



## PRESS RELEASE

### **UNITED AERIAL FIREFIGHTERS ASSOCIATION HIRES ITS FIRST EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AND SENIOR POLICY DIRECTOR**

#### **Paul Petersen Named Executive Director, Tiffany Taylor to Become Senior Policy Director**

**Washington, DC, 3 April 2023** – The United Aerial Firefighters Association (UAFA), the only comprehensive trade association dedicated to aerial firefighting, is building its team, announcing two key appointments following the February 2023 launch of the association. Bureau of Land Management (BLM) veteran Paul Petersen was hired as the association's first Executive Director and longtime US Forest Service (USFS)/US Department of Agriculture (USDA) Executive Tiffany Taylor joins the association as its Senior Policy Director.

Petersen will take over as Executive Director of UAFA on May 1, joining the association from the BLM in Reno, Nevada, where he currently serves as State Fire Management Officer. Petersen brings more than 30 years of industry experience to UAFA, starting his career as a seasonal wildland firefighter in 1992. He continued to rise through the ranks of the BLM, starting his current role in 2015. As Executive Director, Petersen will serve as the voice and face of UAFA and will be responsible for its overall management. He will collaborate with his team to build membership, while continuing to cultivate his relationships with Congress, BLM, and the USFS.

"Protecting lives and property as a wildland firefighter and through my time at the BLM, I have seen firsthand the importance of aerial firefighting in protecting our communities and natural resources," says Petersen. "UAFA will play a critical role in advancing the aerial firefighting industry and promoting the safety and well-being of our firefighters. I look forward to building our membership and developing relationships with key industry partners and policymakers to ensure our firefighters have the resources and support they need to keep us safe from the threat of wildfires. We will work together to elevate the standard of aerial firefighting and make a lasting impact on the future of our profession."

Taylor has started in her role as Senior Policy Director. She will develop and implement the association's strategic policy objectives and will advocate for UAFA and its members with federal, state and local governments, partner industries and citizens. An almost 18-year veteran of the USFS and USDA, Taylor developed strong relationships to help address the needs of national agencies involved with wildfire and emergency management. She most recently served as Director for the Office of Contracting and Procurement for the USDA, and previously held the position in the USFS of Assistant Director, Business Management and Fire and Aviation. In that role, she was Chief of the Contracting Office, supporting fire and aviation management and managed a staff of more than 40, providing acquisition support and analysis, while building relationships with key inter-agency partners and industry vendors.

"I am thrilled to join UAFA as its first Senior Policy Director. I will advocate for its members and develop and advance policies that make a real difference for aerial firefighters."

The creation of UAFA is a crucial step in modernizing wildfire operations, as it introduces a united voice for the aerial firefighting industry. As climate change and other factors lead to longer, more intense wildfire seasons, the role of aerial firefighters will evolve and continue to become more important. It is critical that the interests of aerial firefighters are represented, so that advancements in technology and safety can help to shape policy and operations moving forward. As Senior Policy Director, I will work with our members to make a meaningful impact on the future of aerial firefighting," says Taylor.

John Gould, President for the UAFA Board of Directors and a founding member of UAFA, was part of the group that worked to bring Petersen and Taylor to the association.

"Adding two strong industry professionals like Paul and Tiffany to the UAFA team was a big win for the association," says Gould. "Their combined expertise and leadership will be invaluable in advancing our mission and advocating for our members. With their help, we will continue to build strong relationships with key stakeholders and policymakers to ensure that aerial firefighters have the support and resources they need to keep our communities and natural resources safe. This is an exciting time for UAFA, and we look forward to continuing to build our team to support the future success of the aerial firefighting industry."

For information on the UAFA, visit <https://uafa.org/>, or email [membership@uafa.org](mailto:membership@uafa.org).

### **About the United Aerial Firefighters Association**

The United Aerial Firefighters Association (UAFA) is the only comprehensive trade association dedicated to aerial firefighting. The organization provides a unified voice that advocates for safety and standardization in the aerial firefighting community at the local, state, and federal levels. The goal of the association is to inform policymakers and legislators about the important issues concerning the increasingly critical nature of aerial wildland firefighting.

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