

Dear Friend,

I am often asked about my favorite park along the Charles River - where is my favorite vista, shady reading spot or running route? Instead of thinking of locations on a map, my mind always turns to the talented and passionate people who love this incredible resource and how fortunate I am to have the opportunity to amplify imaginative ideas that increase everyone's enjoyment of these public resources.

I think about shared smiles and laughter during a lunch at Magazine Beach, someone's curiosity during a first kayak trip to the floating wetland, the energy of athletes of all sizes, abilities, ages, and backgrounds enjoying the Lynch Family Skatepark, and the partnerships we've built to connect surrounding communities to the river. The Charles River parks are truly incredible places, but they are made even more special by the people who love them.

Over the past year, marked by the ongoing challenges and uncertainties of the pandemic, we have worked to center our work in the parks on the people along the Charles. We've connected students and teachers to the river with the development of floating wetland "activity kits" and the MathTrail along the Magazine Beach footbridge. We've reunited friends and colleagues safely outdoors with the return of our volunteer program. We've supported family gatherings by ensuring that the parks are safe, clean places to visit. And importantly, we have also deepened our commitment to ensuring the Charles River parks are truly welcoming, inclusive places for everyone through the development of an equity action plan.

It's more important now than ever to care for the Charles River parks and the communities they support. **Please consider supporting this important work by contributing to our annual fund, The River Bank.**

Your gift will ensure that our important park maintenance, innovative ecological projects, unique educational opportunities and timely advocacy work continue. Above all, your support will help keep the parks a welcoming place to connect with friends and family, exercise and improve our wellbeing, and reset from the routine of daily life.

On behalf of the river, its parks, and the people who enjoy them, thank you for your support.



Looking forward to seeing you along the river soon,

Laura Jasinski
Executive Director



43 Thorndike Street, S3-3
Cambridge, MA 02141



Photo by Aaron John Bourque

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Connecting communities and classrooms to the river

Charles River Floating Wetland

A lush regrowth of plants during the second summer of our wetland installation provided fertile ground for research, education and outreach. The CRC partnered with MIT SeaGrant to create wetland activity kits for elementary students, which model the research project of the life-size wetland, and benefited from the hard work of those from the Cambridge Mayor's Summer Youth Employment Program, who collected community feedback to inform our design of an expanded installation. The Northeastern University team continued the research program, collecting samples and analyzing data to provide insight and metrics as to how these installations can support the local ecology and improve water quality.



Supporting biodiversity

Park Stewardship

Our volunteer program made a strong return to maintain, care for, and invest in the Charles River parks that were a respite for so many throughout the pandemic. To meet the demands of heavy park use and interest in getting outdoors to give back to these essential spaces, we

doubled the number of open community events throughout the spring, summer and fall. We also continued our multi-year restoration of Hell's Half Acre, working in partnership with DCR to use the lessons learned on this site to inform broader invasive species removal practices and DCR's Charles River Vegetation Management Plan.



Making our river resilient

I-90 Allston Multimodal Project

MassDOT recently announced its plan to rebuild I-90 and Soldiers Field Road at-grade. This decision, influenced by CRC advocacy and by designs from CRC board member and Perkins&Will principal Gautam Sundaram, marked a huge win for our coalition of Allston community members, advocates, and stakeholders. There is still significant work ahead to protect the river and create a welcoming, resilient shoreline. The CRC will continue to engage with partners and the neighborhood on this important project as design continues.



Creating unique outdoor learning experiences

MathTrail

If you've been to the Magazine Beach Footbridge this year, you may have noticed a colorful, numbered line with prompts for counting, estimation, observation and more. The CRC partnered with MathTalk and Magazine Beach Partners to bring this MathTrail to the Charles River parks. With the app *Measure! Everything!*, local elementary school students and community members are introduced to early intervention math concepts using numbers and animal footprints. This interactive installation builds STEM literacy by connecting youth to their environment through free math play, and encourages youth and adults to interact with their local parks in meaningful ways.



Photo by Clyde Carman

Advocating for investment

DCR Special Commission

Over the past year CRC Executive Director Laura Jasinski has served as an appointed member of the DCR Special Commission, representing DCR Friends' Groups and partners in this effort to improve the agency's asset and resource management. Through statewide coalition building and advocacy, she has highlighted the need for deeper financial investment in our state park system, brought attention to DCR's role in equity and climate resilience, and elevated the role that partners can play in the stewardship, improvement and activation of these vital resources.



The River Bank

The Annual Fund of the Charles River Conservancy

The Charles River Conservancy appreciates your contributions to The River Bank, the annual fund that supports our daily work and special projects and programs. All donors will be recognized in the CRC's Annual Report and website and will receive a subscription to the CRC's monthly e-newsletter, as well as invitations to CRC events. A gift at any level is meaningful to us if it is meaningful to you.

Examples of how your gift contributes to the vitality of the Charles River and its parks include:

\$100-\$499

Inspiring the next generation of river stewards by sharing educational resources like *floating wetland activity kits to science classrooms*

\$500-\$999

Improving the river's health with activities that keep trash out of the river, like *park litter pickups by our conservancy volunteers*

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](http://theriverbank.org/)**. For more information please contact **Laura Jasinski, Executive Director** at **(413) 265-0204** or **ljaskinski@thecharles.org**.

Stewardship Society

\$1,000-\$2,499

Creating unique outdoor experiences, including *the maintenance, programming, and expansion of the Math Trail*

\$2,500-\$4,999

Supporting biodiversity and healthy ecosystems, such as with *the removal of harmful invasive species*

\$5,000-\$9,999

Envisioning an accessible riverfront through our advocacy and coalition building for projects like *the Allston Multimodal Project*

\$10,000-\$24,999

Enhancing the river's resilience, including *planning and design for an expanded floating wetland installation*

\$25,000+

Supporting arts and culture in our public parks with *partnership-building and community engagement*

A message from our board chair...

“As we close out another year, I am extremely grateful for all of the support we’ve received from our volunteers, followers, partners and donors. You have helped us meet the challenges of the pandemic head on and continue to steward the Charles River parks that have been critical to our health and wellbeing.

We’re also grateful for the dedication of our staff and board and thrilled to be welcoming new faces to each. With this addition of talented, motivated individuals, we’re entering the new year stronger than ever and look forward to building new partnerships and increasing engagement with our surrounding communities and the Charles.



Joan Pickett
Resident of Cambridge



Welcome New Board Members!

Simeen Mohsen



*Managing Director,
Harvard Business
School Online*

Laurel Schwab



*Senior Environmental
Planner & Conservation
Agent, Town of Watertown*

Nayeli Rodriguez



*Technologist for the
Public Realm,
City of Boston*