



U.S. Fire Administration
Working for a fire-safe America

The U.S. Fire Administration (USFA) has received notice of the following firefighter fatality:

Helitack Crewmember Sydney Kathryn Watson

U.S. Wildland Fire Service - Upper Colorado River Interagency Fire Management
Unit, Rifle Interagency Helitack

Rifle, Colorado

Firefighters from the Rifle Interagency and Pittman Valley Helitack Crews were involved in a burnover event while responding to initial attack fires in the Upper Colorado River Interagency Fire Management Unit (UCR). Helitack Crewmember Sydney Watson, along with Helitack Squad Leader Emily Barker (U.S. Forest Service – UCR) and Helitack Crewmember Nicholas Hutcherson (U.S. Forest Service – Kaibab National Forest), did not survive the burnover.

Age: 27

Classification: Wildland Full-Time

Years of service: 7

Date of incident: June 27, 2026

Date of death: June 27, 2026