Dear Friends,

It has been a whirlwind first full year in this position and I am still learning so much. It has been a pleasure to get to know many of the dedicated long-time members of the CRWA family while also welcoming the many new supporters and volunteers who have joined our ranks.

When I took over as Executive Director, I had a few key goals:

**Robust Science-based Advocacy** - I wanted CRWA to continue to be a fierce protector of the Charles River from threats large and small. We are advocating for dam removals in Wrentham, Watertown, and Natick; pushing MWRA to eliminate sewage discharges into the Charles; and vigorously opposing MassDOT’s plan to put a “temporary” road in the Charles River in Allston during construction of the new I-90 viaduct, while ensuring that climate resilience is a driving consideration of the new I-90 design.

**Strengthen Municipal Partnerships** - I wanted those working in cities and towns within our watershed to know that we are here to support them as they take steps to implement nature-based solutions that will not only further clean up the Charles River, but will build climate resilience in their communities against the weather ravages of climate change: extreme heat, flooding, drought, and storms. We created the Charles River Climate Compact for our 35 watershed cities and towns, and held two “Climate Resilience 101” trainings for local elected officials. As a result we are partnering on projects that advance climate resilience at a regional level; this challenge is too big for towns to take on alone.

**Investing in our Future** - To effectively take on the challenges we are facing and have a real impact on the future of the Charles River, CRWA needs a solid financial foundation. I sought to make the case to donors both large and small that CRWA is a great investment for those who love the Charles River and want to see it flourish. We went public with our Campaign for the Charles, which has raised nearly $7M, and we are closing in on our $10M goal.

**Impact** - I sought to bring CRWA’s amazing knowledge, resources and experience to a broader audience. We’ve done this through both social media and traditional media, engagement with every state lawmaker in the watershed, meetings with local watershed elected officials, presentations at regional and national conferences, TV appearances, and even a feature length article in an in-flight magazine.

There is a lot of doom and gloom in the news when it comes to our environment. CRWA has demonstrated for decades that persistence and doggedness, backed by science and data, can make an enormous difference, and when we give nature a chance, she can rejuvenate. Anyone who remembers the Charles River of decades ago, looking at it now, knows how true that is. We face intense challenges today, but we have overcome seemingly insurmountable challenges in the past. We will take these lessons into the next decade and fight for a better life for watershed residents, human and otherwise.

Thank you for your continued support for our vital work. We could not do it without you.

Emily Norton
Executive Director
With every passing day, and every record-breaking storm or historic flood, it becomes clearer that climate change is the challenge of our time. According to the National Climate Assessment, the Northeast will face more heat, more frequent flooding, more intense precipitation during heavy storms, and greater ocean warming than the rest of the United States. We are already experiencing these impacts, and without action, they will intensify exponentially.
Cities and towns are on the front lines of climate adaptation and resilience. Local governments know to invest in police to protect communities from crime, in firefighters to protect communities from fire, and in local health departments and school nurses to protect public health. But the reality is that mayors, city councilors, and select board members are not yet giving nature-based solutions the attention they deserve as protection from flooding, heat, and pollution.

This is where CRWA comes in. In 2019, we launched the Charles River Climate Compact to facilitate collaboration between municipalities. CRWA also launched Climate Resilience 101 trainings for local elected and appointed officials so they can better understand these growing threats, and provide them tools to proactively address them. Climate resilience zoning; stormwater utilities; local wetlands bylaws; and tree canopy protection; are all tools in the climate resilience toolkit.

We are also helping local officials understand that while they govern within municipal boundaries, water does not respect those boundaries, and decisions made upstream will impact downstream communities. For example, more impermeable surface means more flooding—yet it is virtually unheard of for a local select board to consider flooding impacts in another community when they are making development decisions.

“The Climate Resilience 101 put on by CRWA was great. It opened my eyes to the need to work across municipal boundaries, and gave me ideas of what more we could and should be doing in Cambridge to invest in trees and green space, not only because the residents want them, but because they will help protect us as climate change gets worse.”

QUINTON ZONDERVAN, CAMBRIDGE CITY COUNCILOR
FY 2019 FINANCIAL SUMMARY
October 2018 to September 2019

Revenue & Support
- Campaign $1,108k
- Events $360k
- Programs $437k
- Contributions $342k
- Other $140k

Total: $2,387,000

Expenses
- Fundraising $119k
- Programs $568k
- Admin $164k
- Events $253k

Total: $1,104,000

Funding Sources
- Individual 43%
- Foundation 21%
- Corporation 24%
- Government 9%
- Other 3%

Program Expenses
- Blue Cities 12%
- Advocacy 12%
- Climate Change Adaptation 14%
- River Science 14%
- Events 31%
- Education 17%

*Not based on FY2019 audited financial statements, reported on a cash basis. Audited financial statements are available on CRWA’s website.
FY19 BY THE NUMBERS

120
BMI VOLUNTEER
(BENTHIC MACROINVERTEBRATES)
HOURS

528
VMM VOLUNTEER
(VOLUNTEER MONTHLY MONITOR)
HOURS

96
EDUCATIONAL VISITS

20
PRESS HITS

923
UNRESTRICTED CONTRIBUTIONS GIVEN IN FY19

875
INDIVIDUAL DONORS IN FY19

110
CORPORATE DONORS IN FY19

153
CORPORATE DONATIONS IN FY19
CRWA is raising its voice to say no to putting a road into the Charles River. MassDOT is gearing up to replace the Allston viaduct, which carries the Massachusetts Turnpike (I-90) from the Allston Interchange to the Commonwealth Avenue Bridge. This billion-dollar project involves realigning the MassPike in Allston. When Secretary Pollack selected the preferred design for the final project in January 2019, CRWA initially applauded the decision as one that would accomplish the project’s ambitious transportation goals while simultaneously providing for improved stormwater management, enhanced climate change resilience, and river and riverbank restoration.

A few months after Secretary Pollack’s announcement, MassDOT revealed publicly for the first time that during construction of the project, Soldiers Field Road and the Paul Dudley White path would be “temporarily” relocated into the Charles River on fill and pilings, while I-90 would sit on additional fill and sheet pilings along the banks of the river. Construction of the project is estimated to last 8-10 years. Disruption of the river’s ecology and hydrology, especially for that duration, would have permanent environmental impacts on the Charles. CRWA is pushing MassDOT to disclose and evaluate these environmental impacts, and fully vet alternative approaches to both construction phasing and final project design that would not harm the river. Stay informed at crwa.org/voice-of-the-river.

CRWA created a Building Blue Framework guidance document to assist developers, designers, and project reviewers in best practices for site design and land management that prioritize protecting the Charles River and its floodplain corridors. The Framework describes preferred design and construction practices related to landscaping, stormwater management, and control of erosion and sedimentation. These practices reinforce the use of Low Impact Development (LID) strategies in order to encourage sustainable development and appropriate climate adaptation measures within the Charles River watershed. Highlighting CRWA’s green
infrastructure implementation projects within the watershed, examples of subwatershed plans and green infrastructure demonstration projects can be found in the guidance document.

In partnership with The Nature Conservancy, CRWA has developed a Nature Based Solutions Mapping Tool. This tool is designed to help town planners and conservation professionals identify priority conservation and restoration opportunities that have high habitat value, protect threatened water resources, and help mitigate expected flooding impacts of climate change.

**Water chestnut removal** continues to be a huge success in the Lakes District. Thanks to support from Charles River Canoe and Kayak, the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR), the Citizens Alliance for Noxious weed Eradication (CANoE), and our dedicated volunteers. When left unaddressed, the invasive water chestnut plant (trapa natans) outcompetes any native plant growth, degrading biodiversity and water quality. Its decay depletes oxygen levels in the water, further diminishing aquatic life and can lead to fish kills. Visual observations indicate that the 2019 post-season water chestnut coverage is the lowest we’ve seen in the program’s history, thanks to the 300 volunteers who spent 900 hours hand-pulling approximately 8.7 tons of invasive plants.

In 2019, we launched our new volunteer program: **River Ambassadors**. This program focuses on creating environmental stewards who can help us raise awareness about local environmental issues. With 35 communities in the watershed and a small, hard-working staff of only 10 people, River Ambassadors broaden our reach by representing CRWA at festivals, fairs, summer concerts, and more. They speak to local residents about our mission, projects, and how people can help keep the Charles clean. For added fun, they often bring our hands-on demonstration, Watershed in a Box, to help children and families visualize the impacts many of our daily activities have on water quality and river health. Get involved at crwa.org/river-ambassadors.

**Boston City Council recently approved a local Wetlands Ordinance.** The Ordinance will boost protection of natural resources and climate resilience in the City of Boston. Boston City Councilor and Champion of the Charles, Michelle Wu, and her fellow Councilor Matt O’Malley were strong leaders on this issue and we thank them for their efforts. Local wetland ordinances or bylaws are great tools local communities can use to enhance and customize the protections of statewide environmental laws. Regulations implementing the ordinance will be developed over the coming year, and CRWA will continue working with the City and our partners to ensure that those regulations provide strong protections for rivers, streams, and wetlands within the City.

**And much more!** Stay updated on our projects and advocacy by subscribing to our monthly newsletter at crwa.org/river-current.
Your support helps CRWA continue its powerful combination of sound science, advocacy, and law to address today’s threats. We couldn’t accomplish our critical work without you. A big thank you from all of us at Charles River Watershed Association!

**BLUE HERON SOCIETY**
$25,000 and up
- Anonymous (2)
- Robert H. Ackerman, MD
- Gerstner Family Foundation
- Elizabeth L. Johnson
- Milford Power, LLC
- Richard Salmonstad
- Charitable Foundation
- Robert and Lee Sproull

**AMERICAN SHAD SOCIETY**
$10,000 - $24,999
- Bilezikian Family Foundation
- Hamilton Company
- Charitable Foundation
- Highland Street Foundation
- Roger and Dawn Kafker
- McLane Harper Family
- Charitable Foundation Inc.
- Paddle Boston
- Charles River Canoe & Kayak
- Bob and Amy Rands

**ALEWIFE SOCIETY**
$5,000 - $9,999
- Anonymous (2)
- Blue Cross Blue Shield
- Boston Duck Tours
- Chris Baldwin and Sally Reyering
- CHT Foundation
- Steven and Alexi Conine
- Conservation Law Foundation
- E & L Campbell
- Family Foundation
- Eaglesmere Foundation
- Eversource
- Richard Gonci
- Becca Gould and Bob Lagoya
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- Mrs. Francia W. Hatch
- Head Of The Charles Regatta
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- Patricia King and Tom Powers
- Ms. Beede Ladd
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**HEADWATERS SOCIETY**
$2,500-$4,999
- Anonymous (4)
- Ralph and Ellen Abele
- Avis Budget Car Rental, LLC
- Ben & Jerry’s
- BSA Foundation
- CDM Smith
- Clif Bar Family Foundation
- Consumers for Sensible Energy
- Laure and Christopher Doyle
- Robert Frymire
- Google Gift Matching Program
- Health Resources in Action
- Houghton Chemical Corporation
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- Jay and Marilyn Sarles
- The Silver Tie Fund
- Grant Thomas-Lepore
- The Village Bank
- Wellesley Bank
- Charitable Foundation

**RIVER CHAMPION**
$1,000-$2,499
- Anonymous (2)
- Mrs. Charles F. Adams
- Amsop
- Sue and Henry Bass
- Beacon Hill Garden Club
- Bergmeyer Associates
- Beta Group, Inc.
- Boston Beer Company

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“Every individual matters. Every individual has a role to play. Every individual makes a difference.”

JANE GOODALL
Today, we are pursuing a vision that is transformational, practical, and essential. The Campaign for the Charles River went public on September 19, 2019. This $10 million campaign will provide CRWA with the financial resources we need in order to:

- Restore a clean, swimmable river for people and wildlife.
- Restore natural river flow for ecological, recreational, and human uses.
- Protect human and ecological systems from climate change impacts by replicating nature.
- Protect public trust parklands, watershed lands, and access to the river.
- Shape the successful transformation of the Charles into a practical model for communities worldwide.

During the initial quiet phase of the campaign CRWA raised $6.3 million.

CAMPAIGN DONORS

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Boston Duck Tours
David Bryant
Jack and Elizabeth Campo
Meredith and Eugene Clapp
Laurie and Christopher Doyle
E & L Campbell Family Foundation
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Eric and Carly Ekman
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Brad and Sharon Malt
Peter and Beatrice Nessen
Margot Pyle
Richard Saltonstall Charitable Foundation
Tom and Martha Eddison Sieniewicz
Robert and Lee Sproull
Grant Thomas-Lepore
Paul and Jennifer Walsh

The quiet phase is now over and we are telling the world about this opportunity and our need for visionary philanthropists to invest in our science, invest in our advocacy, and invest in the future of the Charles River!