suppression efforts and no structures have been lost.

"The fire has burned up against the Coal Hollow Fire burn scar, which is being used to prevent the easterly spread of the fire south of Highway 6," according to the press release.

Unless there is significant rainfall and other weather conditions improve, the Pole Creek Fire, with 2 percent containment, is expected to continue to burn for another two weeks. The same prediction is true for the Bald Mountain Fire which has zero containment.

Air resources are being used across the fire and were critical Sunday where firefighters were able to keep the fire from spilling over the ridgeline into the Covered Bridge subdivision.

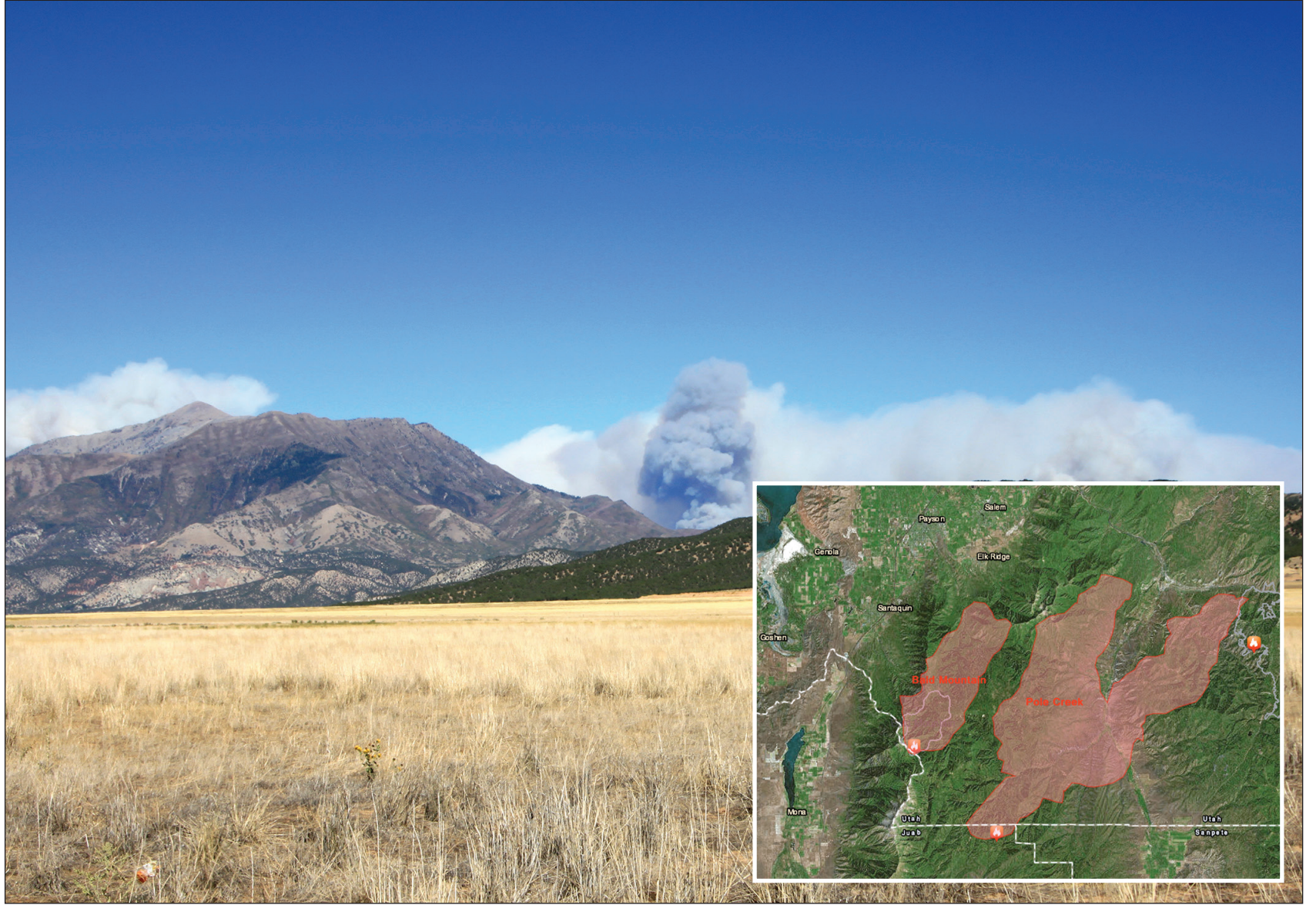
"Smoke can prevent residents on the ground from seeing air operations," according to the press release. "High winds and smoke can also periodically shut down air operations."

Crews will continue aggressive suppression efforts and structure protection on both fires with firefighter and public safety as the primary objective.

Roads closed as of Monday were US Highway 6, from the mouth of Spanish Fork Canyon until the junction with US Highway 191 just north of Helper and US Highway 89 from Thistle Junction on Highway 6 to the Utah/Sanpete County lines.

The rail line is in contact with fire personnel to allow safe and limited passage.

Area closures include Santaquin Canyon, Mona Pole Canyon and the Nebo Loop Na-



SMOKY SIGHT • This was the view of the Bald Mountain and Pole Creek Fires as seen from Levan Ridge on Friday afternoon. Our valley has been relatively smoke free due to the winds blowing from the south. Fire crews are continuing to battle the blaze which as of Monday was 2% contained. Due to a natural gas line being threatened by the fire, Dominion Energy shut down the line and is asking residents from Levan to Provo to conserve. Juab School District schools will remain in session and serve cold lunches for the time being, with the exception of Mona Elementary which has electric appliances. We need Mother Nature to cooperate and lessen the winds and send a little rain to help put out the fires. A better fire map can be found on page 10.

Residents asked to continue conserving natural gas due to uncertainty of fires

By Myrna Trauntvein

Times-News Correspondent

The natural gas system for East Juab County is still off and no date has been established to restore full use to customers.

The Nephi gas line is still threatened by the wildfires, according to Gov. Gary Herbert who attended a morning briefing with fire officials at the fairgrounds in Spanish Fork on Sunday.

"From Santaquin to Levan,

please conserve natural gas. Thanks for everyone's cooperation," he posted on Twitter on Sunday morning.

"No, the gas is not yet on," said Seth Atkinson, Nephi City Administrator. "The news up north erroneously reported that the gas was back on."

"We were able to have Dominion Energy open the line back up Saturday to temporarily add more pressure but they needed to shut it back down. It will give some capacity for low usage customers

(non-industrial) for a couple more days."

"We still need customers to be sparing in their usage until we can bring the gas back online fully," he said.

Atkinson said that the natural gas service to Rocky Ridge, Mona, Nephi and Levan was affected.

Nephi acts as agent for the other East Juab cities and Juab County.

The operations and capital budget for the natural gas utility are part of the Juab Rural Development Agency

(JRDA). Gas is provided by Dominion Energy for the communities through JRDA.

Juab School District Superintendent Dr. Rick Robins stated on Twitter that schools in the area will be in session unless directed otherwise. All schools, with the exception of Mona Elementary, will serve cold lunches this week.

"Mona Elementary will be serving regular hot lunches," he said. "Their kitchen is electric, not impacted by natural gas."

Mona City council holds kickoff meeting with Urban Planning International

By Myrna Trauntvein

Times-News Correspondent

Mona is working to form a general plan that will guide the city into the future and the planners will attend the city council meeting at 6 p.m. on September 25 prior to council meeting.

The Mona City Council held a Council Kick Off Session with Urban Planning International, LLC on Wednesday September 5, at 7 p.m. prior to the regular Planning and Zoning meeting.

The purpose for the session was to present information on Mona City's upcoming general plan, to form a vision statement, and to set goals.

This special session was held in the council chambers. In attendance at the planning meeting was Dr. Michael Clay, Professor of Urban Planning at BYU,

Kira Johnson and Katilynn

Harris, Brigham Young University (BYU) students who are working on the project as part of Urban Planning, LLC, council members, the mayor, and city planning commission and city staff members.

Urban Planning, LLC, will create the new general plan for Mona which will take approximately six months to do and there will be several planning meetings and a public hearing prior to its adoption.

"Kira Johnson has poured over your existing plan (1980)," said Clay. "She has also prepared data to share tonight."

"We are asking for the council to list items that the council would like to see for the city in the future," said Clay. "These plans can last 10 to 20 years."

He said that often the children of the creators of the first plan were the ones to revise it.

The planners will now put together the information they gathered via a PowerPoint

presentation for the 25th.

The Tenth Amendment, or Amendment X of the United States Constitution, is the section of the Bill of Rights that basically says that any power that is not given to the federal government is given to the people or the states.

"That means that general plans have constitutional power and they are legally binding," he said.

Bill Mills, mayor, asked if the city had any authority over the county in possible annexations.

"The city has jurisdiction over its land," said Clay.

A state might have jurisdiction over a state road passing through a city but the city had jurisdiction over the land in its boundaries and had a "halo region" of five miles around the city.

That was considered the potential growth areas.

There were some pieces of

data about Mona that were surprising, Clay said.

"The medium income for the community is \$75,000," he said. "You are very wealthy which surprised me."

The population demographics indicated that there were a lot of kids and adults. The college-age students were not there, however, they were getting educated but many of them were coming back to raise families.

"You are doing well," he said.

The planning group worked with those present to come up with a vision statement that all would be comfortable with. Once suggestions were made, Clay said, those suggestions would be put into adoptable form for the council to consider.

See **Fires** on page 7

See **Planning** on page 2



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