



National Museum of Forest Service History

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A Non profit Corporation

National Museum of Forest Service History Opens Its Doors (and Trails!)

Smokey and Woodsy loved the crowd.

Along with U.S. Forest Service Chief Dale Bosworth (retired), other dignitaries and 275 members of the public, Smokey and Woodsy helped the National Museum of Forest Service History in Missoula, Montana open its visitor center and Forest Discovery Trail for the first time in a Ribbon Cutting Ceremony on Thursday, July 20th, 2017.

It has been a long time coming, and the opening of the Visitors Center and the new Forest Discovery Trail, is just the initial phase in the Museum's 36-acre campus, located one mile west of the Missoula, Montana International Airport at 6305 Highway 10 West. The Capital Campaign for the 30,000 sq. foot Smithsonian-affiliate Museum building is halfway there, with approximately \$4.5 million dollars raised.

The Museum, a nonprofit wholly separate from the U.S. Forest Service, is the only museum in the country devoted to telling the forest and grasslands conservation story of the United States. The Forest Service has been, and is, the cornerstone of that story, which began more than 100 years ago when President Teddy Roosevelt urged Congress to create the agency and appointed the first chief, Gifford Pinchot. The story is large, and includes many partners. It is a rich and important story to tell!



One of the highlights at the Museum campus is our Forest Discovery Trail, complete with beautifully constructed interpretive signs and interactive exhibits are designed to inform and challenge students, families and visitors alike. The trail winds through a Champion Grove of trees, a grove of key tree species in the U.S. whose unique DNA has been preserved.

Lisa Tate, the Museum's Executive Director, says, "*The Museum's Conservation Education Program, in which the Forest Discovery Trail is a component, is part of a larger national effort to*

share the rich and important story of America's Conservation Legacy and the role the U.S. Forest Service has played in shaping our country."

Also on the Museum campus is a restored, historic Ranger's Cabin that currently hosts the Visitors Center and features rotating exhibits; a replica of a "L-4" Fire Lookout Tower built for the Smithsonian Folklife Festival on the Washington D.C. mall; and a newly constructed stock corral, hitching post and knot-tying station which serves as a focal point for learning about the history and use of pack animals in our national forests.

The Museum is open to visitors at 7 days a week Memorial Day through Labor Day and by appointment. Several special events are also scheduled to be held at the Museum throughout the year.

For further information contact the National Museum of Forest Service History office at 406.541.6374.

