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Vermont Parks Forever Helps Foster Families Visit State Parks

Waterbury, VT– Vermont Parks Forever — the nonprofit foundation for Vermont State Parks— has raised \$3,000 to purchase state park passes for 100 foster families. The passes give families free day access to state parks and ensure children and youth in foster care are able to experience all that Vermont State Parks have to offer.

This incredible gift will allow foster families to swim the cool, clear waters of Silver Lake, walk into history at Little River State Park, watch the hawk migration from the top of Mt. Philo, hike the trails at Mt. Ascutney, and do countless other fun activities together in parks across the state.

The Department of Forests, Parks & Recreation provides children and youth in foster care free park passes though many are unable to take advantage of this benefit because their foster families can't afford to access the parks themselves. For the past three years, DCF's Family Services Division has purchased 300 passes for foster families and many more families could benefit from these passes.

"Fortunately, we were connected to Vermont Parks Forever," says DCF Foster/Kin Care Manager Pam Piper. "They saw the value of making state parks accessible to children and their foster families and sought donors to buy an additional 100 passes. We are very grateful our families will have the opportunity to explore Vermont's beauty in our state parks this summer." The gift of 100 park passes was made possible through the generosity of Lisa Cashdan and Peter Stein, the Charles P. Ferro Foundation, and the Alchemist Brewery.

To learn how you can become a foster parent and other ways you can help children in foster care, go <http://dcf.vermont.gov/foster>.

To make a donation in support of this program and Vermont Parks Forever, visit <http://www.vermontparksforever.org>.

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The Vermont Department for Children and Families delivers a wide array of programs and services to Vermonters in areas such as child care, child development, child protection, child support, disability determination, and economic benefits that help meet basic needs. To learn more about DCF, go to <http://dcf.vermont.gov>.

Vermont Parks Forever, the foundation for Vermont State Parks, was established in 2013 to enhance state parks through charitable support. By expanding access to parks and creating innovative educational opportunities, we work to inspire the next generation of environmentalists in Vermont State Parks. To learn more about Vermont Parks Forever and make a donation to help more foster families visit state parks, go to <http://www.vermontparksforever.org/> or call 802-917-1719.