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DIERKS BENTLEY RECRUITS LUKE BRYAN FOR SEVEN PEAKS FEST



NASHVILLE, Tenn. (AP) — After watching a recent documentary about the doomed Fyre Festival in the Bahamas, country star Dierks Bentley was appalled at how it all went disastrously wrong.

Bentley knows the pressure of putting on a destination music festival that he's invested in and curated as he's heading into the second year for the Seven Peaks Music Festival in Buena Vista, Colorado, a small town about two hours outside of Denver.

"It gave me hot flashes, even now just thinking about it. On every level, that was so wrong," Bentley said of the Fyre Festival.

Performers at the three-day Labor Day festival will include Bentley, Luke Bryan, Maren Morris, Jon Pardi, Travis Tritt, the Nitty Gritty Dirt Band and Diamond Rio. There will be a '90s country night with artists like Deana Carter, Tracy Lawrence and Bentley's own '90s cover band, the Hot Country Knights, in addition to Americana and bluegrass artists like The War and Treaty and Steep Canyon

Rangers and new country artists like Tennille Townes, Caylee Hammack, Mitchell Tenpenny and Ryan Hurd.

“I’m ecstatic that we’re getting a second year, because it’s not a given,” Bentley told The Associated Press. “These don’t make money for three, four years. I don’t think I’ll make any money for a long time and more importantly Live Nation didn’t make any money and they lost a lot of money because that’s the way it goes with launching a festival.”

Bentley’s inaugural festival had its challenges. There had previously been an electronic music festival at the site that drew complaints about loud music well after midnight. Both Bentley and Live Nation representatives spent time in the city during the planning process talking to local officials about traffic, ticketing, sound, safety and more.

“There’s a trust that goes on,” Bentley said. “We could come in there with a big country music hammer and really just stomp all over their town, so I get their concerns.”

According to local newspaper reports, about 8,000 people attended the festival in its first year, but Bentley said they are expecting attendance to increase. Because of its remoteness, Seven Peaks caters to camping and RVs. It has a beautiful mountain range nearby, a beach and a pond on the festival grounds.

“The location could never lose its intimacy. It’s such a unique spot,” Bentley said.

Bryan is one of the genre’s biggest stadium-filling stars and the two have shared hosting duties for the Academy of Country Music Awards. Bentley said he’s played Bryan’s Mexico festival, “Crash My Playa,” and decided to call in a favor.

“He recognizes the role he plays at a festival, the weight he carries and the people he brings in,” Bentley said.

Bentley is proud that many of last year’s headliners didn’t just play their set and leave for home but stayed for the whole weekend.

“It’s making my liver hurt just thinking about Luke hanging out for several nights,” Bentley said.