



NEWS RELEASE

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Northern Forest Days coming to Fort Kent

On June 13-16, a new celebration of the Northern Forest will take place in Fort Kent.

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. Fort Kent's celebration is the final Northern Forest Days of the 2007 season.

In Fort Kent, partners include the Fort Kent Chamber of Commerce, University of Maine at Fort Kent, Town of Fort Kent, Professional Logging Contractors of Maine and the Northern Forest Canoe Trail.

"From conversations about our economy to traditional entertainment to the amazing *Ways of the Woods* exhibit, Northern Forest Days are sure to get us all engaged in thinking about both our rich past and our promising future," said Sandra Brawders, executive director of the Professional Logging Contractors of Maine. "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.

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

A forum about the economic future of the region takes place Wednesday evening. 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. For time and location information, contact Amy Scott at the Northern Forest Center, (207) 824-8263.

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.

"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 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. "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 and open to the general public at the University of Maine—Fort Kent (UMFK) parking lot from 2:30-6:30 p.m. on Thursday. There is no charge to view the exhibit.

Thursday, the Opening Reception for *Northern Forest Days* begins at 4:30 p.m. with tours of *Ways of the Woods* and light refreshments. From 6:30-8:30 p.m., an evening of presentations and performance takes place at UMFK's Nadeau Hall. The 30-minute multi-media presentation "A Hopeful Future for the Northern Forest" highlights dynamic and innovative business and community initiatives from across the four Northern Forest states, illustrating that the region does indeed have a bright future—economically, culturally and environmentally. This presentation also details the work of the Northern Forest Center and local partner organizations, and outlines opportunities for people to help ensure that the region's future is indeed a bright one.

Jennifer Lamphere from the Northern Forest Canoe Trail will then give a slideshow about the Trail, an historic Native American travel route that runs across New York, Vermont, Quebec, New Hampshire and Maine. This 740-mile journey begins in Old Forge, New York and ends in Fort Kent.

The evening also includes music. Les Chanteurs Acadiens will perform both traditional and original French-language compositions until the reception ends.

On Saturday, April 14, *Ways of the Woods* moves to Riverside Park and will be open from 10 a.m.-3 p.m. for River Fest. Other attractions that day include the St. John River Canoe/Kayak race, the "Fish River Folly: Anything that Floats Race," a chicken barbeque, raffles for a kayak and other prizes, and information booths for local organizations and businesses.

Details about Fort Kent's *Northern Forest Days* events will be available from partner organizations and in the calendar sections of local newspapers. Specific details about the River Fest portion of *Northern Forest Days* are available at www.fortkentchamber.com, in the calendar sections of local newspapers and by calling (207) 834-5354.

Northern Forest Days celebrations have already taken place in Gorham/Berlin and Colebrook, NH, Morrisville, Vermont, both Old Forge and Watertown, New York and in Farmington and Greenville, ME.

After Fort Kent's *Northern Forest Days* concludes, *Ways of the Woods* will begin its 2007 "Fairs and Festival" tour across the Northern Forest region. A complete schedule is 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.