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## Grand Canyon News Release

Release date: Immediate

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### **Firefighter Fatality in Private Medical Helicopter Collision**

Firefighter Michael MacDonald was tragically killed in a private medical helicopter collision while being transported from the Grand Canyon to a northern Arizona hospital for a medical condition not directly related to firefighting on Sunday, June 29, 2008.

“Our condolences go out to the families and co-workers of those that were lost yesterday in this tragic incident,” stated Steve Martin, Superintendent of Grand Canyon National Park. “The fire community lost a young firefighter, the Flagstaff Medical Center, Guardian Air and Classic Lifeguard lost coworkers and friends, and the Blackfeet Nation, Flagstaff and Grand Canyon communities all suffered a great loss. We offer our deepest condolences to all who lost family, friends and co-workers yesterday.”

Martin added, “on behalf of community members, co-workers, family and friends, our thanks go out to all rescue and medical personnel who responded to the incident yesterday. We appreciate their heroic efforts to save the lives of others at the risk of their own.”

Mr. MacDonald, age 26, was a member of the Chief Mountain Hot Shots, an elite Bureau of Indian Affairs funded Native American firefighting crew based on the Blackfeet Indian Reservation in Browning, Montana. The crew was assigned to the Walla Valley Fire on the North Rim of Grand Canyon National Park. The Chief Mountain Hot Shot crew will be released from the incident today to travel home.

For more information on this incident, please contact the Flagstaff Police Department at 928-556-2300 or Flagstaff Fire Department at 928-380-0469.

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