



Board of Supervisors County of Los Angeles

MICHAEL D. ANTONOVICH
MAYOR

September 9, 2011

Senator Dianne Feinstein
United States Senate
331 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Feinstein:

It was very disappointing to learn that the Forest Service has further delayed the completion date for the nighttime aerial firefighting study for Southern California's forests.

It has been two years since the Station Fire devastated most of the Angeles National Forest and killed two Los Angeles County firefighters and yet the U. S. Government Accountability Office has not concluded their investigation into the Station Fire nor has the RAND Corporation concluded its study.

Within a few months of the Station fire, the Los Angeles County Fire Department issued its report on their investigation and recommendations to the Forest Service on preventing future catastrophes. Approved unanimously by the Board of Supervisors, it included nighttime air attacks, procedural changes, tougher brush clearance requirements and the use of mechanized firefighting equipment.

Congressional hearings have revealed that it was the U.S. Forest Service, as the lead agency, that failed to communicate effectively, and forced other agencies to stand idly by as the boots-on-the-ground waited for orders to proceed from its command center in Idaho. Ineffective at fighting wildfires on the urban-wildlife interface, their prohibition of night-flying aircraft prevented early containment as County Fire pilots waited anxiously on the tarmac.

Significant structural changes must be made before the next major wildfire destroys more of our National Forests, personal property or any more lives.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Mike Antonovich", is written over the word "Sincerely,".

MICHAEL D. ANTONOVICH
Mayor, Los Angeles County

MDA:snh