



43 Thorndike Street, S3-3
Cambridge, MA 02141



2000
Charles River
Conservancy
was founded

2002
Conservancy
Volunteers hosted
first event



2013
First City Splash was
held, inviting the
community to swim
in the Lower Basin
for first time in over
50 years



2015
Lynch Family
Skatepark
opened



2018
Herter Park
Amphitheater was
revitalized

20
years of
stewardship!

Photos by
Bettina Wanschura,
Topher Baldwin

Dear Friend,

In a year defined by change and uncertainty, our public parks have remained a wonderfully reassuring constant. Throughout 2020, the Charles River and its parks have been a touchstone for so many of us. They have been the place we go to exercise, to safely meet with friends and family, to breathe more deeply and to take a break from our screens. They have been a place of sanctuary and discovery, of reflection and inspiration.

Admittedly, the parks are not entirely unchanged. For one thing, they are a bit more crowded - and that is a good thing! Smiling faces may largely be hidden behind masks, but shining eyes above those masks still convey the delight to be found along the river.

With increased usage comes increased need to care for the parks, as well as increased opportunity to think creatively about their future. **We hope you will support this essential work with a gift to our annual fund, The River Bank.**

Your investment will enable *critical maintenance* to keep this public resource welcoming for ALL who visit. You will enable *innovative ecological projects* (like our floating wetland and the restoration of Hell's Half Acre). Your gift will enable *advocacy* to ensure that the public's interest in the parks is protected on transformational projects like the Allston Multimodal redevelopment.

Though the days will soon get shorter and colder, the parks still beckon. I hope you will join me in bundling up, remembering when the words "snow day" meant "vacation," and finding wonder in winter along the Charles. Discover new spots along the river; walk along it at a new time of day; try a new cold-weather outdoor activity; take in that vista you've seen so many times and dare yourself to experience something new.

On behalf of the river, its parklands and the people who enjoy them, thank you for your support. Just as we have for the last 20 years, the Charles River Conservancy will be with you with new reasons to get outside and with reminders that spring will always follow winter.



Looking forward to seeing you along the river soon,

Laura Jasinski

Laura Jasinski
Executive Director



*Caring for our parks,
so they can care for us*

Photo by Aaron John Bourque



2020

20th Anniversary Year
of the Charles River
Conservancy

regrowth & resilience

Caring for our parks so they can care for us



Strengthening ecology with the

Charles River Floating Wetland

To tackle the challenge of toxic cyanobacteria blooms (a growing threat to the health of the Charles River and other water bodies), the CRC installed a floating wetland just downriver of the Longfellow Bridge in June 2020. This innovative research project reintroduces native plants into the river, which we hope will boost populations of the microorganisms that feed on cyanobacteria. Continuing our partnership with Northeastern University, Ph.D. candidate Max Rome will study the effects of the wetland on the local ecosystem, with an eye towards understanding whether this intervention could be implemented on a larger scale to make the river more resilient against stormwater pollution, the impacts of climate change, and ultimately cyanobacteria blooms.



Supporting places for

River Respite

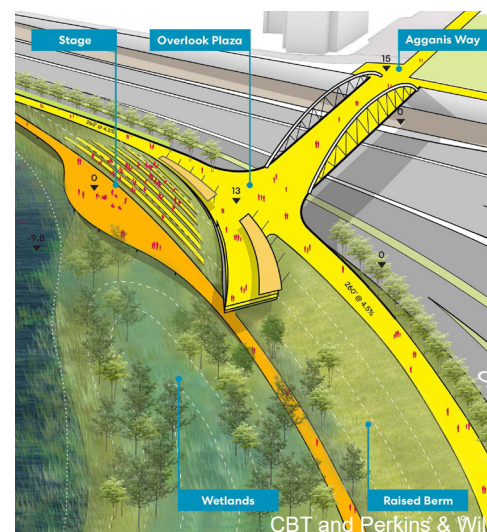
In a year of uncertainty and social distancing, the importance of public greenspaces as essential resources was more apparent than ever. As many relied on the Charles River parks for personal well-being, CRC staff spent more time in the field caring for these spaces.

Advocating for riverfront

Restoration Strategies

in Allston

For decades, the river's edge near the I-90 Allston Interchange has been narrow and eroded. The Allston Multimodal Project is a once-in-a-century opportunity to improve these conditions and to re-connect Allston neighborhoods to the parks. CRC Board Member Gautam Sundaram worked with urban design colleagues to develop riverfront restoration strategies that work in tandem with the community-supported "All-At-Grade" design. These strategies helped to build important consensus among community members, transportation advocates, and environmental groups, including the CRC.



Stewarding & establishing

Resilient Landscapes

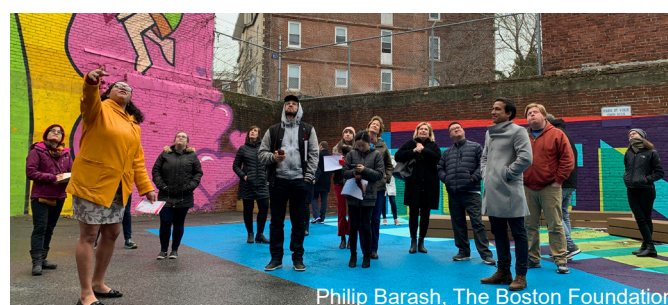


With updated COVID-19 safety protocols in place, our Conservancy Volunteers hit the parks this summer and fall to perform vital maintenance work. Additionally, we launched restoration efforts at Hell's Half Acre, a 7.5 acre "urban wild" along the Charles River in Cambridge. This unique project, which uses best practices in invasive plant removal, will re-establish native vegetation, increase wildlife habitat, and engage the public.

Collaborating through

Partnerships

We believe that we are strongest when we work together and learn from each other. As part of the Boston Foundation inaugural Place Leadership Network, we were thrilled to share space and conversations with a diverse array of inspiring place-making and place-keeping community advocates and organizations.



The River Bank

The Annual Fund of the Charles River Conservancy



The Charles River Conservancy strives to make the Charles River and its parks a well-maintained network of natural urban places that invite and engage all in their use and stewardship. Your contribution to The River Bank is critical to supporting the CRC's daily operations as well as special projects and programs.

\$100-\$499

- Recognition in the CRC's Annual Report and website
- Subscription to the CRC's monthly e-newsletter so you can stay up dated on all of the CRC's accomplishments
- Invitation to all CRC events

\$500-\$999

All of the above, plus...

- Access to early registration for City Splash*
- Discounted rentals at Charles River Canoe and Kayak, with multiple locations along the river.

Make a Contribution

The Charles River Conservancy depends on the generosity and support of individuals, foundations, and businesses to achieve its mission. To make a contribution to The River Bank, please make checks payable to The Charles River Conservancy or visit us online at **thecharles.org/theriverbank**. For more information please contact **Laura Jasinski, Executive Director** at **(413) 265-0204** or **lj@thecharles.org**.

Stewardship Society

\$1,000-\$2,499

All of the above, plus...

- Guided walking tour of North Point Park with CRC staff, featuring the Lynch Family Skatepark, the Floating Wetlands pilot, the site of a planned Swim Park, and more!

\$2,500-\$4,999

All of the above, plus...

- Private volunteer event in the parks for up to 30 people with social media feature as a "CRC Super Supporter"*

\$5,000-\$9,999

All of the above, plus...

- Guided walking or kayak tour with the CRC's Executive Director

\$10,000-\$24,999

All of the above, plus...

- Viewing benefit for major Charles River events, such as 4th of July and Head of the Charles*

\$25,000+

All of the above, plus...

- Private, guided cruise of the Charles River with the CRC's executive director with up to 25 guests*

**Should any of these events be canceled due to public health considerations, we will be happy to find a fun, meaningful and safe alternative way to thank you for your support.*



a message from our Board Chair

Over the past months, I know many of you have taken advantage of the Charles River and its parklands for a walk, jog or kayak trip, or to simply find a quiet space to reflect. This year has reminded us that parks, like the Charles River Reservation, are essential for public health and well-being. This year has also highlighted that these public spaces present an important opportunity for creating and ensuring an equitable society.

As an organization committed to enhancing the Charles River and its parklands, we are equally committed to ensuring they are welcoming, accessible and inclusive for all. We are at the start of a journey to address how systematic racism manifests within our organization, our programming, and throughout the parks, and we will be sharing our progress in this regard over the next months.

Your guidance and suggestions are welcomed as we move forward with enhancing the parklands and ensuring they are accessible and inclusive for all. Your financial support, particularly this year, will allow us to continue this important work.”

Joan Pickett
Resident of Cambridge



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