



NEWS RELEASE

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Northern Forest Days coming to Gorham, Berlin

On March 29-31, a new celebration of the Northern Forest will take place in Gorham and Berlin.

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 Gorham/Berlin, partners include the Family Resource Center (FRC) at Gorham, the Arts Alliance of Northern New Hampshire, the Northern Forest Heritage Park, the Gorham Historical Society and the Berlin & Coos Historical Society.

Locally, Northern Forest Days events and attractions include the Center's *Ways of the Woods* mobile museum; conversations about the region's changing economy; Family Night at the FRC (including Readers Theatre with middle school students and Becky Rule); traditional arts demonstrations at the FRC; "Telling Our Story" events (also with Becky Rule) at the Gorham Historical Society, Moffett House in Berlin and Northern Forest Heritage Park; an introduction to Plymouth State University's "Beyond Brown Paper" project; and the Heritage Park's "Cabin Fever" celebration which includes a Traditional Logging Dinner.

"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 Cathy McDowell, executive director of the FRC. "We are thrilled to be involved in such a dynamic, important celebration."

"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.

Ways of the Woods will be set up across the street from the FRC on Main Street in Gorham.

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 local 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. Locally, this meeting will take place on Friday, March 30 from 5:30-6:30 at the FRC.

“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.”

Other Northern Forest Days celebrations are currently scheduled for:

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 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.