

Charles River Watershed Association strongly condemns the murder of George Floyd by Minneapolis police officers on May 25, and the systemic racism plaguing our country that led to his death. The senseless killings of many innocent and unarmed African Americans recently include Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor, Stephon Clark, Alton Sterling, Tamir Rice, Trayvon Martin, Sandra Bland, Eric Garner, and Walter Scott; we know there are countless others whose names are sometimes only known to their friends and families who still grieve them. CRWA stands with the African American community in this fight for equality and justice.

We must commit ourselves to acknowledging, addressing and rooting out racism at every level of our society: from education to housing to hiring to banking to the criminal justice system. We all have a role to play. We can no longer sit silently by and ignore the reality of what the African American community is experiencing on a daily basis; we must confront our own prejudices, speak out when we see wrongdoing, and change the laws and policies that have been maiming and murdering African Americans for decades.

In the words of Segun Idowu, Executive Director of Black Economic Council of Massachusetts, “In the long history of Black rebellion in the United States, protests have never been solely about police violence, but about the system, the way of life, the philosophies, and the policies that produce and condone this violence.”

Why should an environmental group speak out against systemic racism and police brutality toward Black people? Because when we stay silent about the murder of our fellow citizens, we are complicit in their deaths. It is only when all of us—especially those in positions of authority or power, those with a platform to speak truth to power—demand accountability from our governments and our criminal justice system, that things will change. Our issues are intertwined.

We are committed to doing more to support those who have been on the front lines of dismantling racist systems, and to be a true ally in the cause of building a just, equitable and sustainable world.

For more context, here are some helpful articles about the connection between environmentalism and racism:

- [Birding While Black](#) by J. Drew Lanham
- [The Climate Movement’s Silence](#) by Emily Atkin
- [The Climate Crisis is Racist](#) by Eric Holthaus

Check out this list of [75 Things White People Can Do for Racial Justice](#).

Get involved. Donate to local organizations focused on racial justice. Below are a few recommendations.

- [Alternatives for Community and Environment](#) is the first environmental justice nonprofit organization in Massachusetts.

- [X-Cel Education](#), which trains low income residents for careers in the emerging field of Green Infrastructure
- [Codman Square Neighborhood Development Corporation](#), which works to build a better, stronger & more sustainable community in Codman Square and South Dorchester.
- [Greenroots Chelsea](#) works to achieve environmental justice and greater quality of life through collective action, unity, education and youth leadership across neighborhoods and communities.

Linda McLane

Board President

On behalf of CRWA Board

Emily Norton

Executive Director

On behalf of CRWA Staff