|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| STATEMENT  USDA Forest Service  Washington, D.C. | | USDA Forest Service badge |
|  | | |
| **Release No. FS-0621s** | **Contact:** | Press Office, (202) 205-1134 |

byDale Bosworth, Chief  
U. S. Forest Service  
Recent Fatal Helicopter Crashes

"It is with great sadness that we learn of yesterday's helicopter crash on the Payette National Forest which resulted in the deaths of Forest Service employees Michael Lewis, Lillian Patten, Monica Zajanc and contract pilot Quinn Stone. Earlier this month, during fire suppression activities on the Klamath National Forest, a helitanker crashed and resulted in the deaths of contract pilots Terry Jacobs and Andrei Pantcenko. My heartfelt sympathies go out to the families, friends and loved ones affected by these tragedies."

"As fires continue to rage throughout the western states, we are reminded that firefighting is a dangerous business. No piece of land or anyone's home is worth the loss of life. Our firefighters' and the public's safety is and always will be our first priority."

"The National Safety and Transportation Board and Forest Service officials are conducting investigations into the causes of both the crash on the Klamath and now the Payette National Forests."

#