



NEWS



News Headlines 01/06/2021

- The Top Stories Of 2020, Part 3 Of 4

The Top Stories Of 2020, Part 3 Of 4

Staff Writer, z1077fm.com

Posted: January 6, 2021



A hand crew in the El Dorado Fire area. San Bernardino County Fire photo

Continuing our top stories of 2020 are three stories with a big effect on the environment and wildlife. Several fires west of the Morongo Basin blanketed our area with smoke for days. The Apple Fire started July 31, caused by burning carbon from a diesel truck's exhaust off of Oak Glen Road in Cherry Valley. The fire burned more than 33,000 acres and threatened evacuations of Morongo Valley and Pioneertown. The Dome Fire in the Mojave Preserve burned 43,000 acres of thick Joshua tree forests; it was started by lightning August 15. Closer to home, lightning sparked a small wildfire in Sunfair Dry Lake in Joshua Tree August 18, and burned 160 acres. The El Dorado fire started September 5 by a gender-reveal smoke-bomb near Yucaipa. It burned almost 23,000 acres. Both the Apple and El Dorado fires were not declared 100 percent contained until November 18.

And last year, the town of Yucca Valley came under fire for its permit process for removing Joshua trees. Managing editor Tami Roleff has more about the iconic Joshua trees...

The state Fish and Game Commission attempted to protect the Joshua trees from possible extinction by declaring climate change a threat to their survival. In September, the commission granted the iconic trees temporary protection while it reviews for the case. For about a year, it will be illegal to cut down, damage or remove a Joshua tree without a permit or special permission. In December, the Commission voted to give the Town of Yucca Valley (as well as Palmdale and the county) authority to approve projects that require the removal of Joshua trees for certain construction projects.

And finally in our top stories today, rabbits in the Morongo Basin—and the predators who depend on them—are threatened by a highly infectious disease that kills nearly every rabbit infected. Rabbit hemorrhagic disease made its appearance in the Mojave Desert—including the Morongo Basin—in May. Rabbits die within days of infection, and those who survive spread the disease for up to seven weeks after infection. There is no cure.

<http://z1077fm.com/local-news/todays-full-newscast/>