



NEWS RELEASE

U.S. Forest Service, San Bernardino National Forest
For Immediate Release
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Smokey Bear Celebrates 70th Birthday August 9th in Idyllwild "ONLY YOU CAN PREVENT WILDFIRES"

SAN BERNARDINO, Calif., August 1, 2014 – The Forest Service Volunteer Association, along with the U.S. Forest Service, the National Association of State Foresters, and the Ad Council announced today that they will be celebrating Smokey Bear's 70th birthday and provide critical information to Americans about wildfire prevention in Idyllwild on August 9.

"Our Wildfire Prevention campaign has helped children and adults throughout the country understand their role in preventing wildfires," said Forest Service Chief Tom Tidwell. "For 70 years, Smokey Bear has empowered people to make a difference; his message of personal responsibility continues to be as critical and relevant now as ever. We look forward to celebrating many more birthdays of our beloved icon."

Come by to wish Smokey a happy birthday, sign his card & celebrate, Saturday August 9th from 1:30 P.M. to 3:30 P.M. Smokey's birthday party will be held at the Idyllwild Ranger Station located at 54270 Pinecrest Avenue in Idyllwild. The Ranger Station is in the center of the Idyllwild community on the corner of Pinecrest and State Highway 243.

Idyllwild is a short one hour drive from either Palm Springs or Riverside, and way to escape the heat and enjoy the fresh air and the local community nestled in the San Jacinto Mountains. For more information or directions, please call (909) 382-2921.

Smokey Bear - American Icon

Smokey Bear is America's wildfire prevention icon. He has educated generations of Americans about their role in preventing human-caused wildfires. Smokey Bear was born on August 9, 1944, when the U.S. Forest Service and the Ad Council agreed that a fictional bear named Smokey would be the symbol for their joint effort to promote forest fire prevention. The Smokey Bear Wildfire Prevention campaign is the longest running public service advertising campaign in U.S. History.

As one of the world's most recognizable fictional characters, Smokey's image is protected by U.S. Federal Law and is administered by the USDA Forest Service, the National Association of State Foresters and the Ad Council.

Artist Albert Staehle was asked to paint the first poster of Smokey Bear. It depicted a bear pouring a bucket of water on a campfire and saying "Care will prevent 9 out of 10 fires." Smokey Bear soon

became very popular as his image appeared on a variety of forest fire prevention materials. In 1947, his slogan became the familiar "Only YOU Can Prevent Forest Fires!" In 2001, it was again modified to "Only You Can Prevent Wildfires" in response to a massive outbreak of wildfires in natural areas other than forests. The term "wildfire" applies to any unwanted, unplanned, uncontrolled outdoor fire.

Despite the campaign's success over the years, wildfire prevention remains one of the most critical issues affecting our country and Smokey's message is as relevant today as it was in 1944.

Then in the spring of 1950, in the Capitan Mountains of New Mexico, a young bear cub found himself caught in a burning forest. He took refuge in a tree, and while managing to stay alive was left badly burned. The firefighters who retrieved him were so moved by his bravery, they named him Smokey.

News about this real bear named Smokey spread across the Nation, and he was soon given a new home at the National Zoo in Washington, D.C. The living symbol of Smokey Bear, he played an important role in spreading messages of wildfire prevention and forest conservation. Smokey died in 1976 and was returned to Capitan, New Mexico, where he is buried in the State Historical Park.

Join Smokey On-Line! Smokey is giving out bear hugs online, using #SmokeyBearHug. He's also directing fans to his website, www.smokeybear.com, [Facebook](#), [YouTube](#), [Instagram](#), and [Twitter](#) for more information about wildfire prevention.

About the U.S. Forest Service:

The mission of the Forest Service is to sustain the health, diversity and productivity of the nation's forests and grasslands to meet the needs of present and future generations. The agency manages 193 million acres of public land, provides assistance to state and private landowners, and maintains the largest forestry research organization in the world. Public lands the Forest Service manages contribute more than \$13 billion to the economy each year through visitor spending alone. Those same lands provide 20 percent of the nation's clean water supply, a value estimated at \$7.2 billion per year. The agency has either a direct or indirect role in stewardship of about 80 percent of the 850 million forested acres within the U.S., of which 100 million acres are urban forests where most Americans live. Learn more at <http://www.fs.usda.gov/sbnf>

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