

Congressional Panel: The Initial Attack on the Station Fire

Rep. Adam Schiff
Rep. Buck McKeon
Rep. Judy Chu
Rep. Brad Sherman

October 12, 2010

9 am

Richard H. Chambers U.S. Court of Appeals Building, Courtroom #3
125 S. Grand Ave.
Pasadena, CA 91105

Last summer, the Station Fire ravaged the Angeles National Forest, burning 160,000 acres over 50 days. Thousands of homes were threatened, and two members of the Los Angeles County Fire Department, Captain Ted Hall and Firefighter Specialist Arnie Quinones, tragically lost their lives fighting the fire. In addition, the Station Fire suppression effort cost almost \$100 million, a significant fraction of the Forest Service firefighting budget for the year. The initial attack on the fire was swift and aggressive, but over the first evening and the next morning, the fire escaped into terrain too dangerous to approach and spread quickly thereafter. Some former Forest Service employees, fire experts and local residents have raised questions about whether the responding agencies followed the appropriate protocols and made the right decisions on the first night of the fire, and the early morning of the next day.

Rep. Schiff has convened this panel and invited his colleagues to hear from representatives of the Forest Service and other responding agencies, as well as outside experts and critics. The panel will endeavor to shine some light on firefighting procedures and techniques, how they were applied during the Station Fire, and how they should be revised to improve outcomes in the future.

Invited speakers:

Panel 1:

William Derr, retired Forest Service employee
Don Feser, retired Angeles National Forest Fire Chief
Duncan Baird, homeowner, Vogel Flats Fire Recovery Alliance
Jody Noiron, Forest Supervisor, Angeles National Forest
Will Spyrison, (retired) Division Chief, Angeles National Forest

John Tripp, Chief Deputy of Emergency Operations, L.A. County Fire Department

Panel 2:

Tom Harbour, Director of Fire and Aviation Management, Forest Service

P. Michael Freeman, Chief, L.A. County Fire Department

Bob Cavage, President, Wildfire Research Network

David Gillotte, President, Intl. Assoc. of Fire Fighters, Local 1014

Casey Judd, Federal Wildland Fire Service Association