



America's Small Town Capital

PRESS RELEASE --- FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact:

Alec Ellsworth – Parks Director

aellsworth@Montpelier-vt.org

(802) 585-7673

City of Montpelier awarded Federal Funds for Hubbard Park Expansion

The City of Montpelier was awarded \$258,000 from the United States Forest Service's (USFS) Community Forest Program to expand Hubbard Park. The funds will be used as a 50% match to acquire additional acreage for Montpelier's beloved park behind the State House. Montpelier's proposal was ranked #4 in the country, and this additional land will conserve important natural resources such as wetlands and rare natural communities, as well as provide permanent public access for outdoor recreation.

Senator Leahy said, "I am delighted, though not surprised, that the expansion of Hubbard Park was highly ranked for the national Community Forest and Open Space 2021 grants. I played in Hubbard Park as a boy growing up in Montpelier, and this expansion will ensure that it will be even bigger and better for generations to come. This project conserves open space and expands this much-loved park in the heart of our state capital. It is exactly the type of project that I had in mind when I helped create this grant program in the Farm Bill, and why I support its annual funding as Chairman of the Senate Appropriations Committee."

This project is part of a larger effort to ensure more community members have access to the health and wellness benefits parks and trails provide, and to work towards making Montpelier a destination for outdoor recreation. The Montpelier Parks Commission, along with partners such as the Trust for Public Land, are working toward a goal for all residents to be able to access greenspace within a 10-minute walk from home.

"Hubbard Park is Vermont treasure, allowing visitors to stroll through the thickly forested hills just behind the Golden Dome," said Rep. Welch. "I have appreciated the quiet beauty of Hubbard Park since my days in the State House. This grant will allow Montpelier to add additional acres of forest, streams and wetlands to Hubbard Park, increasing its size by almost 50 percent, and adding important natural resources to this well managed community forest in the heart of the Vermont capital."

Additional funding (\$20k) is being provided by the Montpelier Conservation Fund, as well as \$35k raised to date from individual donors. The City will request additional funding from VHCB. If you would like to pledge to support this effort to expand Hubbard Park, please find a pledge form at <https://www.montpelier-vt.org/1222/Expand-Hubbard-Park>.

The USFS Community Forest Program helps communities acquire and conserve forests that provide public access and recreational opportunities, protect vital water supplies and wildlife habitat, serve as demonstration sites for private forest landowners, and provide economic benefits from timber and non-timber products.

Since 2012, the program has supported 88 community-driven projects across 25 states and territories and permanently conserved more than 24,000 acres.

The full list of funded projects is available at <https://www.fs.usda.gov/managing-land/private-land/community-forest/program>