



Northern
Forest
Center

NEWS RELEASE

CONTACT:

Shelly Angers, Northern Forest Center
sangers@northernforest.org
603-229-0679 ext. 109

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: March 21, 2007

Northern Forest Days to explore the region's past, discover its future

This spring a new celebration of the Northern Forest will be taking place in towns throughout the region. Northern Forest Days, a partnership between the Northern Forest Center and local organizations throughout northern Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont and New York, are multi-day, multi-event celebrations that feature community visits by the Center's *Ways of the Woods* mobile museum, conversations about the region's changing economy and other activities designed to explore the past and discover the future of the Northern Forest.

Local *Northern Forest Days* events are coordinated jointly by the Northern Forest Center and community partners to ensure that they reflect local needs, interests and opportunities. While they vary from community to community, activities often include traditional arts demonstrations and performances, community suppers, presentations by local community organizations, photo exhibits and school field trips to the *Ways of the Woods* exhibit.

"Last year's *Ways of the Woods* tour confirmed that people have deep connections to the Northern Forest," said Mike Wilson, senior program director for the Center. "Northern Forest Days creates new opportunities to bring people together to share their hopes for the region's future."

The Center's mobile museum about the changing relationships between people and the land, *Ways of the Woods* elicits powerful, emotional responses from attendees as they explore both the history of the region and their personal connections to it. Funded in part by the National Endowment for the Humanities, this traveling exhibition combines interactive displays, interviews with people who live, work and play in the Northern Forest, and artifacts that illustrate the region's history in action.

The Northern Forest's past is a vibrant one, and despite the economic challenges of the recent decades, the future can be, too.

The Northern Forest Center's Sustainable Economy Initiative (SEI)—operated in partnership with the North Country Council (NH) and funded by the federal Economic Development Administration and private contributions—is developing a strategic blueprint for sustainable economic development in the Northern Forest region that is based on balanced investment in business, community and environment.

During each *Northern Forest Days* celebration, Northern Forest Center staff and members of the SEI steering committee will organize a forum to collect information from community members about the challenges and opportunities they see ahead regarding the region's economic future.

“We're very excited to work with communities across the Northern Forest to hear their perspectives on the challenges they face and the opportunities they see for the future,” said Joe Short, SEI program director. “This input—which will come from people across the Northern Forest representing a variety of perspectives on community and economic issues—will impact SEI's work to create a long-term strategy for the region's economic future.”

Several communities will also be holding an evening reception that includes “A Hopeful Future for the Northern Forest,” a 30-minute multi-media presentation that highlights dynamic and innovative business and community initiatives from across the four Northern Forest states. “A Hopeful Future” shows that the region does indeed have a bright future—economically, culturally and environmentally. This presentation also outlines the work of the Northern Forest Center and local partner organizations, and explores opportunities for people to help ensure the future is indeed a bright one.

Northern Forest Days are currently scheduled for:

March 29-31: Gorham, NH
April 12-14: Colebrook, NH
April 19-21: Morrisville, VT
May 17-20: Old Forge, NY
May 24-26: Watertown, NY
May 31-June 2: Farmington, ME
June 7-9: Greenville, ME (tentative)
June 13-16: Ft. Kent, ME (tentative)

Specific details about Northern Forest Days events will be available from partner organizations and in the calendar sections of local newspapers. Schedule updates are available at www.northernforest.org.

The Northern Forest Center, a nonprofit organization, mobilizes people to build healthy communities, economies and ecosystems by working together across the Northern Forest region. Learn more at www.northernforest.org.

###