



CHATHAM CONSERVATION FOUNDATION, Inc.

BULLETIN

The Chatham Conservation Foundation, Inc. (CCF) is a nonprofit, donor supported, community land trust that preserves open space in perpetuity for the benefit of the people, plants, animals, and ecosystems of Chatham, through acquisition, stewardship, education and advocacy.

MAKING AN **IMPACT**

CCF's Current Restoration Projects

Tour Our Restoration Efforts with CCF Director of Land Stewardship, Julie Baca

Restoration projects, especially those centered on native plant restoration, have an outsized impact in small towns such as Chatham where every acre counts. These efforts improve biodiversity, strengthen ecosystems, and help preserve the unique natural character of our community. We devote very significant resources, both in manpower and funds, to battling invasive plants and replacing them with native plants, which form the foundation of the food chain. It is a demanding and costly effort, and I could ramble on about the need for this, but how about a tour of our restoration achievements instead.

This will be the first in a series of Bulletin articles on our restoration projects, with one site featured in each edition.

MINI MEADOW ON MAIN

We'll start at the Mini Meadow at CCF's headquarters, the Mayo House, on downtown Main Street. Our Mini Meadow on Main is our little rewilded spot in a heavily commercial district. On this September day as I write, bees visit the nectar buffet presented by the goldenrod and still-blooming mountain mint. Various plants are starting to disperse seed; perhaps most visible, the pods of the butterfly milkweed, our orange flowering July star, are starting to split, revealing their fluff (known more technically



The Mayo House in 2018 before and after planting of the Mini Meadow in 2025

as floss) mounted seeds. When CCF moved our office to the Mayo House in 2018, we decided to remove the traditional lawn and invasive tree in front of the building to install a more biologically productive meadow. Various pollinators and other insects use the meadow, and we delight in seeing volunteer native plants and fungi move in. At this point, we can maintain the meadow with just a few volunteer weeding sessions each growing season. This year, we extended the native plantings to alongside the east (right) side of the house which was plagued by various invasive plants such as English ivy, bittersweet, and Norway maple. New additions include bearberry and northern bush honeysuckle (*Diervilla lonicera*, not to be confused with invasive shrub honeysuckles in the genus *Lonicera*).

continued on page 4

**BE A LAND STEWARD
FOR TOMORROW**

See Article on Page 7

Chatham's land trust since 1962

Letter from the President and Executive Director



Tim Burt
President
Board of Trustees

Dear Friends,

As summer turns to fall on Cape Cod, we are reminded of the enduring beauty and resilience of the landscapes we work to protect together. This season offers a moment to reflect on the breadth of the Chatham Conservation Foundation's impact—and the many ways your support makes it possible.

From stewarding trails and restoring habitats to safeguarding new lands and deepening educational outreach, our work continues to grow in scope and significance. Over the past year, we have seen firsthand

how collaboration amplifies conservation. By partnering with neighboring land trusts, local organizations, and regional agencies, CCF has been able to extend its reach far beyond what we could accomplish alone. Together, we are tackling complex challenges such as water quality, habitat loss, and the effects of climate change on our fragile ecosystems.

Our strategic plan, informed by member feedback and community input, is guiding this work. The plan sharpens our focus on three priorities:

- **Land Acquisition** – ensuring that irreplaceable open space is protected for generations to come.
- **Habitat Restoration** – bringing new life to lands impacted by invasive species or past development.
- **Stewardship & Education** – investing in ongoing care for our properties while engaging the community in conservation.



Lauren Arcomano
Executive Director

Already, these priorities are yielding visible results. We added precious land to our holdings and extended our protection of the Muddy Creek estuary, and we are in dialogue with a number of landowners regarding potential additional land donations. The Frost Fish Creek Restoration Project, a collaborative effort involving multiple organizations, aims to create healthier marshland and wildlife habitat. Expanded trail maintenance and monitoring programs are ensuring that our preserves remain accessible and welcoming. And our outreach—through walks, talks, and partnerships—is building a stronger culture of stewardship in Chatham.

This breadth of impact is only possible because of you—our members, supporters, and friends. Your commitment fuels our mission and enables us to look ahead with confidence. We're thrilled to introduce two new ways to support CCF's work. We're launching the **Land Stewards of Tomorrow** initiative, focused on protecting Chatham's land for future generations, with opportunities for founding supporters to be recognized in publications and at special events. **Conservation Champions** recognizes those who give \$1,000 or more each year, offering exclusive access to a number of special gatherings where we not only celebrate your generosity but also share how your support is making a difference. Together, we are charting a future where Chatham's natural heritage is protected and celebrated, not just for today, but for generations to come.

With gratitude,

Lauren Arcomano

Lauren Arcomano
Executive Director

Timothy J. Burt

Timothy J. Burt
President of Board of Trustees

CCF Strategic Plan 2025 -2028

Goal 1: Explore opportunities to expand conservation land in Chatham

- Develop a proactive land conservation plan
- Contact priority landowners

Goal 2: Implement best land stewardship practices on CCF properties

- Develop a comprehensive restoration plan
- Complete full management plans for all Tier 1 properties
- Monitor all properties annually
- Increase protection of rare species and habitats

Goal 3: Increase community engagement in conservation activities

- Continue to offer diverse programs for members and the public
- Increase public knowledge about the benefits of native plants
- Create a policy to guide CCF advocacy

Goal 4: Ensure CCF's long-term sustainability through robust fundraising and strong governance

- Increase annual fundraising by 20% by 2028
- Ensure Board and staff have needed skillsets and potential for future leadership
- Create a communications plan
- Strengthen regional partnerships and collaboration



Notes From the Field

Article and photos by Elijah Valentine, Land Steward Technician



In the early spring, while monitoring near Cockle Cove, I found myself a bit stranded on one side of an old cranberry bog. I had traversed a small stream at a shallow point but now it was too deep to cross back over in my rain boots unless I backtracked all the way to where I crossed. Stubbornly, I kept on fighting swamp azalea

bushes and greenbrier to find another crossing point ahead. The vegetation was so dense at one point I had to crawl to keep going, following a small tunnel in the bushes. Suddenly I heard a noise in front of me. As I heard a small yelp, I, in turn, cried out in surprise. For a split second I locked eyes with a river otter that was hiding in the underbrush, then it was gone, hurriedly running down a small side path away from me. I continued through the old bog until I found a berm that I

could use to cross to where I had come from, still thinking about how close I got to an otter in the wild.

This summer we worked frequently on our ongoing restoration projects across town. Most of our projects involve restoring a portion of the property to a healthy

grassland habitat. Many times, while working, I would take in my surroundings, and you could tell the area was literally buzzing with insect activity. Fireflies landing on the switchgrass stalks, bees hungrily taking in pollen from goldenrod and viceroy butterflies fluttering by are regular things that can be seen if you look close enough. Bees, dragonflies, beetles, butterflies and many other unique insects all thriving off the flowers and grass we had planted in years past. With insect populations on a heavy decline, it was heartwarming to see that, in some corners of Cape Cod, there are still bugs if you have a healthy habitat for them.

In April and May, CCF went on a mission to see if we had any vernal pools that flew under the radar of the Massachusetts potential vernal pool map. Surveying involved wading in shaded water filled with vegetation, scanning the surface for egg masses and scooping water to look for fairy shrimp. Trudging through underbrush and muddy soil across town, we ended up finding what we hope to be new state-listable vernal pools. Even in some of the most unassuming



and quite frankly polluted wetlands we were able to find salamander and frog eggs surviving against the odds. While wetland habitats are becoming increasingly scarce it is nice to know that if they are conserved even human impacted vernal pools can support amphibian life.

These stories highlight something very important: even small areas of conserved land can have an impact on wildlife. Every parcel CCF acquires is a win for the large and small creatures that also call Chatham their home. With community support and volunteering we can continue to restore and protect our natural habitats in town so that Chatham's future has more otters, insects, and amphibians in it.

Photos:

Left:

Otter slide

Top:

Moth at Barclay

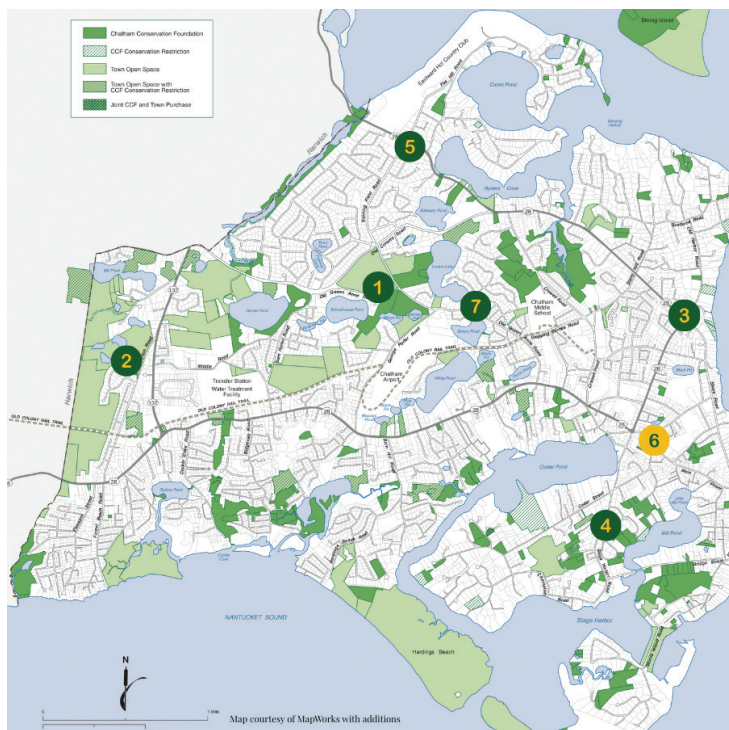
Right:

Spotted

Salamander

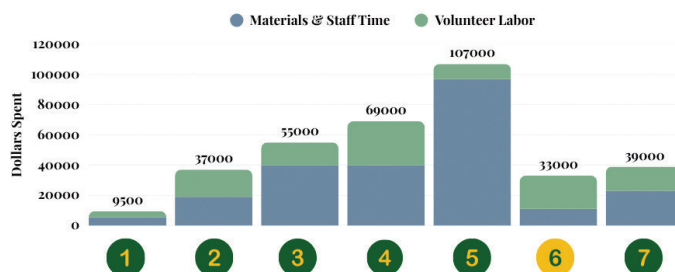


CCF's Current Restoration Projects: *continued from page 1*



Map Locating Restoration Projects

Estimated Total Cost of Projects to Date (Mini Meadow is #6 in Yellow)



The numbers on the chart correspond to the numbers on the map.

The Mini-Meadow is only one of seven restoration projects currently being undertaken by CCF. For small land trusts such as CCF, success depends on generous financial support but also on the dedication of volunteers willing to put in the hands-on work. We welcome your partnership in our restoration efforts, whether through contributing to our Land Stewards for Tomorrow Fund or joining us in our regular volunteer efforts.

Call for Volunteers

The Chatham Conservation Foundation is looking for volunteers to help in a variety of ways! Whether you're interested in greeting visitors as a Mayo House docent, lending a hand with land stewardship, or supporting special events, there's a place for you on our team. **If you'd like to get involved, please email info@ccfinc.org with the subject line "Volunteer Interest."**

Join Us for Christmas by the Sea Stroll

Step into the spirit of the season and visit the historic Mayo House during Chatham's beloved holiday tradition — the Christmas by the Sea Stroll!

CCF hours:

Friday, December 12, 3pm - 6pm

Saturday, December 13, 11am - 3pm



Be a docent at
the Mayo House

Volunteer for
Field Work



Help with Outreach &
Event Planning



Photo by Kim Roderiques

Photo by Adrienne Louuolo

Update on Frost Fish Creek Project

by Julie Baca

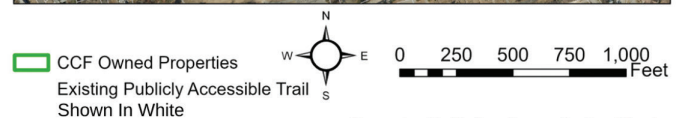
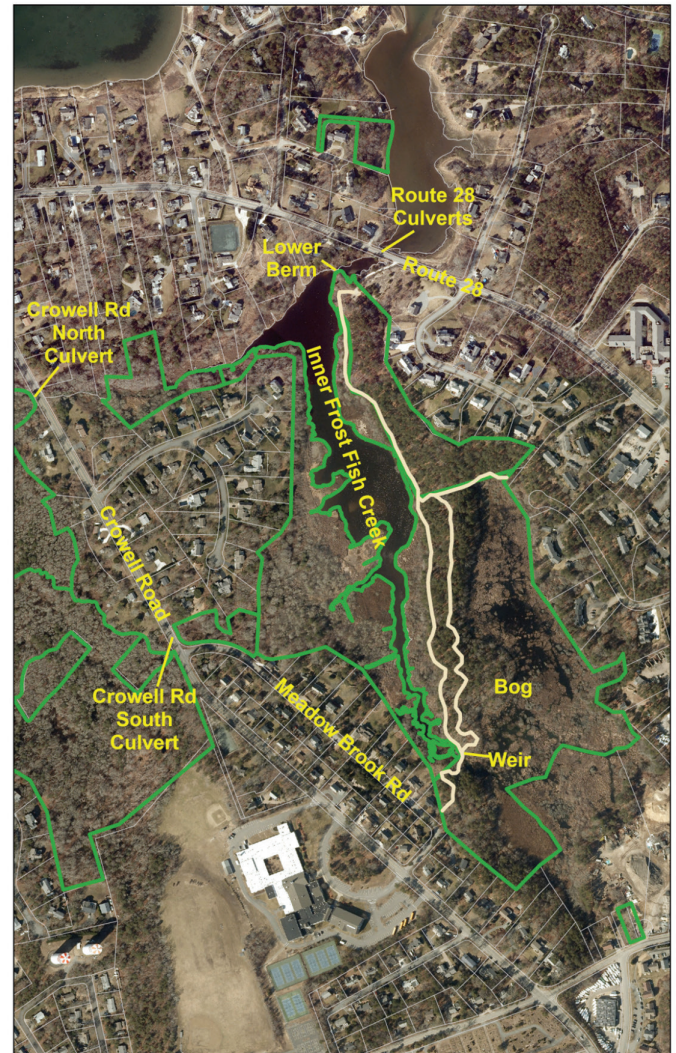
Habitat restoration is one of the four main goals in Massachusetts newly published “Biodiversity Conservation Goals for the Commonwealth” report; specific objectives under this goal include upgrading undersized culverts, restoring fish passage, and restoring salt marshes. For the past four years, CCF has joined a team of partners including the Massachusetts Division of Ecological Restoration (DER), the Town of Chatham, the Cape Cod Conservation District, MassDOT, and the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) in examining achieving these objectives at Frost Fish Creek.

Legacy of Restrictions Along Frost Fish Creek

Frost Fish Creek is a tidally influenced system connected to Ryder’s Cove, which is part of Pleasant Bay. Over the course of the last few centuries, various restrictions were added to the system. Fill was added at three road crossings; the creek now flows through two small pipes under Route 28 and is connected hydraulically by two culverts to the forested wetlands located on the western side of Crowell Rd. Further, two berms and water control structures were added long ago so that cranberries could be farmed along the creek and in the bog at the uppermost reaches of the system. These berms are still in place today; the “lower berm” is located about 200 feet southwest of the Route 28 crossing and the “weir” is located at the end of the creek and maintains the approximately 18-acre bog as freshwater. The Route 28 culverts and the lower berm severely restrict the tidal flow into Inner Frost Fish Creek. Restriction of tidal flow negatively impacts the health and range of salt marsh and flushing of system. The restrictions also limit fish passage.

CCF Launches Investigation of Restoration Potential

With 43 acres in our Frost Fish Creek assemblage, CCF is the primary owner of the bog and the land directly abutting Inner Frost Fish Creek. Additionally, we preserve 35 acres of conservation land on the western side of Crowell Rd, including the wetlands connected to the Creek. In 2018, CCF engaged APCC to conduct an initial restoration assessment of the system, and they recommended further studies, for which CCF sought and received a CPC grant in 2021. CCF and MassDOT independently applied for and were granted Priority Project Designation with the DER in early 2022, and many



Map produced by Chatham Conservation Foundation, Inc in March 2025. Aerial Imagery from MassGIS.



COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
**Division of
Ecological
Restoration**

Invested in Nature & Community



**Cape Cod
Conservation
District**

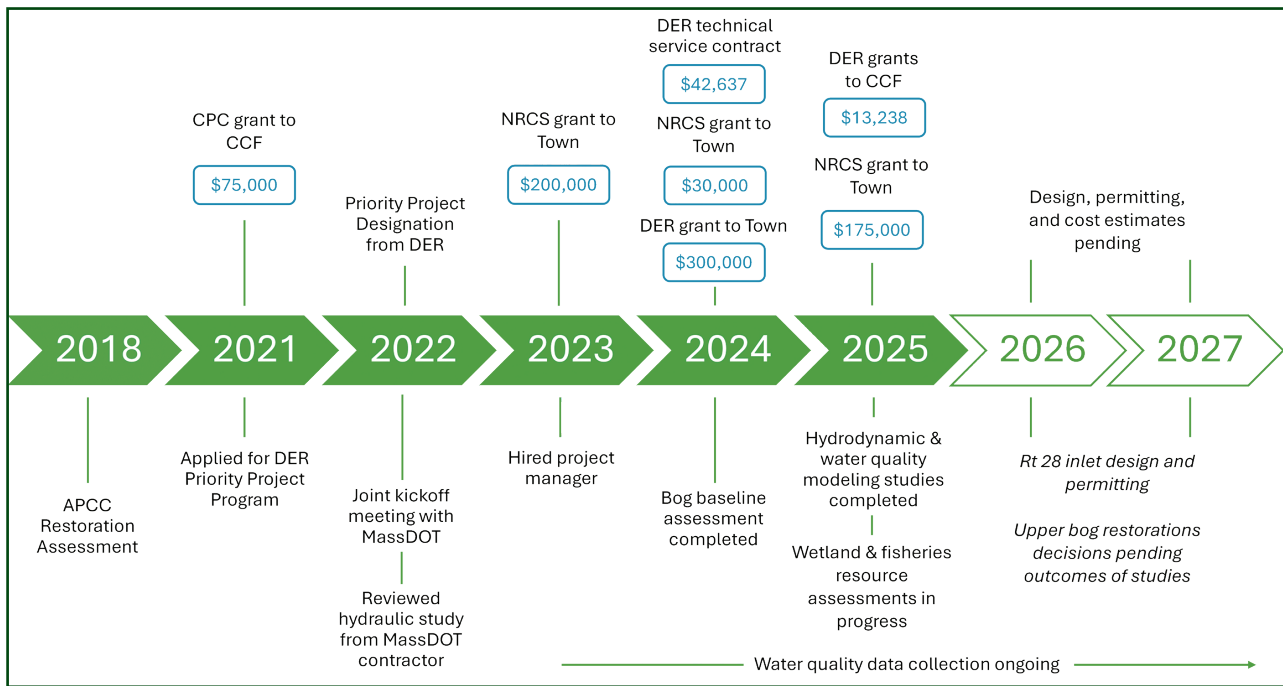


Natural Resources Conservation Service

The project partners (see left logos) are considering removing restrictions in the Frost Fish Creek system with the goals of:

- Increasing salt marsh and ecosystem resilience
- Improving fish and shellfish habitat
- Improving water quality
- Expanding recreational opportunities

Update on Frost Fish Creek Project Continued



team meetings have followed. CCF used CPC funds to hire project manager Carole Ridley, of Ridley & Associates, Inc., who had the experience of the Muddy Creek Restoration and was currently part of the team facilitating the Herring River Restoration in Wellfleet.

Studying the Creek and Modelling Potential Changes

Under Carole's guidance, the team has raised substantially more funds to the project including over \$400,000 from NRCS and more than \$300,000 from DER. So far, this funding has supported tasks such as water quality baseline data collection, an ecological assessment of the bog, hydrodynamic and water quality modelling, and wetland and fisheries resources assessments. Aside from participating in meetings, communicating with the team, reviewing reports, and putting

forth questions, CCF staff and trustees also complete field work. Every other week over the course of a year, we measured the flow-rate at the weir to gather data for the hydrodynamic model. The past three summers, we have launched two dinghies on five mornings each summer to collect water quality data and samples at four stations and we look forward to continuing this effort in coming years.

Looking Ahead

The project partners are continuing to receive study results, conduct additional modeling, and closely monitor potential opportunities for design, permitting, and construction funding, which has become increasingly uncertain. Public outreach efforts will continue as the project progresses.



Julie Baca wading through Frost Fish Marsh to assess access.

Book Club at Mayo House

CCF's Book Club meets monthly at the historic Mayo House at 540 Main Street from 4 to 5 pm. Generally on the first Monday of each month, we gather to discuss books that explore nature and the environment. Coming up:

Nov. 3rd: Return of the Osprey or Soaring with Fidel, by David Gessner

Dec. 1st: Bear Boy by Justin Barker

Jan. 5th: Nothing More of This Land by Joseph Lee

Please join us! Participation is free and open to all.

NEW! Land Stewards for Tomorrow

by Cathy Weston



Restoration of Menekesh on the corner of Rt. 28 and Shore Rd.
An article on the progress of this project will appear in a future Bulletin.

CCF is excited to announce a new initiative – the Land Stewards for Tomorrow fund. The goal of this fund is to allow CCF to expand the work we do on land stewardship and restoration.

For many years, the focus for conservation was acquiring more land to be preserved. We all know we can't purchase large blocks of undeveloped land in Chatham anymore, but in these days of environmental challenge, the work to care for already-conserved land is just as important.

You may think land stewardship is straightforward – land left in its natural state takes care of itself. But that's not the case. Here's what we need to do to take care of the 800 acres that we conserve, to make sure these properties remain healthy for generations to come:

- **M**ake sure our publicly accessible properties remain open, cared for, and safe – while at the same time ensuring they remain ecologically healthy. So, we prune trails, manage signs, and educate people about dog etiquette.
- **D**evelop an inventory and deep understanding of the ecological value of our properties, including habitats, wildlife, endangered species and emerging threats. This allows us to customize our care for each property.
- **E**nsure the properties we care for – both those we own and those we manage under conservation restrictions – remain in a natural state. To do this, we have to walk the boundaries of every property every year, have a dialogue with neighbors about any encroachments, and remove trash.
- **D**evelop thoughtful plans for the future for our key

properties, including assessments of threats and improving resiliency.

- **L**ast but not least, conduct ongoing restorations and maintenance for the ecological health of selected properties. We currently have 7 multi-year projects underway (with several nearing completion) to remove invasives and replant with native species.

To better support these efforts, we announced at our Annual Meeting the launch of the Land Stewards for Tomorrow fund. The fund will be used in two ways, to support current maintenance efforts and special restoration projects.

What kinds of projects will this fund support? Throughout 2025, our stewardship team has been evaluating and prioritizing our properties to develop a list of our next round of restoration projects. The list includes smaller properties with invasives to be removed, larger properties that will require professional evaluation and planning for long-term restoration, and properties being threatened with environmental degradation and habitat loss. By spring 2026 we will have narrowed down the list to our top priorities.

Everyone who donates to this fund before the end of the year will become a Founding Contributor.

If you gave an extra donation this summer for our fundraiser, over and above your tickets, you have already contributed. To give this fund a good start, the CCF Trustees will match any funds donated by year end up to \$25,000. You can donate to this fund in two ways. There will be a special line on the Year-End Appeal for the fund, or you can donate through our website at ccfinc.org, and click Donate.

New Members of the CCF Team

Meet CCF's Newly Elected Trustees: Charley Goheen and Barry Desilets



Charley Goheen grew up in Princeton, New Jersey, spending summers on Cape Cod, where he developed a lifelong love for the water. Before retiring four years ago, Charley built a long career in finance, including serving as CFO of Harvard Pilgrim. He now brings that expertise to CCF, helping guide the organization with the same thoughtful stewardship that shaped

his career. Charley's connection to the Foundation began close to home—literally. When land adjacent to his property was donated to CCF, he began working alongside Julie Baca on group stewardship projects. Since then, his appreciation for conservation has only grown. A licensed captain and avid fisherman, he continues to find joy and inspiration on the water, while helping to protect the landscapes that have always been part of his Cape story.



Barry Desilets has always cared deeply about the environment, growing up along the Blackstone River where industrial pollution was a daily reality. After a career in law enforcement and sales, he and his wife discovered Chatham in 2014 and soon made it their full-time home. His connection to CCF grew naturally. After a biking

accident in 2017, Barry began walking long distances around Chatham and fell in love with the town's beauty. Spending time on conservation lands, especially Frost Fish Creek and Strong Island, deepened his appreciation for protecting these special places. Barry shares his eye for the natural world through his photography. What started as long walks and an Instagram page became The Colors of Chatham gallery on Main Street, where he continues to highlight the landscapes that inspire his work with CCF. Barry brings his creativity, love of the outdoors, and commitment to conservation to his CCF work.

Intern Spotlight: Building Connections for Conservation

CCF welcomed Elizabeth Provost, recently graduated from the University of Rhode Island, to our team this past summer in the role of Communications and Event Outreach Intern. Elizabeth has played a key role in strengthening relationships with local supporters, assisting with events, and helping to tell our story in ways that inspire action and generosity.

Meet Elizabeth as she talks a bit about herself and her work at CCF:

Tell us about yourself.

I was raised in Foxborough and spent the summers of my childhood visiting the Cape. We rented a handful of houses in Yarmouth's Bass River Village. In 2019 my parents bought a house in that area and now I try to spend as much time as I can down here. If I could read on the beach all summer, that's exactly what I'd do. I just graduated from URI with a degree in textile marketing. I love knitting, crocheting and sewing so I was glad to be



Elizabeth Provost, CCF Intern

Photo by Dawn Dinnan

able to blend my hobbies with my interest in marketing.

What do you do at CCF?

I am the Communications and Event Outreach Intern. My main project this summer was the Strong Island Fundraiser, but I also helped with the Annual Meeting at Wequassett. I essentially served as project manager, coordinating logistics and working with staff and volunteers. Now, I help wherever I'm needed—from writing blog posts to creating postcards to help CCF connect with the community.

What's been your favorite project?

Obviously, I have to say the Strong Island Fundraiser! It was amazing to see everything come together and the weather couldn't have been more perfect.

What are you looking forward to:

Honestly, I'm rather intrigued by the next few CCF Book Club sessions. I'm also excited for the Winter Stroll and to experience the Mayo House as it transitions from the beauty of fall foliage into its cozy winter charm.

Looking Ahead

FIRST DAY HIKES



CCF will kick off the 2026 trail walk season with two guided First Day Hikes on January 1st along Frost Fish Creek. These walks are part of #FirstDayHikesCapeCod, a collaborative effort between CCF and other Cape Cod conservation groups offering outdoor experiences on New Year's Day. CCF's walks are free but please register at www.ccfinc.org. We hope to see you there to start the year with nature and community!



Artwork by Bob Strake

WINTER WEBINARS

CCF's fourth Winter Webinar Series will take place on Saturdays in February and March. The webinars are presented free-of-charge as a community service thanks to the generosity of CCF members and donors.

The series starts on February 7th with Julie Baca, our Director of Land Stewardship, discussing ongoing CCF projects, including updates on the Frost Fish Creek Restoration Project (see pages 5-6). Speakers for subsequent webinars are being finalized, but topics will include salt marsh and eelgrass restoration efforts in Pleasant Bay, the history of the colonial era Nickerson homestead (the remains are located on CCF property), amphibians found in our local habitat, and, as always, a presentation or two of interest to birders! Dates and details are coming soon on our website.

CCF is proud to partner once again with fellow Chatham environmental groups, and a wide variety of other local organizations, businesses and faith groups to offer activities and events celebrating Earth Day and Arbor Day. Events will include guided walks, kids programming, a keynote lecture, tree sapling giveaways and our annual Town Clean Up. A detailed schedule of events will be available in early 2026.

Guided by Nature: A Look Back at Our 2025 Trail Walks

From January through September, CCF's trail walk season kept nature enthusiasts exploring, learning, and connecting with the land. Guided trail walks remain one of the Foundation's most valuable outreach tools, helping to educate both members and the broader community about CCF properties and our conservation mission.

This season, CCF led 18 guided walks across our properties, including 8 trips to Strong Island. We also partnered with Friends of Monomoy, Friends of Sylvan Gardens, Friends of Trees and the Harwich Conservation Trust to co-host an additional 20 walks, greatly expanding our reach. Each walk provided a unique perspective on the natural world—from tree identification to shoreline ecology. In September, we were thrilled to bring back our

always-popular birdwatching walks on Strong Island and to debut a brand-new program, "Moth Balls"—a fun and fascinating nighttime event focused on moth identification.

A heartfelt thank you to all the guides who joined CCF staff and trustees in leading this year's walks. Your knowledge and enthusiasm make these experiences truly special.

Mark Faherty, *Science Coordinator, Mass Audubon's Wellfleet Bay Wildlife Sanctuary*

James Junda, *Ornithologist, Mass Audubon's Wellfleet Bay Wildlife Sanctuary*

Phil Kyle, *Natural Historian and Educator*

Tom Walker, *Botanist*

And very special thanks to Jay and Christy Cashman for providing the transportation for our Strong Island trips.

Recent Gifts in Memory Of

Kathleen Baack

Kathleen Jerauld

Drew Carey

Cheryl Gardner

Steve Clarke

Lori & Paul Joyal

Carolyn Cryan

Her Thursday Afternoon
Zoom Friends

James & Nancy Donahue

Ben & Barbara Russell

Frankie Doty

Edward & Andrea Foldessy

Edward Footer

Jeffrey Lemont

Robert Masters Goss

Lynn & Doug Johnston

David Kallander

Jennifer & Steven Wolfberg

Richard McCoy

Judith McCoy

My Mother

Anonymous

Dorothy Raymond

Ray & Leslie Mitkus

Robert & Jean Raymond

Ray & Leslie Mitkus

James Shepard

Arthur & Ella Feldman

William D. Ward

Edith Ward

Barbara Wells

Matthew & Marianne Wells

Recent Gifts Honoring

The CCF Land Stewards for Tomorrow Fund

Anonymous

Joyce & Dick Lacatell

Danette Green

Al Maillet

Cheryl & Bill Grau

David Potts

Greg & Arlina DeNardo

Christopher Rogers

Abbot & Dorothy H. Stevens
Foundation

Sara Schewe

Charles & Anne Schewe



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Conservation
Foundation, Inc.**

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www.chathamconservationfoundation.org

A Force For Nature: A Night to Remember



CAPE
COD5



On a perfect August evening, more than 180 guests gathered on Strong Island with CCF to celebrate our shared commitment to being a force for nature and to launch the Land Stewards for Tomorrow Fund. Together, we proudly reached our \$100,000 fundraising goal.

We are deeply grateful to the Cashman Family for graciously hosting this special event, and to our generous corporate sponsors (listed top left) and private sponsors, Oonie Burley and Arthur Vanderbilt, —your support makes this work possible.



The Raw Bar was exquisite!



Jay Cashman with son-in-law Trevor Childs (L.) and Ted and Karen Koskores (R.)

Photos by Kim Roderiques