

U.S. House of Representatives
Committee on Natural Resources
Washington, DC 20515

July 21, 2025

President Donald J. Trump
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave NW
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear President Trump:

I am writing today to request information about your administration's handling of the Dragon Bravo Fire in Northern Arizona. As you have insisted in many, many other cases, the ultimate responsibility for policy decisions lies with you and your appointees, not with career civil servants. Yet incredibly, we have not heard anything from you, or from Secretaries Burgum and Rollins about this massive fire and the destruction it has wrought one of America's most iconic national parks. This situation demands full accountability at the highest levels.

Understanding that incident management is initiated by federal agency staff at the local and regional level, politically appointed leaders at the Department of the Interior and the Department of Agriculture should have received daily reports from the ignition of the fire on July 4th and should have informed the White House of developments. The ultimate decision-making power lies with leaders of your administration. Given the conditions on the ground at the time this fire started, and the catastrophic outcome, it is reasonable to question whether that power was exercised responsibly. Further, given the administration's proposal to consolidate all wildland fire programs under the Department of the Interior, the lack of direction and leadership is extremely alarming.

This fire was allowed to burn for days before necessary action was taken to prevent it from threatening – and ultimately destroying – the cherished and irreplaceable historic lodge, cabins, and other buildings on the North Rim of Grand Canyon National Park. It is fortunate that no lives have been lost to this wildfire, which continues to burn uncontained. However, rebuilding infrastructure at the North Rim will take years and cost hundreds of millions of dollars.

Given the severe consequences, there is a clear need to examine the decision-making process to understand how this was allowed to happen. While managed fire practices are a necessary tool in many circumstances to reduce hazardous fuel loads and achieve other management objectives, it appears they were clearly the wrong approach in this case given the exceptionally hot, dry, and volatile conditions on the ground.

In accordance with House Rule X(m), the House Committee on Natural Resources has oversight authority over public lands generally, including forest reserves and national parks created from the public domain. Please provide answers to the following questions:

1. When were senior officials at the Departments of the Interior and Agriculture, including Secretaries Burgum and Rollins, first notified of the Dragon Bravo Fire and of the initial response to manage it as a controlled burn?
2. How frequently, and on what dates, were senior Interior and Agriculture Department officials and the White House updated on the status of the fire and any changes to the management approach?

3. Did senior Interior and Agriculture Department officials or the White House raise any concerns or objections to the proposal to allow the fire to continue burning given the hot and dry conditions on the ground and lack of containment
4. Did the Interior or Agriculture Departments make any requests for firefighting resources or personnel that were not granted?
5. How many red card employees were assigned to this fire? How many have been allocated to fires of this magnitude and significance in the past? Please include a breakdown by agency.

Please respond to this request no later than Monday, August 4, 2025 with answers to these questions, all Incident Action Plans, Fire Management Plans, and any correspondence between regional federal employees involved with management of the Dragon Bravo Fire (including Grand Canyon National Park and Kaibab National Forest) and leaders at the Departments of the Interior and Agriculture, including Secretaries Burgum and Rollins, and other appointees as well as with National Park Service and U.S. Forest Service headquarters.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jared Huffman", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Jared Huffman
Ranking Member
House Committee on Natural Resources

Cc: Doug Burgum, U.S. Secretary of the Interior
Brooke Rollins, U.S. Secretary of Agriculture