



43 Thorndike Street, S3-3
Cambridge, MA 02141

Dear Friend,

What a wonderful year 2022 has been along the urban oasis that is the Charles River and its parks, with experiences and events both familiar and new to enjoy.

Our volunteer program saw a resurgence of participation in 2022: In April, we hosted a record-breaking Charles River Earth Day Cleanup with 775 registered volunteers! In June, swimmers gleefully jumped and cannonballed back in the Charles to enjoy our annual City Splash community swim. Our Floating Wetland activity kits were welcomed into 6th grade public classrooms across Cambridge, teaching 500 students about their local river ecology, and many more teens paddled out to see the wetland in person over the summer. We focused on unique programming projects along the Charles River parks, including kicking off a public art initiative at the Lynch Family Skatepark rooted in community engagement. Read more inside about how the past year's activities have set us up for an impactful year ahead!

We hope you will join our work in 2023 by contributing to our annual fund, The River Bank. Your gift will enable the CRC to:

- **engage** more youth in STEM learning opportunities with our floating wetland;
- **expand** City Splash to give more people the unique opportunity to swim in the Charles;
- **celebrate** the cultural vibrancy of the parks through a community-driven public art project at the Lynch Family Skatepark;
- **sustain** the incredible collective impact of our volunteers' stewardship of the parks; and
- **stand up** for resilient parks that can meet the needs of park users!

Your support speaks volumes about your passion and commitment for an active and inviting parkland. On behalf of the river, its parks, and the people who enjoy them, thank you for your support!

Laura Jasinski
Executive Director

Lonsdale G. Koester
Board Chair



Photo by Helen Cai



Photo by Aaron John Bourque

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Floating Wetland

An Ecological Exploration

The impact of our pilot floating wetland continues to grow along with its lush plants! **A third summer of data was collected** by our partner Northeastern University to conclude initial research on its impact, **500 sixth graders experimented** with grow-your-own-wetland kits developed with MIT Sea Grant, and **85 youth kayaked** with the CRC to explore the wetland. In the coming year, we will **publish results from the pilot research** and maintain the island to support additional data collection and community engagement; seek ways to deepen and **expand the wetland kit** educational program; and **share our vision for expansion**.

City Splash

A Swimmable Charles

One of our most anticipated events, City Splash, returned in 2022, and it was met with great enthusiasm—we **sold out within days of registration opening!** Our annual, sanctioned one-day community swim in the Charles River celebrates the environmental achievements to date and seeks to inspire additional progress. Given its popularity, we will **explore ways to safely expand the event to reach a broader audience**.



Photos by Clyde Carmant

Public Art at the Lynch Family Skatepark

A Conduit for Social Resilience

The CRC spent the past year building partnerships with Cambridge Hip-Hop Collective and Community Art Center. In October, we kicked off the first in a series of events aimed to **support the physical space** by fostering a sense of shared responsibility for its care; to **enhance social resiliency** of the park by creating dialogue among users that can ensure the space is a welcoming for all; and to **produce art reflective of the community**.



Photos by Clyde Carmant

Advocacy

A Voice for Public Parks

The CRC has continued to be a leading voice for the public’s interest in the Charles and its parks. This includes **representing statewide Friends Groups** on the DCR Special Commission and **building coalitions** to advance priorities, such as increasing multimodal access, amenities and resilience along the river. We will continue to **advocate to increase DCR’s capacity** and to **advance the public’s interest** in projects like the Allston Multimodal Project, Herter Park Master Plan and Memorial Drive Improvements.



Photo by Elena Saporta



Photo by Clyde Carmant

Volunteer Program

A Society of Stewards

After providing stable support for the parks during the pandemic through strategically smaller events, our volunteer program was able to ramp up to—and even exceed—its prior capacity, harnessing the power of **more than 2,300 volunteers in 2022** to remove over 500 bags of litter and 475 bags of vegetation. To complement the work of larger one-day events, **we began the Charles River Environmental Watch (C.R.E.W.)**, a program that trains individuals to care for a designated area independently. The volunteer program is ready to **sustain this impact in 2023** through strategic implementation of projects, quality service-learning experiences, and expansion of the C.R.E.W. program.



The River Bank

The Annual Fund of the Charles River Conservancy

Photo by Aaron John Bourque

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 Charles River Conservancy or visit us online at **thecharles.org/theriverbank**. For more information please contact **Laura Jasinski, Executive Director** at **(617) 300-8175** or **ljasinski@thecharles.org**.

Stewardship Society

\$1,000-\$2,499

Creating unique outdoor experiences, including our *annual City Splash community swim*

\$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*

Visualize more floating wetlands in the Charles River

Photo of camera by Atharva Dharmadhikari on Unsplash

Rendering of floating wetland by Perkins&Will

Learn more Spring 2023...