



*A WILDLAND FIREFIGHTER FORUM FOR CHANGE*

June 23, 2014

Dear NWCG Executive Board Members:

We are writing to you as we approach the tragic 20-year Anniversary of the South Canyon Fire, which led to 14 firefighter fatalities in Glenwood Springs, Colorado; and the 1-year Anniversary of the Yarnell Hill Fire, which killed 19 of the Granite Mountain Hotshots just outside of Yarnell, Arizona.

We are a group of retired federal wildland firefighters who are urging you and your agency or wildland fire organization to take new decisive action now to help prevent additional deaths of wildland firefighters.

We have spent the last year studying wildland firefighter fatalities of the last 20 years, including many hours of research and review of data and reports from many sources. Hauntingly there are similarities in each of these tragedies. Yet despite enhanced training, new wildland fire management policies and stated commitments by all agencies to firefighter safety, the wildland fire agencies are not doing enough to prevent wildland firefighter deaths. Wildland firefighters continue to die in staggering numbers. If changes are not made this tragic loss of life will continue as it has for the last several decades. We hope that you will agree with us that this is totally unacceptable.

Attached is our report which offers concrete recommendations that can be implemented almost immediately. Many of them require no additional funding. We stand ready to help you with more detailed analysis and strategies to implement these recommendations.

Please, let's not have any more anniversaries or commemorations of wildland firefighter deaths!

Thank you,

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