



NEWS RELEASE

Arizona House of Representatives

Representative Quang Nguyen (R-1)

Representative Selina Bliss (R-1)

1700 West Washington • Phoenix, Arizona • 85007

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Reps. Nguyen and Bliss Meet with Pocket Fire Command, Urge Residents to Stay Prepared

District 1 lawmakers receive on-site briefing as wind-driven fire expands north of Sedona

STATE CAPITOL, PHOENIX – State Representatives Quang Nguyen and Selina Bliss met Sunday with Pocket Fire incident command at the Sedona Airport air operations base for a briefing on the fire’s rapid growth, threats to nearby communities and the state and local response.

As of Sunday morning, the Pocket Fire had burned 5,547 acres, with 871 personnel assigned.

The fire was first reported June 19 about seven miles north of Sedona and is burning in steep, rugged terrain that limits where crews can safely attack it directly.

The fire more than doubled in size between Saturday evening and Sunday morning as strong winds pushed it northeast. Crews shifted resources toward threatened communities and continued using bulldozers and other heavy equipment to establish defensive lines.

As of Sunday afternoon, Oak Creek Canyon Zones 14 and 15, Kachina Village and Forest Highlands remained under SET status. State Route 89A remained closed to nonlocal traffic between Sedona and Interstate 17, and portions of the Coconino National Forest remained closed.

Representatives Nguyen and Bliss requested the briefing to hear directly from incident command, determine whether additional state assistance is needed and provide residents with current information. Fire officials thanked Yavapai County, Coconino County, the Arizona Department of Transportation, the Arizona Department of Public Safety and other agencies assisting with the response.

“This is our district, and we have a duty to know where the threat is moving, what crews need and whether the state can do more,” said Representative Nguyen. **“We came to hear directly from incident command and see the operation firsthand. The men and women fighting this fire are working in dangerous conditions, and we stand ready to help secure any state resources they need.”**

“SET means prepare now, not later,” said Representative Bliss. **“Pack medications, important documents and supplies. Account for family members and pets. Know where you will go, monitor official alerts and leave immediately if ordered. Do not wait for GO status to start preparing.”**

Unless fire conditions require a change, a public meeting on the Pocket Fire will be held at 7 p.m. Monday at Sedona Red Rock Middle School and High School, 995 Upper Red Rock Loop Road. Fire managers and local officials will provide an update and answer questions. The meeting will also be livestreamed on the Coconino National Forest Facebook page. Residents should monitor the page for schedule updates.

Out of respect to first responders who put their lives on the line, Representatives Nguyen and Bliss also honored three federal firefighters killed Saturday in a burnover incident while assigned to the Knowles and Gore fires near the Colorado-Utah border. Two other firefighters were injured.

The deaths came during a solemn period for Arizona's wildland fire community. June 26 marked 36 years since six firefighters were killed in Arizona's Dude Fire. Tuesday marks 13 years since 19 members of the Granite Mountain Hotshots were killed fighting the Yarnell Hill Fire on June 30, 2013.

“The deaths of three firefighters this weekend are a painful reminder of the dangers wildland firefighters face to protect others,” Representatives Nguyen and Bliss said. **“We mourn them, pray for the injured and remember the six lost in the Dude Fire and the 19 Granite Mountain Hotshots. At the height of fire season, the public must do its part: obey restrictions, prepare early and never interfere with crews on the line.”**

Residents should follow Coconino County Emergency Management, Coconino National Forest, InciWeb and AZ511 for current fire, evacuation, closure and road information. The Coconino County Pocket Fire Call Center is available at 928-679-8525 for questions about the fire, shelters and evacuation stages.

Officials urge the public not to fly drones near the fire. Unauthorized aircraft can ground firefighting planes and helicopters.

Quang Nguyen and Selina Bliss are Republican members of the Arizona House of Representatives serving Legislative District 1 in Yavapai County. Follow them on X at @QuangNguyenAZ and @SelinaBliss.

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