



News Release

Medicine Bow-Routt National Forests &
Thunder Basin National Grassland
<http://fs.usda.gov/mbr>

Media Contacts: Aaron Voos, U.S. Forest Service, (307) 745-2323 or Steamboat Springs Chamber, (970) 875-7009

Smokey Bear to Fly in Steamboat's Hot-Air Balloon Rodeo

(STEAMBOAT SPRINGS, Colo.) July 7, 2016 – With an active wildfire not far away in North Park, Colo., a larger-than-life reminder of human-caused wildfire prevention, Smokey Bear, will fly over the Yampa Valley this weekend during the 35th Annual Hot-Air Balloon Rodeo.

The Smokey Bear hot-air balloon will launch over Steamboat Springs on Saturday and Sunday morning, July 9-10. At nearly 100-feet tall and 75-feet wide, the flying image is testament to one of America's most successful informational campaigns and is a must see.

This year marks the third consecutive appearance that the Smokey Bear Balloon has made in Steamboat Springs as part of the ongoing campaign to promote wildfire prevention.

Local USFS staff will be assisting Smokey's crew in launching and landing the balloon, and will be on hand at the launch field to interact with spectators. There is also the possibility of appearances by Smokey Bear himself at the family-friendly event.

The Smokey Bear Balloon was built and sent aloft by a unique public/private partnership of volunteers, private sponsors, National Association of State Foresters, and the U.S. Forest Service (USFS). The Friends of the Smokey Bear Balloon, Inc., is the sole licensee for use of the Smokey Bear image in balloon form and for selling related balloon products.

Additional information about the Friends of the Smokey Bear Balloon can be found at [**SmokeyBearBalloon.org**](http://SmokeyBearBalloon.org).

For more information on the Hot Air Balloon Rodeo and Art in the Park weekend, visit [**HotAirBalloonRodeo.com**](http://HotAirBalloonRodeo.com) or contact the Steamboat Springs Chamber Resort Association at (970) 879-0880.

For more USFS information about this or other wildfire education topics, call the Hahns Peak-Bears Ears Ranger District at (970) 870-2299, or stop by the District Office at 925 Weiss Drive in Steamboat Springs between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday.

Information may also be found on this website, [**http://fs.usda.gov/mbr**](http://fs.usda.gov/mbr), or you can follow the Medicine Bow-Routt National Forests & Thunder Basin National Grassland on Twitter, [**@FS_MBRTB**](https://twitter.com/FS_MBRTB).

###