

# Smokey Bear turning 70, joining social media



Smokey Bear teaching kids.  
Photo/LTN file

**By Meg James, Los Angeles Times**

Smokey Bear turns 70 this summer. But instead of kicking back in retirement – whacking golf balls or sniffing around for early-bird dinner specials – the bear in bluejeans is returning to work to educate people about wildfires.

Last year, there were 47,579 wildfires nationwide, according to the federal government. Typically, 9 out of 10 are caused by humans. Fire danger is expected to be high this summer, particularly in the parched Western states.

So, with the help of local ad agencies, Smokey Bear has been enlisted for a new marketing campaign to remind humans to be more careful.

Handlers of the iconic animal have decided he needed a younger and fresher look. They want him to fit in with the millennial generation of teenagers and young adults.

**Read the whole story**