

## Partnership Proposal: Friends of Goodwin Forest Welcome Center at the James L. Goodwin Forest and Conservation Education Center , 2024

### Overview:

The Friends of Goodwin Forest propose creating a welcome center at the James L. Goodwin Conservation Center utilizing the existing museum directly located behind the main house. Using this structure, we would provide staff with our members/volunteers, and offer additional educational programming, provide information about the forest and surrounding areas, and answer visitor questions. Docents can direct visitors to the history museum when the main house is open.

The museum building has enough room for teaching small classes and could provide a starting point for many of the outdoor educational programs.. Our long-term goal is to have volunteer staff available at least four hours every day, including holidays, but realize that it may take time to recruit and train enough volunteers to make it a reality. To begin, we would like to open Thursday - Sunday 10:00-2:00.

We request access to the bathrooms in the main house (an existing interior door between the bathrooms and main house can be locked when DEEP staff are not available.) Our friends group could install keyless locks on both the museum and back door of the house to alleviate issues with security (doors being left unlocked). We also request access to internet service through a guest account that could be provided annually through the state. (This is a current practice.) The Friends group has its own computer.

All services would be posted to the Friends of Goodwin website: [friendsofgoodwinforest.org](http://friendsofgoodwinforest.org) and to our social media pages. We would utilize the trailheads to post pertinent information. A welcome/open flag would be flown by the entry to let people know when the building is open. Any published material would come from DEEP, CFP, the Last Green Valley and other local organizations that would like to be promoted for tourism purposes.

DEEP would continue offering programs through their seasonal naturalists, and continue paying for maintenance and utilities. The Friends would continue offering and funding lecture series, and recreational opportunities for all ages in addition to the current programming. We have an annual trail run, are planning to host a state forestry day and with access, can consider hosting other events (small concerts, art shows, etc.)

Our long range goal is to create a Forestry Center for the state of Connecticut which would have interactive displays as well as on site experiences to demonstrate the social, economic, and ecological benefits of forests.