



Forest Service
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE



National Garden Clubs, Inc.

ANNOUNCING 2025 Smokey Bear & Woodsy Owl Poster Contest

Children from first through fifth grade
are invited to participate in this annual
drawing contest featuring conservation icons
Smokey Bear & Woodsy Owl!

The U. S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service and the National Garden Clubs, Inc., are giving students the opportunity to demonstrate their understanding of wildfire prevention and basic environmental conservation principles through original drawings of Smokey Bear or Woodsy Owl.

View previous contest winners:

<https://gardenclub.org/smokey-bear-woodsy-owl-youth-poster-contest>.

Smokey Bear says: "Only you can prevent wildfires!"



Smokey Bear is recognized nationally and internationally as the symbol for wildfire prevention. The original Smokey Bear appeared in 1944. Smokey's message, "Only you can prevent wildfires!" encourages personal responsibility for wildfire prevention. Smokey Bear teaches children and adults to be careful with campfires, barbecues, burning yard waste, and matches. For more about Smokey Bear visit <https://smokeybear.com>.

Woodsy Owl says: "Lend a hand—care for the land!"



Woodsy Owl is America's icon for the conservation of the environment. Since 1971, Woodsy has helped parents and teachers inspire children to observe, explore, and care for the environment. He challenges children to "Lend a hand, care for the land!" and to take an active role in caring for the land through recycling, reusing, and reducing waste; gardening, planting, and caring for trees; using resources wisely; and not littering. For more about Woodsy Owl visit <https://www.fs.usda.gov/learn/kids/woodsy-owl>.



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National Garden Clubs, Inc.

2025 Smokey Bear & Woodsy Owl Poster Contest INFORMATION



Hosted by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service and the National Garden Clubs, Inc., this contest is an opportunity for local garden clubs to connect with their communities and may be used to **promote** their local or State garden club, **attract** children and their parents, and **raise awareness** of the importance of caring for the environment and preventing wildfires.

- Only children from first through fifth grade can participate. You can reach out to schools, scout troops, after school programs, youth programs, and similar groups.
- Students should be reminded to check spelling as posters with spelling errors will be disqualified.
- The following information must be written on the back of each poster: The student's name, grade level, garden club name, garden club contact name address, phone number, school, teacher's name, school name, parent or guardian name and address, phone number and email. (Should school policy preclude giving students' addresses and phone numbers, please include the school address and phone number.)
 - Or use the free downloadable label found at www.symbols.gov/ngc-poster-contest.
- Local garden club coordinators for the Smokey Bear & Woodsy Owl Poster Contest should contact their State or regional poster chairman to get the promotional package. You can also download the promotional package from the National Garden Clubs, Inc., website, www.gardenclubs.org or from www.symbols.gov/ngc-poster-contest.
- Every participating child should receive a certificate of participation. Certificates can be ordered for free at www.symbols.gov or www.symbols.gov/ngc-poster-contest.
- Local and State garden clubs' poster coordinators are encouraged to organize recognition ceremonies.
- If there is a Forest Service office nearby, they can help facilitate the presence of Smokey Bear or Woodsy Owl at your recognition ceremony. You can find your nearest Forest Service office by visiting www.fs.usda.gov.
- We encourage participants and/or local, State, and regional chairpersons to make copies of the posters before submission.
- The five posters that compete for the national grand prize become property of the Forest Service. They ARE NOT returned to participants.
- For information about the poster contest do not hesitate to contact the National Garden Clubs, Inc., national coordinator for the poster contest, Terry Critchlow at tcritchlow@nacd.com or the Forest Service national coordinator for the poster contest, Iris Velez at iris.velez@usda.gov.

**Thank you for your support and commitment to the partnership between
the National Garden Clubs, Inc., and the Forest Service!**

USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.

2025 Smokey Bear & Woodsy Owl Poster Contest Rules

- Competition may include students from first to fifth grade.
- Posters are to be completed by individual student artists.
- Posters must have correct spelling (posters with spelling errors will be disqualified).
- All posters must feature Smokey Bear.
- Smokey Bear posters must include Smokey's wildfire prevention message: Only You Can Prevent Wildfires!
- All posters should encourage children to take a personal role in preventing wildfires or conserving natural resources.
- Smokey Bear must be presented in his correct colors (he is an official icon protected by law); check the colors on the website www.fs.usda.gov/learn/kids or www.symbols.gov.
- Each poster entry should be 11 x 17 inches in size.
- Materials that can be used include crayons, markers, poster paints, watercolors, and the like.
- The choice of paper color and texture is up to the child.
- No three-dimensional posters, computer-scanned, or electronically generated images will be accepted.
- All poster entries must be sponsored by a recognized local garden club.
- The local garden club chairperson must submit the poster entries to his or her state chairperson no later than January 20, 2025. The state garden club chairperson must submit the five winning posters from his or her state to the regional garden club chairperson by February 24, 2025.
- The following information should be written on the back of the poster in the lower-right corner (do not use a dark marker for this information as it may show through):
 - The name, address, phone number, and email of the sponsoring local garden club.
 - The artist's name, address, contact phone number, grade level, school, teacher's name, city, and State. (Should school policy preclude giving students' addresses and phone numbers, please include the school address and phone number).

Poster Tips

- A good poster has a bold and simple design.
- The poster's message should be easily understood and delivered both in the picture and in text.
- An educator, parent, guardian, or other adult should provide 11" x 17" paper for a child to create their poster.
- Find inspiration for your poster with promotional and educational products from the National Symbols Cocho, www.symbols.gov.
- Posters will be judged for originality, design, slogan, artwork, and overall effectiveness of the message.

Recognition Ceremonies

- It is recommended that local and/or State recognition ceremonies be coordinated in conjunction with local events during Earth Week in April or during National Public Lands Day (last Saturday in September). Smokey Bear should be present at these award ceremonies if possible. The Forest Service conservation education or fire prevention regional coordinators can help you identify local Forest Service offices that may assist you when planning for a Smokey Bear appearance at your event. A list of coordinators is available upon request via email at sm.fs.symbols@usda.gov.
- Certificates of participation are free of charge. You can download them from www.symbols.gov or by requesting hard copies via email at sm.fs.symbols@usda.gov.
- The National Garden Clubs will announce the first-place national winners for each grade level and the national grand prize winner at their 2025 annual meeting.
- Certificates and prize money (\$50) for the five national winners will be mailed following the National Garden Clubs' 2025 annual meeting. The national grand prize winner will get the certificate, a trophy, and a framed copy of the winning poster during a recognition ceremony in Washington, DC.
- The Forest Service conducts the recognition ceremony for the national grand prize winner, which takes place every year in Washington, DC, typically during the summer.



_____ Smokey Bear/Woodsy Owl
Poster Contest

INSTRUCTIONS: Part A of this form must be completely filled out and placed onto the back of all posters in order to qualify. Please complete as much of Part B as possible.

Part A: Garden Club Contact Information:

Student's Name: _____

Student's Grade Level:

Circle One 1st 2nd 3rd 4th 5th

Garden Club Name: _____

Contact Name: _____

Contact Street: _____

City/SV/ZIP: _____

Phone No.: _____

Email: _____

Part B: Parent/Guardian/Student Contact Info:

Teacher's Name: _____

Parent/Guardian Name: _____

Street: _____

City/SV/ZIP: _____

Phone No.: _____

Email: _____



_____ Smokey Bear/Woodsy Owl
Poster Contest

INSTRUCTIONS: Part A of this form must be completely filled out and placed onto the back of all posters in order to qualify. Please complete as much of Part B as possible.

Part A: Garden Club Contact Information:

Student's Name: _____

Student's Grade Level:

Circle One 1st 2nd 3rd 4th 5th

Garden Club Name: _____

Contact Name: _____

Contact Street: _____

City/SV/ZIP: _____

Phone No.: _____

Email: _____

Part B: Parent/Guardian/Student Contact Info:

Teacher's Name: _____

Parent/Guardian Name: _____

Street: _____

City/SV/ZIP: _____

Phone No.: _____

Email: _____



2025 Smokey Bear & Woodsy Owl Poster Contest

Local Chairperson's Accountability Report Form

Complete the information requested below and send it to your state chairperson for the Smokey Bear & Woodsy Owl Poster Contest along with your **five local** winning posters by **January 20, 2025**.

Local Garden Club Name: _____

Local Chairperson Name: _____

State: _____

Outreach to Students

First grade: _____

Second grade: _____

Third grade: _____

Fourth grade: _____

Fifth grade: _____

Total: _____

Outreach to Schools and Organizations

Public schools contacted: _____

Private schools contacted: _____

Youth organizations contacted: _____

Other groups contacted: _____

Total: _____

Local Chairperson Signature