



Judy Record Conservation Fund

Stewardship of the Natural Landscape

Trustees: Roger Wrubel, *Executive Director* • Eugene Record, *Treasurer* • David O'Neill, *President, Mass Audubon*

Judy Record Conservation Fund 2021 Annual Report

The Judy Record Conservation Fund (JRFund) awarded five grants in 2021 totaling \$50,382. Projects were on conservation properties in Belmont and Lexington. One project took place in Waltham although not on a protected property.

The Fund began the year by writing to the conservation commissions and town offices in Belmont and the neighboring communities that might have projects that could fulfill the Fund's mission of protecting and improving conservation land. In 2021 we visited and documented progress at each of the project sites. The Fund also offered the Belmont Conservation Commission a matching grant to establish an endowment for Rock Meadow in Belmont. So far, there has been no official response to that offer. Below are brief updates on the five projects funded in 2021, an update on the Pine Allee Tree Planting project at Lone Tree Hill that was funded in 2020 but postponed because the Covid pandemic and a year-end JRFund financial report.

1. Land Stewardship Internships, Habitat Education Center and Wildlife Sanctuary, Belmont (\$17,444):



The grant supported two land stewardship internships at Habitat Education Center and Wildlife Sanctuary in Belmont from March through October 2021. Under the direction of Habitat's property manager, Sandy Vorce, Evan Allen began his internship in March and was joined by Angus Abercrombie in summer of 2021. Evan and Angus assisted with the ecological management of the property, including control of invasive plants, management of meadows and gardens, and work with Habitat's goat herd meadow grazing system. Because Habitat continued to experience an increase in visitation during the Covid-19 pandemic period, Evan and Angus provided valuable assistance engaging with visitors. They assisted the property staff with work required by the Habitat summer camp and assisted with "Pulling Partners" volunteers as part of the Habitat Intergenerational Program. Each intern submitted a reflection on their internship experience at Habitat (Appendix A). It should be noted that after his internship Evan Allen was hired by Mass Audubon as a property worker at Habitat.

2. Kiosk at Clay Pit Pond, Andrew Wong, Eagle Scout Project (\$1,388)

The goal of the project was to build an information kiosk and install it at Clay Pit Pond Park in Belmont to benefit the Belmont community. The kiosk was part of a master plan developed by the Belmont Conservation Commission for this park, but due to limited funding this component of the plan had not been implemented.

Andrew took on the project as part of his Eagle Scout badge. Funding the project was part of the badge requirements and the JRFund was happy to assist.

The kiosk is a three-sided structure with a hexagonal cedar-shingled roof. Each bulletin board features a cabinet-style plexiglass door which is fastened with a combination lock. It was mostly assembled at Andrew's home, with help from other scouts and



adults, over a series of four work sessions. The project concluded with a fifth, longer work session that involved transporting the kiosk components to the site, digging post holes, shown above, and erecting the structure. Altogether, 25 volunteers participated in the project and worked for a total of 228 hours. Now that the kiosk is complete, it is under the care of the Belmont Conservation Commission and will be available to various town groups to display content regarding local history, ecology, or other subjects.

The grant the JRFund approved was \$1,250.00 for the purchase the materials, supplies and tools for the project. Three local construction companies donated material to be used for the roof. The total expenses exceeded the grant amount by \$138, and Andrew's parent offered to pay the difference. However, the JRFund agreed to pay the overage for this well executed project.

3. Forest & Meadow Restoration at Lone Tree Hill, Belmont (\$4,400)

In 2020, the first year of this multiyear effort to restore overgrown selections of the Lone Tree Hill Conservation Land, field technicians from Parterre Ecological Services engaged by the Land Management Committee for Lone Tree Hill (LMC), focused on invasive plant removal in Area A1 (Fig. 1.). The JRFund provided a 1:1 matching fund for the 2020 project.

Bittersweet vines that were smothering the trees were cut and a forestry mower was employed to obliterate, at least temporarily, glossy buckthorn and multiflora rose. The mowing radically altered the appearance of that portion of the property and revealed a hidden stone wall.



Fig 1. Northwest sections of Lone Tree Hill Conservation Area.

In 2021, the Fund agreed to match funding from the LMC for Year 2 of the ecological restoration project to help restore native plant communities and enhance biodiversity.

Starting in early May 2021 staff from Parterre Ecological Services began periodically visiting area A1 to mechanically remove resprouting invasives or treat remaining invasives with herbicides. In addition, black swallowwort, which had invaded parts of the abutting Great Meadow was treated with herbicides. Isolated stands of Japanese knotweed were also treated.



Fig 2. Resurgent native vegetation in Area A1 adjacent to the Great Meadow. Emerging plants included Canada mayflower, staghorn sumac and little blue stem grass.

A 6,400 sq-ft area north of the parking lot on Mill Street and next to section A3 was cleared for a pollinator meadow. In November 2021 the area was seeded with a meadow mix of pollinator-supporting native wildflowers, including anise hyssop, purple coneflower, blazing star, foxglove beardtongue, black-eyed Susan and smooth aster.



YEEP interns preparing native garden

4. Meadowscaping for Biodiversity: Youth Environmental Entrepreneurship Program, (\$21,600)

Meadowscaping for Biodiversity is a youth development and environmental organization

based in Waltham,

Massachusetts. The JRFund provided support for eight high school student interns to participate in the Youth Environmental Entrepreneurship Program (YEEP). Interns were provided with a series of zoom classroom meetings in Spring 2021 helping students gain career skills while learning about ecology, native plants, biodiversity and habitat restoration. During the summer, 2021 the students were engaged in identifying and removing invasive plants, designing and installing pollinator gardens using native plants, and running a native plant sale including purchase of plants, advertising and sale. They took field trips to Fresh Pond Reservation and Garden in the Woods, where they spoke with professionals caring for those properties.



Barbara Passero, YEEP co-founder, YEEP native plant sale Waltham 2020

5. Camera-Trap Photography of Wildlife in Local Conservation Areas, Soren Goldsmith (\$5,500)



Soren Goldsmith is a Lexington high school student who has had an interest in conserving open space. For this project he wants to photograph wildlife and use the photographs to spur interest in and support of our local conservation areas.

He intends to set up an Instagram site to post photographs as well as mount gallery exhibits. He has purchased high quality camera trap equipment and will be installing it at three locations in Belmont



and Lexington. Currently, one camera is operating in Simonds Brook in Lexington. Other likely locations include Lone Tree Hill and Habitat in Belmont, Willard Woods in Lexington and Beaver Brook North Reservation in Lexington, Waltham and Belmont. The project will continue into 2022.

6. Lone Tree Hill, Belmont Tree Planting: The JRFund was prepared to fund the fourth year of planting white pine saplings in the Pine Allee at Lone Tree Hill. However, the project was suspended in 2020 because of the Covid pandemic. Tree planting will resume in Spring, 2022. On a positive note; the trees planted between 2016-2019 are generally doing well, except for some deer browsing on the growing tips of some saplings.

Financial Report January-December 2021

Judy Record Conservation Fund Financial Report January 1, 2021 - December 31, 2021				
Activity	Amount	Payments made on Behalf of the Judy Record Conservation Fund		
		Date	Vendor	Amount
Beginning Balance 1/1/2021	\$1,115,908			
		2/18/2021	Town of Belmont-1/2 Panterre Eco Services Invoice	\$3,312.50
Gifts Transferred to Endowment	\$750	2/28/2021	Town of Arlington Wellington Park Project	\$20,000.00
		5/25/2021	Roger Wrubel Exec Dir. Stipend	\$5,000.00
Dividends & Interest	\$7,005	6/7/2021	N.E. Grassroots Envir. Grant to Meadowsclaping for B	\$21,600.00
		7/22/2021	Donation to Belmont Citizen Forum newsletter	\$1,000.00
Endowment Mangement Fees	(\$978)	7/31/2021	Habitat Land Steward Internships	\$17,444.00
		8/19/2021	Town of Belmont Matching grant Ecological	\$4,450.00
Transfer for Expenses (see list)	(\$79,195)		Management Lone Tree Hill	
		10/29/2021	Alexander Wong Eagle Scout Kiosk Claypit Pond	\$1,388.43
Market Change	\$209,471	11/30/2021	Roger Wrubel Exec Dir Stipend	\$5,000.00
Ending Balance 12/31/2021	\$1,252,961		Total Expenditures 2021	\$79,194.93

The Judy Record Conservation Fund began 2021 with a balance of \$1,115,908. The Fund had expenses of \$ \$79,194.93.

Payments in 2021 for grants in 2020: The Fund paid \$3,312.50 to Parterre Ecological Services for *Forest & Meadow Restoration Project at Lone Tree Hill* conducted in 2020. The Town of Arlington through the Arlington Conservation Commission received a grant for \$20,000 in 2020, which was paid in 2021, for *Wellington Park and Mill Brook Revitalization Project (Phase III)*.

Grants, expenses, and income in 2021: Mass Audubon/Habitat received a grant of \$17,444 to support two Land Stewardship Internships. Meadowsclaping for Biodiversity received a grant of \$21,600 to support eight students in for the Youth Environmental and Entrepreneurship Program. The Fund donated \$1,000 to support the Belmont Citizen Forum newsletter; The Town of Belmont, Land Management Committee for Lone Tree

Hill was paid a matching grant of \$4,450 for ecological management work in 2021; Alexander Wong received a grant of \$1,388 for his Eagle Scout project at Clay Pit Pond in Belmont. Roger Wrubel received a stipend of \$10,000, in two payments, for administration of the Fund and the Fund paid \$978 to Mass Audubon for endowment management fees. The Fund received gifts of \$750 in 2021. With dividends, interest and market gains from investments the Fund ended the year with a balance of \$1,115,908 as of December 31, 2021.

The Judy Record Conservation Fund (JRFund) was established in 2001 by family, friends, and members of the McLean Open Space Alliance and the Belmont Land Trust, who wished to honor Judy's contributions to land conservation. The JRFund provides grants to support protecting, maintaining, restoring, and acquiring conservation lands in the Town of Belmont and the neighboring communities of Lexington, Cambridge, Waltham, Watertown and Arlington. In addition, the Fund considers projects, within conservation lands, that further the development of multi-use paths, off road hiking and biking trails and universally accessible trails. The JRFund also provides support for internships and fellowships, with recognized conservation organizations, fostering the next generation of land conservation leaders.

This Annual Report was prepared by Roger Wrubel, Executive Director and reviewed and approved by fellow trustees of the JRFund, Eugene Record and David O'Neill.

Appendix A: Habitat Internship Reflections, Summer 2021

Evan Allen

After I finished my springtime internship with Habitat, I had the opportunity to do a second internship through the summer and into fall. Though I had already been acquainted with Habitat through the spring, there was still so much to learn with the coming seasons. I got to experience the bustling summer camp program and the autumn leaves begin to change color. It really gave me more insight into what year-round ecological management and land stewardship entails, and how each season brings with it more to do and more to learn. During the summer and the beginning of fall I was able to spend some time helping out at some of the other Metro west Mass Audubon sanctuaries and get a feel for how those locations operate. I got to do some trail maintenance and building at Broadmoor and work at planting trees with an Appalachian Mountain Club volunteer group over at Drumlin. I truly am grateful to have been able to further involve myself within Mass Audubon. I thank the Judy Record Conservation Fund for enabling me to spend valuable time working and learning at Mass Audubon. I have found this experience to be incredibly inspiring.



Angus Abercrombie

I've volunteered with Mass Audubon for a long time, however going into the summer before my senior year in high school, I wanted the opportunity to have the experience and financial freedom that comes with a job. To continue supporting the community I'd found over the past 16 years at Habitat, I applied for the position of Land Steward Intern. As a part of the property team, I was able to dig into the skills that I'd learned in my early days as a volunteer, but also understand the complexities of running the sanctuary to a greater degree. When some poor child would discover a wasp nest the hard way, or I'd arrive to spend two hours sawing up a tree that had occupied a portion of the all-persons trail, instead of whatever had been planned the day before, I became practiced in quick decision making to ensure that whatever responsibility had fallen upon me was handled with grace. I've spent a very long time immersed in Habitat, and I know its trails and trees better than some parts of my own house. The internship was, for me, an opportunity to work as a part of a team, learning what it takes to have just two or three people some days to keep 90 acres ticking. Every member of our community presented a unique story that textured the tiring ninety something degree days. As upkeep drifted into routine, trips out to clear the bench at Lone Tree Hill, bringing goats water and sitting with them while no one else had the time, there was always a new challenge just around the corner to keep us on our toes.

Overall, the experience I gained as part of a diverse team of bittersweet fighting superheroes is rivalled in value by only the memories made while doing it. I can't think of a better first job, or a position I may take where the skills of coordination, communication, and a little bit of crisis management, won't be needed. Having the financial incentive available to keep people like me able to care for their local ecosystems, and their community through the profound effect access to nature has. I am so thankful that the Judy Record Conservation Fund supported Mass Audubon, enabled me to continue supporting nature access in my community, and provided an opportunity to learn skills that will help me in my future pursuits.