

# Talladega National Forest

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# News 1650

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## **Forest Service Celebrates 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary with Smokey Bear at the Races**

(Talladega, AL) April 12, 2005---- The National Forests in Alabama's Talladega and Shoal Creek Districts are celebrating the Forest Service 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary by bringing Smokey Bear and his fire prevention message to the Talladega Superspeedway in Talladega, Alabama. During the pre-race parade, Smokey Bear will ride Talladega District Engines E-61 and E-63 as they circle the speedway track. Racing spectators can greet the famous public figure and receive free Smokey Bear memorabilia at the International Motorsports Hall of Fame Museum during April 29 and 30.

“This is a very special year within the Forest Service because we’re celebrating 100 years of caring and nurturing public land,” said Kent Evans, Talladega district ranger. “We are delighted to bring a popular icon such as Smokey Bear to the races and spread the message about the causes and consequences of wildfires.”

The Smokey Bear Wildfire Prevention Program educates and reminds people using or traveling through forests that responsible behavior helps prevent wildfires.

According to Scott Layfield, fire management officer for the Talladega and Shoal Creek Districts, protecting our natural resources from destructive wildfires is everyone’s responsibility.

“During the race weekend, I encourage the public to visit with fire specialists for the Talladega

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and Shoal Creek Districts and learn what they can do to help protect homes and natural resources from wildfires”, added Layfield.

**Smokey Bear’s fire prevention message includes the following four points:**

1. Break your matches. Doing so stops the possibility of a partially extinguished match continuing to burn.
2. Crush your cigarettes or cigars. Smokers who carelessly toss or merely stub and then discard their cigarettes or cigars can cause forest fires. Anything left smoking, even minutely so, is a serious hazard.
3. Drown your campfires. Remember there may be embers that are still alive, yet not readily visible. Make sure your campfires are completely extinguished by heavily dousing them with water.
4. Be careful with all fires. Regardless of the nature of the fire, make sure that when you walk away, the fire is thoroughly extinguished. If necessary, wait before leaving until the fire is completely extinguished. If you come across a fire that cannot be controlled or spot an arsonist, call for help immediately.