



NEWS RELEASE

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Northern Forest Days coming to Farmington

From May 31-June 2, a new celebration of the Northern Forest is coming to Farmington, Maine.

Northern Forest Days are a multi-day, multi-event program being held in communities across the Northern Forest region of Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont and New York. Each local event is coordinated jointly by the Northern Forest Center and community partners to ensure that the celebration reflects local needs, interests and opportunities.

In Farmington, partners include Mountain Counties Heritage, Inc. and the Western Mountain Alliance. Local sponsors are Franklin Savings Bank, Bean & Smith Real Estate, Franklin Memorial Hospital and Kyes Insurance.

“From conversations about our economy to the Grand Opening of a new exhibit at the Maine Mountain Heritage Center to the amazing *Ways of the Woods* traveling museum, *Northern Forest Days* are sure to get us all engaged in thinking about both our rich past and our promising future,” said Bruce Hazard, executive director of Mountain Counties Heritage, Inc. “We are thrilled to be involved in such a dynamic, important celebration.”

Each day during the celebration has opportunities to explore the Northern Forest’s past and discover its future. There are activities for people of all ages who care about the region.

On Thursday and Friday, local students will visit *Ways of the Woods*, the Center’s mobile museum about the changing relationships between people and the land. This “museum on wheels” 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, *Ways of the Woods* combines interactive displays, artifacts that illustrate the region’s history in action, and interviews with people who live, work and play in the Northern Forest.

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

Ways of the Woods will be setup at the county parking lot on Anson St. in Farmington. There is no charge to view the exhibit, which will be open to the general public on Friday 10:30-11:15 a.m. and Saturday 11:00 a.m.-3 p.m. Fly tying demonstrations will take place during Saturday's exhibit hours.

From 9-10:30 a.m. on Friday, a forum about the economic future of the region takes place at the Maine Mountain Heritage Center. Information collected at this meeting will be integrated into the Northern Forest Center's Sustainable Economy Initiative (SEI), a program operated in partnership with the North Country Council (NH) and funded by the federal Economic Development Administration and private contributions. SEI is developing a strategic blueprint for sustainable economic development in the four-state Northern Forest region that is based on balanced investment in business, community and environment. Space is limited; please call (207) 778-3885 to reserve a seat.

"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."

On Saturday, the Grand Opening of the newest exhibit at the Maine Mountain Heritage Center takes place from 11 a.m.-3 p.m. The new exhibit focuses on both the human history and the natural history of the Maine Mountain region, and features images and stories relating to the area's natural environment, communities and local economies—something people of all ages will find interesting and fun.

Specific details about Farmington's *Northern Forest Days* are available at www.mainemountains.org, in the calendar sections of local newspapers and by calling (207) 778-3885.

Northern Forest Days celebrations have already taken place in Gorham/Berlin and Colebrook, NH, Morrisville, Vermont and both Old Forge and Watertown, New York. Others are currently scheduled for Greenville (June 7-9) and Ft. Kent, Maine (June 13-16). *Northern Forest Days* schedule updates and the complete 2007 *Ways of the Woods* tour schedule 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 about the Northern Forest and the Northern Forest Center at www.northernforest.org.

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NOTE TO MEDIA: Photos of the Northern Forest Center's *Ways of the Woods* exhibit are available for publication. Please contact Shelly Angers, Marketing/PR Coordinator, at 603-229-0679, ext. 109, sangers@northernforest.org.