

Economic Recovery

Investing in Vermont's Outdoor Recreation Assets

Improvements to Vermont's Trail Network



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- **WHAT:** Vermont has more than 750,000 acres of public lands including 55 state parks, and a network of trails that spans public and private land totaling some 5,000 miles. Vermont also has more than 800 lakes and ponds and the Fish & Wildlife Department maintains more than 190 developed fishing access areas, providing places to launch boats and kayaks, as well as public access for shore fishing opportunities. Continuing to invest in Vermont's recreational assets will further improve access, expand opportunities and promote outdoor recreation and its economic, health, and environmental benefits.

An investment of \$5 million will support dozens of recreational infrastructure construction and maintenance projects spread statewide: repairing trails, adding environmental enhancements and protections, improving parking, and providing better access for less mobile Vermonters. Much of this work will be completed by small, local contractors, offering a boost to many businesses during a challenging economic time. And investment begets success - experience has shown that investing in outdoor recreation assets drives increased visitation and related spending.

- **WHY:** Vermonters have always enjoyed outdoor recreation pursuits. These interests were only heightened by the COVID pandemic, with unprecedented numbers of Vermonters – including many first-timers -- taking advantage of hiking trails and bike paths, visiting state parks, purchasing hunting and fishing licenses and using access areas, and enjoying public lands and other outdoor spaces. These investments will buttress and amplify the continued enjoyment of our outdoor recreation resources, supporting the full recovery and further growth of this important sector of Vermont's economy – by residents and visitors alike.
- **WHO:** The quality, quantity and inter-connectedness of Vermont's outdoor recreation assets is a reflection of the strong partnership between state agencies, municipalities and volunteer-driven private trail and conservation non-profits. This interdependence also means that strategic investments across public and private lands will benefit Vermont's outdoor recreation economy as a whole.
- **HOW:** Through a combination of contracted projects on public recreational assets and grants to support improvements to the Vermont trail network, these funds will support strategic investments in a variety of outdoor recreation assets.
- **FUNDING:** An appropriation of \$5,000,000 to the Agency of Natural Resources.

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