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Charlestown Silsby Free Public Library Celebrates \$100,000 Grant Award

NH's Land and Community Heritage Program awards \$3.9 million in matching grants

Charlestown, NH 12/7/18 – The Silsby Library Trustees and Town of Charlestown has received a grant award of \$100,000 from the NH Land and Community Heritage Investment Program (LCHIP) to support the restoration and preservation of the library's masonry. Opened in 1896, the Silsby Free Public Library is a highly visible landmark in its central location within the Historic District of Charlestown and houses a collection of over 21,000 books, a large non-circulating historical collection and displays of local artwork. Forty-two projects receiving grants from LCHIP are spread all across the state. Sixteen natural resource conservation projects will be supported by \$2 million while twenty-six historic resource projects will receive \$1.9 million, all in matching grants.

Historic resource projects will help with the rehabilitation of structures ranging in date from 1721 (Ladd-Gilman House, Exeter) to 1916 (Whitcomb Hall, Swanzey). The natural resource projects will ensure permanent protection of more than 13,000 acres in parcels ranging from ten acres in Durham to over 6,000 acres in Gorham. Grant recipients are required to provide at least one matching dollar from another source for every dollar received from the state through LCHIP. This year they will provide more than \$3.70 for each state dollar. The smallest grant is \$7,500 for a planning study to help the Great North Woods Committee for the Arts explore what is needed to convert the former Shrine of Our Lady of Grace into a cultural and arts center. The largest grant of \$350,000 will help the Southeast Land Trust of NH create the Birch Ridge Community Forest in New Durham.

"Town support for the library masonry project has been evident since a 2011 Capital Reserve Fund was established by voters and it has been funded annually by a solid majority" according to Judi Baraly, a Library Trustee. "In March, the voters will be asked to release the Capital Reserve to provide the match for the LCHIP grant and cover the full masonry project of \$260,000. We are grateful for LCHIP's investment and assistance in preserving this remarkable building." The combination of resources will allow for specialized, historic stone and brick masonry restoration. The extensive color-matching and repointing "is a slow and meticulous process" according to masonry consultant Jeff Roush, American Terracotta of Weare, NH.

The eighteen-member LCHIP Board of Directors selects the grant recipients as the culmination of a rigorous application and review process. LCHIP's Board Chair, Amanda Merrill of Durham, observes, "The LCHIP Board and staff have the responsibility and privilege of helping to protect natural, cultural and historic resources across New Hampshire. It is a pleasure to work with dedicated colleagues from local government, citizens groups and non-profits to preserve the places that make our state special."

About Silsby Free Public Library

The six elected Trustees are responsible for stewardship of the Silsby Free Public Library and work with the Town government to oversee maintenance of the building.

For more information about the Library and Trustees visit silsby@charlestown-nh.gov or contact Jim Fowler, Chairman at 603-826-7793.

About New Hampshire's Land and Community Heritage Investment Program

The New Hampshire Land and Community Heritage Investment Program is an independent state authority that provides matching grants to New Hampshire communities and non-profits to protect and preserve the state's most important natural, cultural and historic resources. Its legislatively mandated mission is to ensure the perpetual contribution of these resources to the economy, environment, and quality of life in New Hampshire. Prior to this year's grant awards listed here, since its inception in 2000, the program has provided 425 grants which have helped to conserve more than 280,000 acres of land for food production, water quality, ecological values, timber management and recreation including hunting and fishing and supported 257 projects to rehabilitate historic structures and sites. Grants have been awarded in all parts of the state and in 157 of New Hampshire's 234 communities. Forty-three million dollars of state money have led to a total project value of more than \$299 million. LCHIP grants are supported by fees on four documents recorded at the Registry of Deeds in every county of the state. For more information visit lchip.org or call (603)224-4113.