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SUBMITTED PHOTO



STEVEN VETTER/The I-70 Scout

A June 9 grass fire that ignited at High Plains Raceway on Highway 36 northeast of Deer Trail got into the stacked tire barrier, left photo, resulting in billowing black smoke that was reportedly seen from Strasburg to the west, Last Chance to the east, and Deer Trail to the south. Right photo, a Douglas County fire attack helicopter drops a water barrier on the west side of the track.

Car track dodges catastrophic fire damage

by **Steven Vetter**
Managing Editor

DEER TRAIL — While about 20 acres were charred and a portion of its tire barrier melted, the region's auto racing track northeast of Deer Trail avoided significant damage to its track, facilities

and employees during a June 9 grass fire. "Could have been so much worse but, because of excellent fire mitigation efforts by the track manager, damage was really limited compared to what it could have been," said Deer Trail Fire Chief Rich Loveless following Tuesday afternoon's blaze at High Plains Raceway. "Even with 45 mph winds,

since things were mowed so low, fire crews were able to stop the fire at the asphalt. Otherwise, it could have jumped the track and been on the north side and who knows what the damage could have been. It's something other [property owners] can
SEE RACE TRACK FIRE
PAGE 10

Beat the heat!

STEVEN VETTER/The I-70 Scout

The Strasburg Parks & Recreation District hosted the formal grand opening of Community Park East June 3. The new facility on the east side of Wagner Street across from the existing park and softball field features a water park, sports courts, pavilion with concessions, a new amphitheater with a grass seating area, and an outdoor classroom. Above, Garrett Martin, 10, enjoys one of the waterfalls in the new splash pad.

1 last DT court date approved

by **Steven Vetter**
Managing Editor

DEER TRAIL — The anticipated suspension of Deer Trail Municipal Court through the end of the year won't happen until one more session is held later this month. During their June 9 meeting, town trustees voted unanimously to table Ordinance 316, formalizing the suspension of the court, until

three pending trials occur. The board also approved the appointment of the current municipal judge for \$500 for one more session before suspending proceedings for the the rest of the year. While it's widely anticipated that the three outstanding cases might be dismissed, one set of plaintiffs attending last week's board
SEE DEER TRAIL BOT
PAGE 4

Colorado wheat crop pessimism abounds

by **Steven Vetter**
Managing Editor

ROGGEN — There seems to be little doubt that this summer's Colorado wheat harvest will be the most meager in five decades but fears are that it could fall well below the last estimate from state ag prognosticators. Most recent projections from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Ag Statistics Service reiterated an estimated Colorado wheat crop of 33.6 million bushels, the lowest on record since 1965. But state wheat industry officials are nervous the harvest won't be that good. "I don't think they understand how much freeze damage there is out there," said Colorado Wheat Executive Director Brad Erker during one of the 12 annual statewide wheat field days at Cooksey Farms near Roggen June 12. "We started with such a great crop in the ground last fall and it even looked pretty good in March, but this tour has been pretty enlightening. When you add the freeze to everything else that's happened, it's more devastating than I previously thought." In most cases, the field portion of this year's field days were canceled because of



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Ava, 8, and Brock Sirios, 4, of Roggen track down ladybugs from a neighboring Cooksey Farms field that was supposed to be part of Colorado State University's annual wheat variety trials. The actual field portions of this year's dozen stops were canceled because of the poor condition of the 2026 crop. poor quality and earlier than normal plant maturity. "Not really much to look at," said Colorado State University Wheat Breeder Esten Mason. "Not a lot of differences to look at between trial varieties because of the conditions." The May 1 and June 1 yield estimates from NASS were both 21 bushels per acre, down from actual yields of 38 bushels per acre last year. For 2025, Colorado wheat production totaled 71.06 million bushels. An abnormally hot, dry and windy winter; significant
SEE WHEAT UPDATE
PAGE 6