

King Seeks Next Generation Airtankers for Colorado

The Colorado Firefighting Air Corps can fight the most dangerous wildfires by acquiring Next Generation airtankers through a build-operate-transfer partnership.

DENVER, CO, USA, February 26, 2014 /EINPresswire.com/ -- State Senator Steve King announced today that the Colorado Firefighting Air Corps can acquire Next Generation airtankers through a build-operate-transfer partnership and save the state billions of dollars in wildfire damage.

King will introduce a bill next month that would authorize a private-sector partner to finance, design, construct, and operate a fleet of Next Generation airtankers.

King said that Colorado would obtain surplus aircraft and the partner would provide funding and technologies to convert them. The partner would then operate and maintain the airtanker fleet.

Each fire season, the partnership would make its airtankers and aerial firefighting services available to Colorado or to other agencies or states.

At the end of the partnership period, ownership of all assets created by the partner would be transferred to Colorado.

King said that Next Generation airtankers deliver the largest payloads of water or retardant. They can use direct attack methods to help firefighters on the ground stay safe and contain wildfires faster. According to the federal Interagency Aviation Training program, direct attack methods include:

Anchor and Flank - construct a fire line on the flanks of the wildfire.

Hook/Pinch - progress from the flank around the head of the fire to "pinch the head off."

Narrow Vee - quickly catch the head of a small fire.

Wide Vee - slow down the fire before ground crews can arrive.

Pre-Treat - reinforce a natural barrier such as a ridge or road.

Tandem Ahead - extend the progress of ground forces so that they can work more safely and quickly.

Tandem Behind - reinforce hastily completed lines.

Angle Tie-In - anchor from a barrier and work across the head.

Spot Fire - prevent a small spot fire from growing.

Angle Out - contain growth in steep or congested terrain.

Cooling Convection - drop to take advantage of convection wind.

King said the build-operate-transfer partnership is part of a long-term plan, but his bill would also provide new aerial firefighting resources for immediate use during the 2014 wildfire season.

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John Simmons
Office of Senator Steve King
303-345-7926
[email us here](#)

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