US Army Corps of Engineers®
New York District

News Release

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U.S. Army Corps of Engineers partners with the city of Montpelier for flood risk management study of the Winooski River

Partnership marks first USACE agreement of its kind in Vermont

NEW YORK- The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, New York District, has initiated a feasibility study with the city of Montpelier, Vermont to investigate possible measures that will mitigate future flood losses experienced by the residents and businesses within the state's capital due to ice jam flooding of the Winooski River.

"The Corps is especially excited about partnering with the city as this is the first U.S. Army Corps of Engineers flood risk management study partnership in the state of Vermont," said New York District Commander Col. John R. Boulé II. "My hat's off to our congressional representatives for securing the necessary funding to make this project possible."

Funding for this study was authorized by the signing of the feasibility cost sharing agreement between Boulé and Montpelier's City Manager, William Fraser as well as a local agreement signed between Vermont and the city of Montpelier. The federal portion of the project funding was secured by Senator Patrick J. Leahy (D-VT)

"I am pleased that the Corps and the city of Montpelier have come together to learn what can be done to reduce chances of flooding due to ice jams," said Leahy. "Damage to the residents and businesses due to ice jam induced flooding is a problem that has existed in Montpelier for centuries. I look forward to seeing the solutions that the Corps, city and state identify in the study."

The project will be accomplished by a project delivery team that will include representatives from the city, state, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers New York District and the US Army Cold Regions Research and Engineering Laboratory (CRREL) in Hanover, NH. Led by Project Manager Jenifer Thalhauser, the team recently completed a detailed plan and schedule for implementing the study and identifying a plan to reduce ice jam induced flooding and associated damages which to date has been a difficult task due to the complicated nature of ice jams.

Montpelier is susceptible to flooding at all times of the year, but particularly in the spring during the spring run-off and ice break-up. In January, 2007, an unusual combination of above average river

discharge followed by a week of very cold air temperatures resulted in a freeze up ice jam downstream of the city which nearly resulted in a major flood event. As a result of this event, the city and state requested that the Army Corps of Engineers initiate a study to identify potential solutions to this recurring problem on the Winooski River.

The total estimated cost of the study is $1.6 million dollars. The state and city will split the non-federal costs (50% of the entire study) with the city being the official partner with the Corps.

For more information, contact Jenifer Thalhauser, US Army Corps of Engineers, at 917-790-8632.

Ice jam on the Winooski River in the city of Montepelier lead to potential flooding in March 2007. (Photo courtesy of CRREL)