



NEWS



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CORONER IDENTIFIES VICTIMS OF 2 FATAL COLLISIONS THURSDAY IN YUCCA VALLEY

Staff Writer, Z107.7 FM News

Posted: July 1, 2020

The coroner's office has identified the two victims who were killed in separate crashes in Yucca Valley Thursday. Just after 3 p.m., 81-year-old Ramona Pedrosa of Yucca Valley was a passenger in a vehicle that was hit broadside on the passenger side by an unidentified male driver at the intersection of Highway 62 and Airway Avenue. **County Fire** Battalion Chief Donnie Vilorio said Pedrosa appeared alert and responsive when firefighters were extricating her from her vehicle, she became unresponsive when placed on the gurney. Paramedics performed CPR as she was taken to Hi-Desert Medical Center, where she was pronounced deceased.

Then about 10:40 p.m. Thursday, first responders were called to a fatal collision involving a Jeep Wrangler and a pedestrian. David Morse, 75, of Yucca Valley, was crossing the highway, outside of a crosswalk, when he was struck by the Jeep traveling westbound on the highway. Morse was killed at the scene.

<http://z1077fm.com/coroner-identifies-victims-of-2-fatal-collisions-thursday-in-yucca-valley/>

FIREWORKS ARE ILLEGAL IN THE COUNTY, A NEW APP LETS YOU REPORT THEM

Staff Writer, Z107.7 FM News

Posted: July 1, 2020

San Bernardino County is facing a dangerous wildland fire season this year. Fireworks are known to start many brushfires, and fire and law enforcement agencies will be conducting operations this year to stop illegal fireworks. In addition, many pets are terrified of fireworks. July 5 is the busiest day of the year for animal shelters as residents search for their lost and missing pets who ran off when fireworks started.

California has banned any fireworks that explode, shoot into the air, or move along the ground. Possession and use of illegal firework—like firecrackers, skyrockets, and others—will result in a ticket; fines are up to \$1,250 for the first offense with the possibility of arrest. In addition, property owners may be cited if they allow fireworks to be possessed, stored or used on their property. Ernest Figueroa says the **county fire** department has created a new tool to help residents report suspected illegal fireworks...

The **Office of the Fire Marshal** just launched an Illegal Fireworks Reporter website that allows people to report illegal fireworks online. Residents may make an anonymous report on the website. Include the date, time, and specific location of the suspected illegal activity. Photos and videos may be included in the submission of each report, and can aid in the investigation of alleged violations.

To make an anonymous report, residents may visit <https://bit.ly/SBCoReportFireworks>.

<http://z1077fm.com/fireworks-are-illegal-in-the-county-a-new-app-lets-you-report-them/>

Head-on crash shuts down Route 66 in the Cajon Pass

Staff Writer, Victor Valley News Group

Posted: June 30, 2020



Firefighters had to extricate the driver of a white sedan. (Photo by Matt Fuller)

CAJON PASS, Calif. (VVNG.com) — A head-on crash involving a vehicle and a dump truck prompted authorities to shut down a stretch of Route 66 in the Cajon Pass.

It happened at 4:21 PM on Tuesday, June 30, 2020, near Cajon Blvd. and Kenwood Avenue.

Matt Fuller, a resident of Apple Valley, said the crash happened in front of him and described it as an explosion. According to Fuller, a male in his mid 20's was driving the white sedan when for reasons still unknown, he swerved and went head-on with the Super-10 Dump truck.

“It was one of the worst accidents I’ve ever seen in person,” stated Fuller. Fuller said the driver in the sedan was trapped and injured very badly but alive.

San Bernardino County Fire responded to the incident and extricated the driver from the vehicle. He was transported to a hospital with unknown injuries.

Officers from the California Highway Patrol are handling the investigation. Additional information will be updated as it becomes available.

<https://www.vvng.com/head-on-crash-shuts-down-route-66-in-the-cajon-pass/>

Goat Grazing Mitigates Hazardous Wildfire Fuels In San Bernardino

Staff Writer, Victor Valley News Group

Posted: June 30, 2020



SAN BERNARDINO, Calif. — Today, the **San Bernardino County Fire** Protection District (SBCoFD) announced an evolution in wildfire community risk reduction.

SBCoFD and San Bernardino County Land Use Services (SBCoLUS) will use goats to clear dry, grassy fuels that increase the threat of wildfire for hundreds of residents in the Little Mountain neighborhood of San Bernardino. This unique community risk reduction project is an environmentally friendly, safe and effective method of creating defensible space.

- These San Bernardino County agencies have partnered with Environment Land Management (aka ELM Goats) out of San Diego to bring over 250 goats to Little Mountain.
- The goats will eat away large sections of dry grass, weeds, and thistles, clearing approximately 50 acres of flammable materials.

- The goats will eat about 1 acre per day and are very effective in steep, rocky terrain.

In addition to reducing the threat of wildfire, the goats naturally fertilize the ground and keep it well packed. When goats eat weed seeds, the seeds lose the ability to regrow. The result is a healthier, nutrient dense soil that is less susceptible to erosion and regrowth of dangerous fuels.

The goats are protected from predators by an onsite goat handler and trained guard dogs, as well as around-the-clock, armed security provided by Allied Security. The guard dogs assist in herding the goats to make sure that they remain in the designated fenced areas. The San Bernardino Municipal Water Department will provide the 300-400 gallons of water that the goats will drink per day.

“Goats are one of the most effective fire prevention tools available,” explained San Bernardino County Fire Chief Dan Munsey. “Areas cleared or thinned by goats recover more naturally and resist wildfires, giving fire crews the upper hand in protecting life and property.”

The San Bernardino County Fire Protection District is committed to looking for new, cost effective methods to reduce the risk of wildfire. Fire officials will continue to seek funding to conduct similar fuel reduction projects in various wildfire prone areas throughout the county.

<https://www.vvng.com/goat-grazing-mitigates-hazardous-wildfire-fuels-in-san-bernardino/>

Grazing Goats in San Bernardino Work to Prevent Fires

MEGAN JAMERSON, KVCR News

Posted: June 30, 2020



CREDIT MEGAN JAMERSON/KVCR

For the first time, San Bernardino County is using goats in their fire prevention measures. The animals are used to clear dry grasses in undeveloped areas that put hundreds of nearby residents at risk. KVCR’s Megan Jamerson went to see the animals in action in the city of San Bernardino.

Husband and wife Michael and Shawn Martinez, have lived in the Shandin Hills neighborhood for 16 years. They are diligent about maintaining their own fire break behind their home, but were pleased to see goats clearing the nearby undeveloped golden-brown hills. So, they drove to the hilltop on Ridge Line Drive to see the animals up close.

“We’ve just been enjoying watching the goats for the last week,” said Martinez. “And it also makes us sleep better at night knowing that a lot of this brush is going to be taken away because when the Santa Ana winds blow up here, when you live up here, you are always concerned.”

350 goats including their kids, are clearing 50 acres through their munching on West Little Mountain and East Little Mountain to create a 100 foot fire break and defensible space. This means if a wild land fire happens, homes are better protected.

During a press event in the neighborhood on Tuesday, Dan Munsey the **county fire** chief, says he fought his first fire on this very hill and every year his crews return to fight more fires. He is hopeful that partnering with the community to identify risks and using the goats to mitigate them will reduce the 150,000 plus calls they get for service each year.

“The community is out here in support. They are going to have goats on their hills. They smell a little bit funny. I’m sorry about that,” said Munsey. “But one of the benefits is we are going to be able to remove this fuel before a fire starts.”

Goat grazing is seen as a more environmentally friendly alternative to controlled burns for reaching the rugged terrain surrounding many Southern California communities like this one. Burns often lead to crew injuries and the smoke can be harmful to residents. Goats are just as effective as controlled burns at handling the steep hills and have added bonuses for the land says Johnny Gonzales, operation manager for the company responsible for the animals used here in San Bernardino.

“The beautiful thing about the goats, they are not just replacing weed eating, they are actually converting the grasses into nutrients,” said Gonzales.

Goats are more inclined to eat invasive plants which helps prevent them from growing back, and their manure provides food to native plants. Gonzales says has seen the use of goats become more common in past 21 years as he has operated the business in communities from downtown Los Angeles to the coast in Orange County.

“It really isn’t anything new, it’s just that we are just re-introducing them back to use,” said Gonzales. “We’re really just getting back in touch with nature.”

He says the animals have become really popular, and a staple of the Southern California environment. And just then, two cars drove up with young children eager to get a closer look.

<https://www.kvcrnews.org/post/grazing-goats-san-bernardino-work-prevent-fires>

Not a baaaaad idea: County Fire uses goats to mitigate wildfires on Little Mountain

Martin Estacio, Victorville Daily Press

Posted: June 30, 2020, 6:45pm



A herd of goats used to clear out vegetation eats on Little Mountain in San Bernardino on Tuesday, June 30, 2020. [MARTIN ESTACIO/DAILY PRESS]

SAN BERNARDINO — A very different type of firefighter descended on the steep hills of Little Mountain.

They didn’t wear turnouts, carry hoses or yell out orders.

Instead, the group of about 275 simply bleated, scampered about on cloven hooves and chewed the various dry grasses and weeds on the hillsides.

The herd of goats was doing what nature intended, and Tuesday marked the first time **San Bernardino County Fire** used such help. Department officials hope the goats will mitigate destructive wildfires that have plagued the area in the past.

“We as a fire department realize that, sure, it’s our job to respond to fires but it’s our greater responsibility to prevent fires from happening,” San Bernardino County Fire Department Chief Dan Munsey said Tuesday. “And in this case we’re using ‘kid’ labor, which I’m sure our HR wouldn’t be too happy with.”

With steep terrain, light fuels and frequent, gusty winds, the community of Little Mountain — situated above the Shandin Hills Golf Club in San Bernardino — is prone to fires that start quickly and can destroy property almost as fast.

In October 2019, six people were injured, including two firefighters, in a blaze that started on the east side of Little Mountain. The fire also damaged eight homes and left two of them red-tagged as uninhabitable, the San Bernardino Sun reported.

Two people suffered life-threatening burns in 2017 after another fire in the area charred more than 250 acres and shutdown Interstate 215, the Sun reported.

Michael Martinez and his wife, Shawn, have lived on Little Mountain for 16 years. They said every year brings a similar dread, especially since previous fires have come as close as their backyard and burned their palm trees.

“It’s beautiful to live up here,” Martinez said. “But six months out of the year, when it gets dry and the wind blows, you’re always concerned.”

The hope, then, is that the goats, and their kids, will clear out vegetation so there’s nothing to burn in the first place.

“They’re creating a living fire break,” said operations manager Johnny Gonzales, who works for Environmental Land Management, the San Diego-based company contracted to provide the herd.

According to Gonzales, an individual goat can eat about 8% of its body weight, which translates to about 10 pounds of plant material a day.

On average, a herd can clear out one to 1 ½ acres per day. They can work in steep terrain, and their dung inhibits weeds from growing back and fertilizes the soil, he said.

The goats looked perfectly content Tuesday while chewing on the hillside. They were hemmed in by an electric fence and guarded by dogs meant to protect them from coyotes and other wildlife.

County Battalion Chief Bob Evans said utilizing the goats was also more environmentally friendly than fire crews that typically burn an area as a preventative measure, which creates smoke pollution.

Michael Martinez said he appreciated what the herd had done so far.

“The goats seem to be working. You take a look where they first started and it’s like a giant lawnmower has cleared all of the brush,” he said.

County officials aim for the goats to eat about 50 acres on Little Mountain. The abatement program could be extended to other areas if it works there.

The chewed-down buffer will hopefully provide residents, like Martinez, with a more peaceful state of mind.

“We pay for the view every year, especially at night when the wind’s blowing real hard,” he said. “It’ll scare you.”

<https://www.vvdailypress.com/news/20200630/not-baaaaad-idea-county-fire-uses-goats-to-mitigate-wildfires-on-little-mountain>

S.B. County Fire uses goat grazing to help prevent wildfires

Staff Writer, Fontana Herald News

Posted: June 30, 2020



The San Bernardino County Fire Protection District will use goats to clear dry, grassy fuels that increase the threat of wildfire for hundreds of residents in the Little Mountain neighborhood of San Bernardino.

The **San Bernardino County Fire** Protection District (SBCoFD) recently announced an evolution in wildfire community risk reduction.

SBCoFD and San Bernardino County Land Use Services (SBCoLUS) will use goats to clear dry, grassy fuels that increase the threat of wildfire for hundreds of residents in the Little Mountain neighborhood of San Bernardino.

"This unique community risk reduction project is an environmentally friendly, safe and effective method of creating defensible space," said Tracey Martinez, public information officer for the county.

These San Bernardino County agencies have partnered with Environment Land Management (aka ELM Goats) out of San Diego to bring more than 250 goats to Little Mountain. The goats will eat away large sections of dry grass, weeds, and thistles, clearing approximately 50 acres of flammable materials. The goats will eat about 1 acre per day and are very effective in steep, rocky terrain.

In addition to reducing the threat of wildfire, the goats naturally fertilize the ground and keep it well packed. When goats eat weed seeds, the seeds lose the ability to regrow. The result is a healthier, nutrient dense soil that is less susceptible to erosion and regrowth of dangerous fuels.

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“Goats are one of the most effective fire prevention tools available,” said San Bernardino County Fire Chief Dan Munsey. “Areas cleared or thinned by goats recover more naturally and resist wildfires, giving fire crews the upper hand in protecting life and property.”

"The San Bernardino County Fire Protection District is committed to looking for new, cost effective methods to reduce the risk of wildfire. Fire officials will continue to seek funding to conduct similar fuel reduction projects in various wildfire prone areas throughout the county," Martinez said.

https://www.fontanaheraldnews.com/news/inland_empire_news/s-b-county-fire-uses-goat-grazing-to-help-prevent-wildfires/article_e3862c9c-bb0c-11ea-a951-2f70581453b7.html