



Harvard Conservation Trust

Muller Conservation Collaborative

2018 Annual Report

The Harvard Conservation Trust (HCT) was founded in 1973 to “assist in and promote the preservation of the rural character of the Town of Harvard”. In 2015, one of HCT’s founders, Erhart Muller, bequeathed \$1.5M to HCT to be used solely for land protection in Harvard, provided these funds are first matched 1:1 through new donations from private individuals and foundations. To fulfill Erhart’s vision of a collective effort to protect Harvard’s land and natural resources, HCT created the Muller Conservation Collaborative (MCC). Since its inception in the fall of 2015, the MCC has received donations totaling over \$730,000.

Expanding on the conservation successes of 2017, 2018 marked the completion of yet another strategic land protection project, known as *John’s Field*. The *John’s Field* property is a scenic 10-acre parcel located at the height of Slough Road, only a mile from Town center. From the edge of the field, one enjoys an easterly vista with a “big sky” that is ideal for stargazing or watching a sunrise. This land also has a long history as productive farmland and contains increasingly rare and valuable agricultural soils. Perhaps most importantly, this land is a critical link in a greenway that extends from town center to the



complex of protected lands to the southeast, which includes the Williams land, Burgess-Brown Farm, and Great Elms. Conserving *John’s Field* ensures the future of a long-distance recreational trail, as well as protects what is already a vibrant wildlife corridor. Deer, bobcat, fox, coyote, and turkey are all species that range across this landscape and benefit from open field habitat.

2018 also marked the completion of a key companion document to the MCC, HCT’s first written *Strategic Land Protection Plan*. The Strategic Land Protection Plan serves to guide the selection and pursuit of land projects based on three priority conservation attributes: ecology, agriculture, and connectivity. As stated in the plan, “the conservation community has come to understand that the value of a land trust’s protection efforts is greater than the sum of indiscriminately amassed acreage,” and “emphasizing the strategic importance of a subset of criteria will build continuity and impact over time.” The importance of each of these three priority attributes is described in the plan, which also includes a set of specific recommended actions designed to provide “a more detailed understanding of the conservation values of Harvard’s landscape down to the parcel level, as well as stronger ties with the people who own and care for the natural and agricultural land in Harvard.” While HCT will continue to be vigilant and responsive to real estate sales and development activity, in town, our land protection efforts are now rooted in a more strategic and proactive approach.

MCC Financial Summary

As of December 31, 2018, the MCC received donations totaling \$730,000, each donation releasing an equal amount from Erhart's bequest. In addition, completed land protection projects have leveraged another \$550,000. Leveraged funding includes the bargain sale value of *John's Field*, and the value of the *Horse Meadows Knoll* conservation restriction purchased by the Sudbury Valley Trustees. Gifts have come from over 140 different individual donors and foundations, ranging in amount from \$5 to \$100,000.

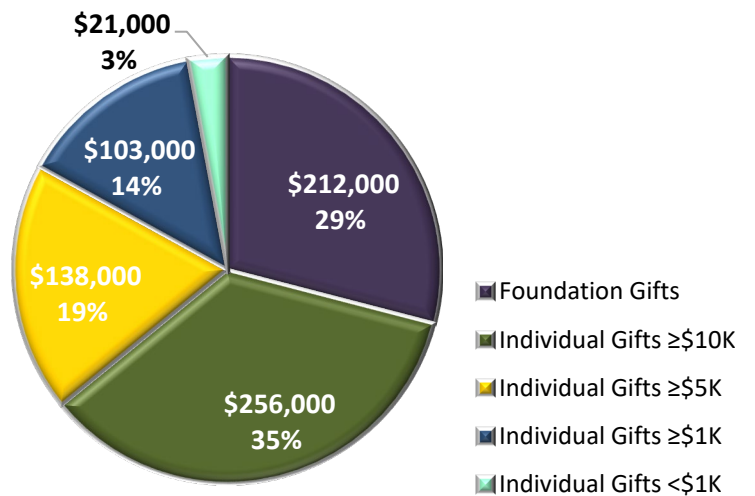
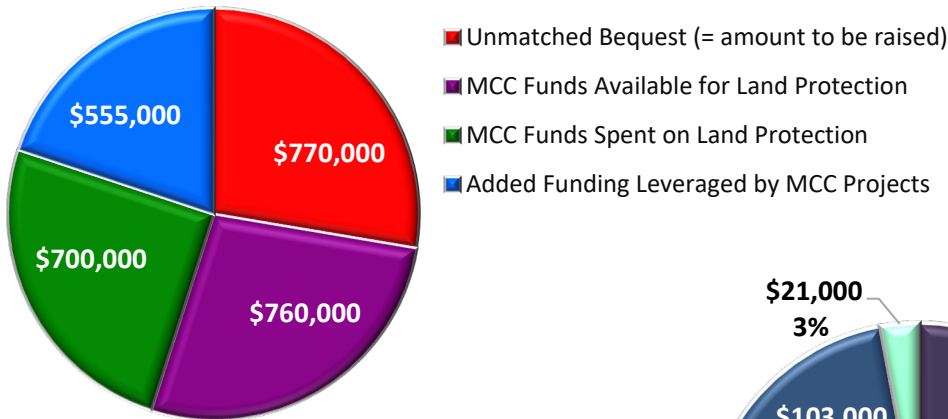
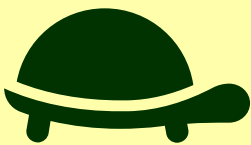


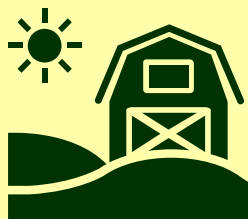
Chart Above: Overview of MCC financial status, including funds spent and leveraged, as well as remaining unmatched bequest;

Chart to Right: Breakdown of MCC donor matching gifts.

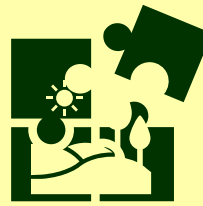
MCC & Strategic Land Protection Outcomes



48 acres of ecologically exceptional land home to multiple rare and endangered species permanently protected



2 scenic agricultural fields containing the highest quality farmland soils permanently protected



4 new connections made with-and-between 389 acres of existing conservation land



15 new community conservation leaders catalyzed (individual donors at ≥\$10K with no prior record of capital giving to HCT)

Thank you to all those who have generously given to HCT's Muller Conservation Collaborative; please visit - https://harvardconservationtrust.org/mcc_donorlist_2018/ - for a complete listing.