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The Week of July 24, 2026

Targeted Grazing to Reduce Wildfire Risk Across Forest Lands



Photo Courtesy U.S. Forest Service-Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest Facebook

By Sydney Trainor

During the June 26 legislative committee on public lands, the Carson Ranger District outlined its ongoing efforts to reduce wildfire risk across national forest lands through a variety of vegetation management techniques. District Ranger Matt Zumstein explained that the U.S. Forest Service uses several methods to reduce fuels that can feed large wildfires, including thinning, prescribed fire, mastication, hand crews, and targeted sheep grazing. Among those strategies, targeted grazing has become an increasingly important tool for managing fire fuels in areas close to communities and recreation sites.

Rather than using sheep for traditional livestock production, the Forest Service uses them to consume fine fuels before they can dry out and contribute to fires. Fine fuels include fast drying, lightweight vegetation such as cheatgrass, small twigs, and pine needles. Sheep are brought into front-country areas where grazing can help lower wildfire risk near communities and popular recreation areas.

To support that work, the Carson Ranger District currently has seven active grazing permittees, including three livestock use permits dedicated specifically to targeted grazing. Those permits allow sheep to graze specifically for fuel reduction projects, helping reduce the buildup of vegetation that can rapidly spread wildfire.

During the presentation, Se. Ira Hansen asked whether targeted grazing is now an established Forest Service practice or still experimental. The discussion focused on how long the practice has been used, whether it has proven effective and what additional research is still needed before expanding it further.

Zumstein explained that it's both, noting the district has used targeted grazing in some areas for decades while continuing to partner with the University of Nevada, Reno to evaluate and refine the practice. Researchers establish monitoring plots in grazed areas and collect long-term data to better understand how targeted grazing affects vegetation over time. Zumstein said the research is also helping determine whether spring grazing during green-up or fall grazing provides the greatest reduction in fine fuels and the most effective use of resources.

"We've been providing data as they'll go out, create plots and start to track that in some of the ones that have a longer-term grazing history. So I think that we are seeing benefits from it," Zumstein said. "We have a good relationship with UNR and I think there's desire and impetus to continue that research, and certainly we are seeing good effects from having them out there."

Zumstein also explained how targeted grazing projects are different from traditional grazing permits. Ranchers operating under traditional grazing permits pay standard grazing fees, while those participating in targeted grazing projects generally have those fees waived because they are providing a wildfire mitigation service. "The point of these isn't so much to provide browse for the sheep as to mitigate the fine fuels. It's a little bit different than our other grazing permits." He explained.

Hansen pointed to a long-running targeted grazing project as an example of the practice's effectiveness. "It was in 2008 Carson City area, I actually hired the Borda Sheep Company to go and graze the C- Hills," he explained, "and it's been extremely successful." Hansen said the area, which had been dominated by cheatgrass, has not experienced a significant wildfire since the project began. He also noted that reducing cheatgrass has allowed native perennial plants and shrubs to return, helping restore the landscape while reducing hazardous fuels.

While the program has received broad support, Zumstein acknowledged some challenges, particularly conflicts between sheep and off-leash dogs in popular recreation areas. The Forest Service works with homeowners' associations, animal control, permittees and the public to minimize conflicts through education, outreach and scheduling. Despite those issues, Zumstein said the district has found that public support has grown over the past decade as more people recognize the role targeted grazing plays in reducing wildfire risk.

Zumstein emphasized that targeted grazing is not intended to replace other vegetation treatments, but instead complements prescribed fire, thinning and mechanical treatments. "It's a tool in the toolbox," he said, explaining that no single method can address every landscape or wildfire risk.

Legislators noted that preventing fires through targeted grazing appears to be a far less expensive approach than suppressing large wildfires and rehabilitating burned landscapes afterward. Zumstein agreed, describing sheep grazing as one of several tools used in the Forest Service's active management strategy. He said the district plans to continue expanding the practice where conditions are appropriate, with the goal of preventing catastrophic fires before they begin.

Federal PILT Funding Supports Rural Nevada Counties

By Sydney Trainor

Rural counties across Nevada will receive more than $35.6 million in federal Payments in Lieu of Taxes (PILT) funding this year, including nearly $5.2 million for Humboldt, Lander and Pershing counties.

Announced June 23, 2026, by U.S. Senators Jacky Rosen (D-NV) and Catherine Cortez Masto (D-NV), the funding is intended to help local governments offset the loss of property tax revenue on federally owned land. The yearly funding supports essential services such as law enforcement, firefighting, public schools and infrastructure.

Pershing County will receive $1,473,387 for 2,918,834 acres of federal land. Humboldt County will receive $2,360,229 for 4,978,471 acres, while Lander County is set to receive $1,341,205 for 3,332,299 acres.

"For counties with a high percentage of public lands, like many in Nevada, PILT payments are a lifeline," Cortez Masto said. "This critical funding helps our rural communities pay for essential services from public education to firefighting. I'll never stop working to ensure that families in rural Nevada get the support that the federal government owes them."

Rosen said the funding will help rural communities continue providing vital public services.

"One of my top priorities is to ensure that our rural communities have the federal funding they need to support critical services, such as public safety and education," Rosen said. "I'm proud to announce that more than $35 million is coming to rural communities across Nevada so they can continue to provide essential services for families. I'll keep fighting to ensure communities in rural Nevada get their fair share of federal funding."

Nevada Appoints New State Fire Marshal



Eugene Zahara (far left). photo courtesy Bar Nunn Fire Department Facebook

By Sydney Trainor

The Nevada State Police Department of Public Safety has appointed Eugene Zahara as Nevada State Fire Marshal, effective July 20. Zahara brings more than 33 years of experience in fire service and executive leadership to the position, where he will oversee statewide fire prevention, code enforcement, fire investigations, public education and fire service support programs.

The Office of the State Fire Marshal has been operating under the oversight of the Nevada State Police Investigation District since February, when previous Fire Marshal Joseph Rodriquez was fired following his arrest on a misdemeanor DUI charge.

According to the Department of Public Safety, Zahara was selected through the appointment process outlined in Nevada Revised Statute 477.143, which requires a competitive recruitment and review of applicants by the Nevada Board of Fire Services before an appointment is made by the department.

Throughout his career, Zahara has served in both Wyoming and California in a variety of fire service roles, including fire suppression, emergency medical services, fire prevention, fire investigations, code enforcement, emergency management and executive leadership. Most recently, he served as fire chief in Bar Nunn, Wyoming, where he led the community's fire department before accepting the Nevada appointment.

"Chief Zahara's extensive experience in fire service leadership, emergency management, and public safety will be an asset to Nevada," Nevada State Police Director George Togliatti said. "His commitment to protecting lives, strengthening partnerships, and supporting Nevada's fire service community will help advance the important mission of the Office of the State Fire Marshal."

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EDITORIAL

Supporting American Brewers Supports Nevada's Hospitality Industry



Photo Courtesy Craftbeer.com

By Mary Ellen Tsuni

Nevada's hospitality sector employs hundreds of thousands of people and drives billions of dollars in economic activity every year. I have spent my career in the beverage industry here, working with producers, distributors, retailers, and restaurant operators, and I have a clear view of our closely linked hospitality and beverage ecosystems. Pressure in one part of that system does not stay contained but rather spreads rapidly. Right now, America's brewing industry is under enormous pressure from imported Mexican beer, which is having ripple effects throughout the economy, touching everything from agriculture to hospitality to trucking. We need trade policy that supports our domestic brewers and the industries that rely on them.

Wherever you fall on the political spectrum, it's important to note at the outset that I do not view tariffs as an inherently partisan issue. America is part of a global economy and fair trade offers our domestic businesses a real chance to compete. This is sorely needed in the brewing industry because American beermakers, be they craft brewers or large manufacturers, face massive structural disadvantages in the global market.

Beer imports have almost doubled their share of the American market over the past decade, growing from about 14 percent in 2013 to nearly one in four beers consumed today. More than 80 percent of those imports come from Mexico, where large breweries have been scaling up rapidly with the American market as their explicit target. Workers in those facilities earn approximately $3,700 a year. American brewery workers earn nearly $80,000. Mexican producers also pay substantially lower taxes and face far less burdensome regulatory requirements than American companies.

Farmers have an important stake in the success of the U.S. brewing industry. American brewers purchase more than one billion dollars in agricultural products every year, including the barley and hops used in making beer. As domestic production contracts, that demand contracts with it, traveling through the distribution network into the restaurants and bars that carry American brands, and into the communities that depend on all of it.

What I see in my day-to-day work is the pressure this places on independent operators. Restaurants and bars in Nevada are already navigating one of the most difficult operating environments in recent memory. Food costs, labor costs, and overhead have all climbed steeply. Operators who built their businesses on thin margins are now making difficult decisions about what beverage products to carry. Most consumers only ever get a glimpse of the vast beverage supply chain in this country, but all of it is heavily dependent on a robust and thriving American brewing industry.

Nevada is an instructive case precisely because our economy is so heavily weighted toward hospitality and tourism. The servers, bartenders, distributors, and small-business owners who make this state work are downstream from the trade policy decisions made in Washington, D.C.

If current trends hold, beer imports are projected to account for as much as 40 percent of total U.S. consumption, with estimated GDP losses of up to $23 billion. Those losses will be felt the most by the workers and small-business owners who have the least capacity to absorb them. These are people I work with on a daily basis, and I can tell you that is the last thing they need right now.

We have watched too many once-thriving American industries lose ground to foreign competition. The fallout always comes in the form of lost jobs and struggling communities, particularly rural ones. Tariffs on beer imported from Mexico will help to give America's breweries a fighting chance. I urge the Trump Administration to defend our U.S. beverage economy by enacting these tariffs.

Mary Ellen Tsunis is a Nevada-based wine and beverage industry professional with extensive experience across the beverage, hospitality, and restaurant sectors.

Farm Bureau Backs BLM Grazing Updates, Seeks Clarifications

Staff Report

The American Farm Bureau Federation has voiced broad support for the Bureau of Land Management's proposed updates to federal grazing regulations, calling them a long-overdue modernization of a program that has remained largely unchanged for nearly three decades. They emphasized that the proposal is a modernization of grazing administration, not a change authorizing grazing decisions themselves.

The comments mirror many of those submitted by the Nevada Farm Bureau, which also endorsed the proposal while urging the agency to carefully evaluate how the new regulations would work together.

"While we support the overall direction of the proposal, we encourage careful consideration of how the individual regulatory changes interact with one another," the Nevada Farm Bureau wrote. "In particular, we urge the Bureau to fully consider the impacts of state water laws and existing water rights when implementing provisions related to grazing permit non-use."

The American Farm Bureau Federation praised the proposal's emphasis on science-based land management and supported changes including recognizing targeted grazing as a land management tool to reduce wildfire fuels, greater flexibility for permittees to respond to changing conditions, and updated definitions intended to reflect modern ranching practices. It also backed evaluating rangeland health across all public land uses rather than focusing solely on livestock grazing.

The federation also recommended refinements, including verifying remote sensing data with on-the-ground monitoring, preserving state authority over water rights, and focusing early consultation on permittees, neighboring landowners and affected local governments before broader public review occurs.

From The Readers...

By Andrea Caldwell

Wow! Just received my first copy of the GB Sun and as I am reading it, the feeling of, "Oh, this is EXACTLY what I have been missing ... all this time." ... Here's to you, Rachel, in building a media empire in the wastelands of Nevada! You should be very proud of yourself and your dedicated team in producing this from nothing except a very empty space crying to be filled with local, pertinent and relevant news! Thank you!!!

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EVENTS

Nevada Mining Association Presents Safety Awards



Courtesy of NVMA, 2025 Operator Safety Award Group Photo

By Sydney Trainor

On July 14, the Nevada Mining Association (NVMA) announced their 2026 Mine Operator and Contractor Safety Award Winners, including 27 mine operations and five contractors.

"These awards recognize an outstanding commitment to workplace safety," said NVMA President Amanda Hilton. "Every operator and contractor recognized is committed to sending their crew home safely, shift after shift. More than recognizing strong safety records, these awards reflect the shared responsibility and effort that define our industry."

Operator Safety Awards are based on Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA) data from the previous year. The evaluation considers factors such as employees on site, total hours worked in 2025, penalties for lost-time accidents, reportable incidents and lost-time days. Several recipients also achieved the industry's "triple zero" designation, meaning they completed the year without a reportable injury, restricted-duty case or lost-time incident.

Additionally, the Contractor Safety Awards honor third-party companies whose employees work alongside mine operators across Nevada. Five contractors were recognized this year, reflecting high standards of safety and collaboration.

Award recipients will be recognized, along with the 45 winners of the 2026 Individual Safety Awards, during the Celebration of Excellence at the Tahoe Blue Event Center. The awards ceremony is part of the Nevada Mining Association's annual convention, and will take place on Sept. 11 at 6:30 p.m. The three-day event brings together mine operators, contractors, suppliers and other industry professionals for networking, educational presentations, a reverse expo, golf tournament and discussions on issues affecting Nevada's mining industry.

According to NVMA, recognizing strong safety performance is one way they encourage mines to continue improving workplace practices. The annual awards program highlights successful safety efforts, promotes the exchange of effective strategies and reinforces the importance of making worker safety a priority throughout Nevada's mining industry.

For more information about the NVMA and its commitment to safety, visit www.nevadamining.org.

<u>The 2026 NVMA Operator Safety Award Winners:</u>

Aggregate
1st Ames Construction Inc.
Ames Backfill Portable Crusher
1st Granite Construction Company
Lockwood Quarry
1st Western Nevada Materials
Spanish Springs Quarry

Non-Metals
1st Arcosa Specialty Materials
Arcosa Adams Claim #1850
1st Empire Mining Company
Empire Mine
1st Lhoist North America
Amargosa Quarry and Plant
1st U.S. Silica Company
Clark Operations
1st U.S. Silica Company
Colado Mine
1st U.S. Silica Company
Colado Plant
1st U.S. Silica Company
Fernley Operations

Surface – Large (300+)
1st KGHM International
Robinson Operation
2nd SSR Mining
Marigold
3rd Nevada Gold Mines
Twin Creeks

Surface – Medium (100-299)
1st McEwen Mining
Gold Bar

Surface – Small (20-99)
1st Mining Americas Inc.
Pan Mine
1st Hycroft Resources
Hycroft Mine
1st Lithium Nevada Corp.
Thacker Pass
1st Kinross Nevada
Bald Mountain South Operation
1st i-80 Gold
Ruby Hill Mine

Underground – Large (300+)
1st Nevada Gold Mines
Cortez
2nd Nevada Gold Mines
Turquoise Ridge
3rd Nevada Gold Mines
Leeville

Underground - Medium (100-299)
1st Nevada Gold Mines
Exodus
2nd Nevada Gold Mines
Pete Bajo

Underground – Small (20-99)
1st i-80
Granite Creek
1st Nevada Gold Mines
El Nino
1st Kinross Nevada
Round Mountain Underground

The 2026 NVMA Contractor Safety Award Winners:

Small Mine Development (SMD)
Leeville
Small Mine Development (SMD)
North Post - Meikle Underground
Small Mine Development (SMD)
Rita K
Cementation USA Inc.
Gold Rush Underground
GenX Mining Contractors

Wild Horse Gather Schedule Changes and Updates

By Sydney Trainor

The Bureau of Land Management's (BLM) 2026 wild horse gather schedule is shifting as several gathers across the West are being completed ahead of schedule. Although the Bureau has not published an updated national gather schedule since May 15, current gather announcements and daily reports are posted on the BLM's website.

Because of these changes, the Moriah herd gather in eastern Nevada is being moved up almost an entire week. The BLM's tentative national gather schedule has the Moriah gather listed as running from July 27 through Aug. 13. However, they recently announced that the gather will start on July 20 instead. This is possibly due to the Saylor Creek gather being completed early.

The Moriah gather will remove up to 500 wild horses from the herd area and nearby public lands. Located about 48 miles northeast of Ely, the Moriah Herd Management Area (HMA) has an Appropriate Management Level (AML) of zero wild horses under the BLM's 2008 Ely Resource Management Plan. The agency says the area is no longer designated for long-term wild horse management because it does not meet the criteria for maintaining a thriving ecological balance alongside other public land uses. Temporary public land closures will be in effect during this time.

Although the Saylor Creek roundup was scheduled to run from July 10 through 17, the BLM completed the entire gather in a single day, on July 15. The BLM's original plan for Saylor Creek was to gather roughly 150 wild horses, permanently remove about 105, and treat 22 mares with fertility control before releasing them back to the range. After conducting a survey in May that estimated the herd's post-foaling population at only 118 horses, the BLM revised its plan to gather approximately 100 horses, remove about 68 and treat 16 mares. The roundup concluded with 103 horses captured, all of which were then transported to the Boise Off-Range Wild Horse Corrals.

Meanwhile, the northern Nevada Callaghan Complex gather remains in progress. As of July 17, the BLM had gathered a cumulative total of 1,240 wild horses, including 516 stallions, 501 mares and 223 foals. The Callaghan Complex gather is one of the largest planned wild horse gathers in the country this year, with up to 2,000 horses scheduled for removal over approximately 1,145,515 acres. This gather is intended to reduce the herd to its established AML of 323-552 horses. Additionally, wild horses have been reported moving frequently along State Route 305, creating public safety issues.

The Bureau of Land Management conducts horse gathers and removals to protect the health of horses and well as rangelands. Large-scale gathers such as the Callaghan Complex are intended to reduce wild horse populations to appropriate management levels, or levels public rangelands can sustain. According to the BLM, "By balancing herd size with what the land can support and avoiding an overpopulation of wild horses on the range, the BLM aims to protect the habitat for other wildlife species such as sage-grouse, pronghorn antelope, mule deer and elk."

During some gathers, mares are treated with fertility control vaccines, including porcine zona pellucida (PZP) or GonaCon-Equine, before being released back to the range. Fertility control has been used since 1978, and is intended to slow herd growth between gathers and reduce the number of horses that need be removed in future years. According to research funded by BLM and the National Park Service, two doses of GonaCon-Equine can provide four years or more of contraception. The BLM says it plans to increase use of GonaCon-Equine because of this.

During gathers, helicopters are used to drive horses into temporary holding facilities, where information is collected on herd characteristics and herd health can be determined.


Photo Courtesy Bureau of Land Management - Idaho Facebook

Following capture, horses are transported to off-range holding facilities for veterinary examinations and processing before becoming eligible for adoption through the BLM's Wild Horse and Burro Program. Horses gathered from the Moriah Herd Area will be taken to the Winnemucca Off-Range Corrals in Paradise, Nevada.

Several additional Nevada wild horse gathers remain on the BLM's tentative schedule this year. The Callaghan Complex gather is expected to continue through Aug. 31, the Lake Lahontan Herd Management Area gather is scheduled for July 20-30 with up to 700 horses planned for removal, and the Jackson Mountains Herd Management Area gather is scheduled for Sept. 20-30 with up to 500 horses planned for removal.

Nevada Police Foundation Partnered with Reno Aces for Fundraiser

By Sydney Trainor

The Nevada Police Foundation partnered with the Reno Aces this week for a fundraising campaign supporting Nevada law enforcement officers and the continued maintenance of the state's Peace Officer Memorial. Half of each ticket purchased through the Foundation's website for the July 23 Reno Aces vs. Tacoma Raiders game benefitted the nonprofit organization.

The Nevada Police Foundation maintains the Nevada Peace Officer Memorial on the grounds of the Nevada Legislative Campus in Carson City. The memorial honors the 158 Nevada law enforcement officers who have lost their lives in the line of duty. Unlike many public memorials, it receives no funding from a government agency and is maintained entirely through private donations and community support.

In addition to preserving the memorial, the Foundation serves as the official nonprofit organization for the Nevada Sheriffs' and Chiefs' Association. The association represents all 17 of Nevada's sheriff's offices and police departments, with the Foundation providing support for initiatives that benefit law enforcement agencies and the officers who serve communities throughout the state.

The Reno Aces partnership gave baseball fans an opportunity to support those efforts while enjoying an evening at the ballpark. Funds raised through ticket sales will help the Foundation continue maintaining the memorial and carrying out its mission of supporting Nevada law enforcement.

More information about the Nevada Police Foundation is available at nevadapolicefoundation.org.

SPORTS

2026 Mountain West Preseason All-Conference Football Team Announced



Provided to GBS

LAS VEGAS – The 2026 Preseason All-Mountain West Football Team was released at the Old Trapper Mountain West Football Media Days, being held at The Palms Casino Resort. As selected by a media panel, the team features five student-athletes who were first or second-team All-MW selections in 2025. The 28-member squad is comprised of two graduate students, three sophomores, five juniors and 17 seniors.

Hawaii sophomore quarterback Micah Alejado is the Preseason Mountain West Offensive Player of the Year, while New Mexico senior linebacker Jaxton Eck is the Preseason MW Defensive Player of the Year. North Dakota State junior return-specialist Jackson Williams is the Preseason MW Special Teams Player of the Year.

Alejado, who was named the 2025 Mountain West Freshman of the Year, led the MW with 24 passing touchdowns, setting both the school and Conference single-season records by a freshman.

The native of Las Vegas led the MW and ranked eighth nationally with 282.4 passing yards per game, while also leading the MW with 25.9 completions per contest.

Alejado led the Rainbow Warriors to a 9-4 mark in 2025, including a Sheraton Hawaii Bowl victory over Cal, while completing 285 passes for 3,106 yards. He was the only FBS quarterback to throw for at least 300 yards in four consecutive games in 2025.

Alejado is the first Rainbow Warrior to earn a MW preseason individual award and the first sophomore in the history of the Conference to be named MW Preseason Offensive Player of the Year.

Eck, the 2025 MW Co-Defensive Player of the Year and first-team all-MW honoree, started all 13 games for New Mexico, finishing 10th nationally with 129 tackles.

The Brookings, South Dakota, native added 6.5 tackles for loss, including 1.5 sacks, two pass breakups, one forced fumble and a fumble recovery. Eck is New Mexico's first MW Preseason Defensive Player of the Year all-time.

Williams becomes North Dakota State's first MW preseason individual award winner as the Bison make the transition up to FBS. The Omaha, Nebraska, native was a 2025 FCS All-America punt returner after averaging 13.9 yards on 25 returns.

He registered one punt return touchdown last season, a 52-yard score against Illinois State on Dec. 6, 2025. Williams returned 14 kickoffs for 32.1 yards per return, including a 100-yard touchdown against Youngstown State on Nov. 1, 2025. He is one of only three Division I players with a kickoff and punt return touchdown last season.

<u>2026 MOUNTAIN WEST FOOTBALL PRESEASON ALL-CONFERENCE TEAM</u>

Offense
QB - Micah Alejado, So., Hawaii
WR - Pofele Ashlock, Sr., Hawaii
WR - Troy Omeire, Sr., New Mexico
WR - Taeshaun Lyons, Jr., UNLV
RB - Owen Allen, Sr., Air Force
RB - Jai'Den Thomas, Sr., UNLV
OL - Jack Foster, Sr., Nevada
OL - Malik Aliane, Sr., New Mexico
OL - Griffin Empey, Jr., North Dakota State
OL - Austin Boyd, Sr., UNLV
OL - Rex Johnsen, Sr., Wyoming
TE - Cade Keith, So., New Mexico

<u>Defense</u>
DL - Dylan LaBarbera, Sr., Nevada
DL - Brian Booker, Sr., New Mexico
DL - Keenan Wilson, Jr., North Dakota State
DL - Lucas Conti, Jr., UNLV
LB - Blake Fletcher, Sr., Air Force
LB - Jamih Otis, Sr., Hawaii
LB - Jaxton Eck, Sr., New Mexico
LB - Ethan Stuhlsatz, Gr., Wyoming
DB - Elijah Palmer, Sr., Hawaii
DB - Aiden Walker, So., Nevada
DB - Darius Givance, Sr., North Dakota State
DB - Jake Pope, Sr., UNLV

<u>Specialists</u>
P - Bart Edmiston, Sr., Wyoming
PK - Joe McFadden, Gr., Nevada
PR - Jackson Williams, Jr., North Dakota State
KR - Jackson Williams, Jr., North Dakota State

Offensive Player of the Year: Micah Alejado, So., QB, Hawaii

Defensive Player of the Year: Jaxton Eck, Sr., LB, New Mexico

Special Teams Player of the Year: Jackson Williams, Jr., PR/KR, North Dakota State

NIAA to have short-term executive director, hope to have new one in November

By Tony Erquiaga

The NIAA Board on Control has taken the first step to solve its latest setback and problem, setting a timeline for a new executive director to be in place and hopefully hiring that person to start on Nov. 2.

In the meantime, there will be an interim executive director to run the day-to-day duties, until a permanent suitor can be hired.

Current executive director Timothy Jackson announced his resignation last month, effective Aug. 1. Jackson held the position for just two years, taking the realm from Donnie Nelson. He previously served as the director of athletics for CCSD and athletic director at Durango High School.

"It has been an honor to serve Nevada's member schools and student-athletes," Jackson said in a release from the NIAA. "I am proud of the strides we have made in professionalizing our operations, expanding opportunities for students, and strengthening our relationships with state leaders."

The move comes at a time where there is turmoil in Clark County over football. CCSD schools in the 4A and 5A moved to independent status to create their own league within the school district. They will not play for a state title but have to abide by NIAA rules and regulations.

The crux of the problem, is Bishop Gorman, a private school in Las Vegas, that has been nationally ranked for over a decade. This year the Gaels are predicted to ne No. 1 or 2 in national preseason polls.

In addition, for this school year, lacrosse and girls wrestling become sanctioned sports. This will be the first year of lacrosse in Nevada.

The search for an interim executive director is underway.

The NIAA posted an announcement, opening the application process for an interim executive director with the plan to choose an interim during the week of July 27 to start on Aug. 3 when Jackson leaves.

In hopes to broaden its pool of candidates, the NIAA will have a four-week period for applicants to apply for the position. When Jackson was chosen for the position during the spring of 2023, the NIAA only received two applicants during a two-week window.

The board of control made modifications to requirements for the position. A master's degree or specific athletic administration certifications will not be required. A minimum of a bachelor's degree and at least seven years of experience working in a high school sports state association or in education administrations, or similar fields, will be required.

The Board of Control appointed board members Colin McNaught, Gregg Malkovich and Dennis Holmes to serve on a sub-committee of the board to examine candidates.

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