

For Immediate Release: July 10 2020

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108 Acres Added to Roxbury State Forest

Property will improve public access to the beloved forest

Roxbury, VT: The Trust for Public Land, in partnership with the Vermont Department of Forests, Parks, and Recreation (FPR), the Vermont Housing & Conservation Board (VHCB), and Park Forestry NY, LLC today announced the addition of 108 acres to Roxbury State Forest. This newly protected land, known as the Third Branch Headwaters, improves public access to the northern and eastern portions of the Cram Hill Block of Roxbury State Forest and benefits water quality and wildlife habitat.

“We’ve seen how essential outdoor spaces have been to Vermonters’ physical and emotional health during the pandemic,” noted Kate Wanner, Project Manager at The Trust for Public Land. “There has been a significant uptick in hunting and fishing licenses this spring, testament to the central importance of backcountry places like Roxbury State Forest. We are thrilled to work with FPR and VHCB to provide a new outdoor area for people to explore during this difficult time.”

Adding this previously privately-owned property to the State Forest permanently protects more than 16 acres of riparian areas above the Third Branch of the White River and nearly a mile of headwater streams, which improve flood resilience, protect water quality and preserve healthy native brook trout populations. Hunters, anglers, and wildlife enthusiasts can now enjoy the northern hardwood stands that host bears, moose, deer, bobcats, turkey, and grouse as well as many non-game species. With frontage on VT Route 12A, the Third Branch Headwaters parcel preserves the forested setting along this scenic route. And, it is located within the Green Mountain Wildlife Linkage, the largest north-south wildlife corridor in Vermont.

Permanent protection of the Third Branch Headwaters not only contributes to a block of unfragmented forest, but it also maintains a natural setting for the adjacent Roxbury Fish Hatchery, Vermont’s oldest fish hatchery, listed on the National Register of Historic Sites.

“The protection and long-term stewardship of forests for public benefit is among the most important and lasting work we do,” said Forests, Parks, and Recreation Commissioner Michael Snyder, “and we are thrilled to add this important piece to Roxbury State Forest and are grateful to our partners for helping to make it happen.”

The acquisition was funded by the Vermont Housing & Conservation Board, the federal Forest Legacy Program and private donations. The newly protected land will be owned and managed by the

Department of Forests, Parks, and Recreation, with a conservation easement held by the Vermont Housing & Conservation Board.

Vermont Housing & Conservation Board Executive Director Gus Seelig said, "We commend The Trust for Public Land and the Vermont Department of Forests, Parks, and Recreation for their diligent efforts to protect the Third Branch Headwaters for the benefit of current and future generations. VHCB is pleased to support this acquisition that expands public recreational access for fishing, hunting, and walking and allows for State management of this significant wildlife corridor."

To learn more about Roxbury State Forest, visit the Roxbury State Forest page on FPR's website at <https://fpr.vermont.gov/roxbury-state-forest>.

About The Trust for Public Land

The Trust for Public Land creates parks and protects land for people, ensuring healthy, livable communities for generations to come. Millions of people live within a 10-minute walk of a Trust for Public Land park, garden or natural area, and millions more visit these sites every year. To support The Trust for Public Land and share why nature matters to you, visit www.tpl.org.

About the Vermont Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation

The Department of Forests, Parks, and Recreation is responsible for the conservation and management of Vermont's forests, the operation and maintenance of the Vermont State Park system, and the promotion and support of outdoor recreation for Vermonters and our visitors.

About the Vermont Housing & Conservation Board

The Vermont Housing & Conservation Board supports the preservation and development of affordable housing and the conservation of agricultural and recreational land, forestland, natural areas and historic public properties. www.vhcb.org