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Office of the State Forester

Arizona State Forestry



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Statement from Arizona State Forester Jeff Whitney

Third Anniversary of the Yarnell Hill Fire

PHOENIX

“Time has not lessened the feelings of loss that we all experienced from the tragic loss of the Granite Mountain Hotshots. June 30 will forever mark a solemn anniversary for the wildland firefighting community and the entire State of Arizona as we remember the 19 brave men who gave their lives at Yarnell Hill three years ago.

Hotshots are the elite of the wildland fire crews and the Granite Mountain Hotshots were certainly hotshots, constantly exemplifying the very best of our profession and a credit to our state and nation. We will never forget what they did for our State and local communities. We continue to hold them and their families in our thoughts and prayers as we do for all of the first responders who risk their lives every day.

The legacy of the 2013 Yarnell Hill Fire is bittersweet. Our losses encouraged actions that included fuels treatments carried out by Yarnell in partnership with the Department of Forestry and Fire Management and the Bureau of Land Management that proved to be invaluable to the initial response efforts to fight the Tenderfoot Fire. Because Yarnell did the fuels work, firefighters were able to save the homes and businesses threatened by the fire.

In our firefighting efforts, we continue to emphasize that safety is our primary goal and another important legacy of the Granite Mountain Hotshots.”

Duty ♦ Respect ♦ Integrity