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## Charles River Watershed Association Forms Regional Climate Action Coalition

*The New Charles River Climate Compact to Tackle Shared Challenges and Regional Solutions across 35 Communities*



Photo Credit: Madison Wolters

WESTON, MA [December 9, 2019] — Charles River Watershed Association has launched a regional climate action coalition designed to coordinate municipal responses to and preparation for the effects of climate change.

The coalition, called the Charles River Climate Compact, is made up of representatives from cities and towns in the watershed working together to tackle shared challenges and develop regional climate adaptation solutions.

“Municipal governments are on the front lines dealing with the impacts of climate change,” said CRWA Deputy Director Julie Wood. “But because climate impacts don’t stop at the town line, it’s critical for local officials to work together on a regional scale.”

CRWA, formed in 1965, provides the coalition access to technical expertise as well as to a network of environmental partners to help address a range of climate change issues including flooding, stormwater, water quality and quantity, environmental justice, dam removal, land conservation, wetlands protections, land use, sea level rise and accessing funding.

The coalition has met twice since August, with 20 of the 35 communities in the watershed participating to date. “In Natick we have been doing a lot to help prepare our community for the impacts of a changing climate, but the reality is we cannot do it all alone,” said Jillian Wilson-Martin, Natick’s Sustainability Coordinator and a member of the Compact. “We’re excited about this opportunity to work with and learn from our neighbors.” The initial focus is on setting goals and priorities including identifying and understanding flooding impacts in the watershed, launching communications outreach to engage residents in the region, and developing a strategic plan of action for the group moving forward.

The Charles River Climate Compact is one of a growing number of regional climate coalitions that have been springing up across the country as the challenges of climate change become more dire. They represent a new generation of regional climate activism that enables the climate adaptation agenda to be at least partially set at the local level, sharing resources to target local priorities.

“Whether it’s a severe heat wave or a drastic flooding event, it’s the local municipalities dealing with the problem,” said CRWA Executive Director Emily Norton. “So it only makes sense to confront these climate issues with a robust regional approach.”

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*Charles River Watershed Association uses science, advocacy, urban design and education to promote resilient communities and a healthy river ecosystem. CRWA was formed in 1965 in response to public concern about the declining condition of the Charles River. Since its earliest days of advocacy, CRWA has figured prominently in major clean-up and watershed protection efforts that have dramatically improved the health of the Charles.*