

**LOCAL HEALTH EMERGENCY PROCLAMATION BY THE NEVADA COUNTY DEPUTY PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICER DUE TO IMMEDIATE PUBLIC HEALTH THREAT CAUSED BY HAZARDOUS WASTE AND DEBRIS FROM THE RIVER FIRE**

**WHEREAS**, California Health & Safety Code sections 101075, et seq., authorize the proclamation of a local health emergency by the Public Health Officer, or their designee, for any area of the County affected by hazardous waste which poses an immediate threat to public health; and

**WHEREAS**, Health & Safety Code section 101080 provides that a local health emergency proclamation shall expire unless ratified by the Board of Supervisors within seven (7) days; and

**WHEREAS**, on August 4, 2021, in the afternoon hours, a wildfire commenced near the Bear River Campground, which was subsequently named the “River Fire;” and

**WHEREAS**, the River Fire resulted in mass mandatory and voluntary evacuations and the destruction of multiple homes and structures and has consumed over 2,400 acres, necessitating a unified command response by Cal FIRE, the Nevada County Consolidated Fire Protection District, Peardale Chicago Park Fire District, and Higgins Fire Protection District; and

**WHEREAS**, the Deputy Public Health Officer for the County of Nevada hereby finds and determines that:

1. The River Fire in Nevada County, commencing on August 4, 2021, caused significant structural damage to, or the complete destruction of, numerous private structures, resulting in the accumulation of ash debris, much of which is subject to contamination with heavy metals, asbestos, and/or other hazardous waste.
2. The release or escape of the above-mentioned conditions of hazardous waste poses a substantial immediate threat and hazard to public health and safety unless immediately addressed and managed.
3. There is an imminent and proximate threat of contagious, infectious or communicable disease, chemical agent and/or non-communicable biologic agent, and/or other toxins, due to accumulations of perishable foods and other organic materials that normally require refrigeration but have been left to spoil due to electricity disruption, and also due to potential contamination or destruction of residential and commercial water supply in the burned areas.
4. The circumstances of the accumulation of this hazardous waste, contaminated debris, perishable items and potential contamination or destruction of water supplies and the need to immediately remove hazardous waste and debris and abate the above-referenced conditions are, or are likely to be, beyond the control, capacity, and resources of the services, personnel, equipment, and facilities of Nevada County.

5. The Nevada County Board of Supervisors is not in session and cannot immediately be called into session.
6. This Declaration will enable the County of Nevada to more effectively respond to the immediate public health threat caused by the River Fire, seek and utilize mutual aid, and pursue any available financial reimbursement sources for the costs incurred in responding to this local health emergency.
7. The aforesaid threat to public health necessitates the proclamation of the existence of a local health emergency in accordance with California Health & Safety Code section 101075, et seq.

**NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY PROCLAIMED** by the Deputy Public Health Officer for the County of Nevada that as of August 6, 2021, a local health emergency is now threatened to exist in areas burned and impacted by the River Fire due to hazardous waste in the form of debris, debris ash, and the presence of other hazardous materials, and due to the potential contamination of residential food and water supplies.

**IT IS FURTHER PROCLAIMED** that state and local agencies are in the process of finalizing a program to remove both hazardous and non-hazardous debris from structures through which the fire burned.

**IT IS FURTHER PROCLAIMED AND ORDERED** that during the existence of said local emergency the powers, functions, and duties of the Nevada County Public Health Officer shall be those prescribed by state law, including but not limited to the provisions of Sections 101040 and 101085 of the California Health and Safety Code, and by ordinances and resolutions of Nevada County, and that this emergency proclamation shall expire seven (7) days after its issuance unless confirmed and ratified by the Nevada County Board of Supervisors within that period of time.

Dated: August 6, 2021

By: *Glennah Trochet M.D.*  
Glennah Trochet M.D. (Aug 6, 2021 14:41 PDT)  
Glennah Trochet, MD  
Deputy Public Health Officer County of  
Nevada