

## Mid-Atlantic Forest Fire Protection Compact Presented with Golden Smokey Award for Outstanding Wildfire Prevention

The Mid-Atlantic Interstate Forest Fire Protection Compact's (MAIFFPC) Fire Prevention Committee was recently presented with the Golden Smokey Award. The presentation ceremony took place at the Vinton Furnace State Forest in Ohio on July 20 in conjunction with the Northeast-Midwest State Foresters Alliance summer meeting.

"I'm pleased to represent the ODNR Division of Forestry on the compact prevention committee and all of the work we have done for wildfire prevention across the State, region, and Nation," said Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR) Division of Forestry employee Aaron Kloss. "To receive the Golden Smokey Award is a true honor, and being able to work with other people in our region who are passionate about preventing wildfires has been a great experience."



*Golden Smokey Award presentation participants (left to right): New Hampshire State Forester Brad Simpkins, Fred Turck of Virginia, Levi Gelnett of Pennsylvania, Dave Robbins of Maryland, Ashley Melvin of Delaware, Aaron Kloss of Ohio, New Jersey State Forester John Sacco, West Virginia State Forester Barry Cook, Smokey Bear, U.S. Forest Service R9 Regional Forester and Northeastern Area Director Kathleen Atkinson, and U.S. Forest Service Acting Deputy Chief Patti Hiram. (Courtesy photo by Greg Smith, ODNR Division of Forestry)*

One of the committee's projects was development of a Smokey Bear video that helps teach kids about outdoor fire safety in an engaging way. The 4-minute video was produced in Ohio in a collaborative effort with the Columbus College of Art & Design and the ODNR Division of Forestry to research, design, and create a [new Smokey Bear animated video and song](#).

Over the past several years, compact member States have worked together to produce innovative wildfire prevention messages that impact thousands of individuals across the United States and Canada. Creative outreach efforts include interactive children's games, customized Smokey Bear artwork for the region, and an international conference focused on wildfire prevention. Upcoming projects include a

supplemental Smokey-themed booklet, which will appear in the popular children's magazine *Highlights*, and a wildfire app.

"The compact has maximized creativity and innovation to deliver fire prevention messages to thousands of people regionally, nationally, and internationally," said Robert Boyles, Ohio's State Forester.

"Members have gone above and beyond their regular duties to influence fire prevention in a meaningful way."

The MAIFFPC was authorized by the U.S. Congress in 1956 and represents seven States in the Mid-Atlantic region that cover a collective 35 million acres. Member States include Ohio, Pennsylvania, Delaware, New Jersey, Maryland, Virginia, and West Virginia. The compact allows the sharing of State resources for wildfire control and promotes effective wildfire prevention across the region, particularly through outreach projects managed by the Fire Prevention Committee.

Since 1957, the USDA Forest Service has awarded the Golden Smokey Award to recognize organizations and individuals for their outstanding service in wildfire prevention at the national level. This prestigious award is considered the greatest honor that wildfire prevention organizations can receive.