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# 2020 STRATEGIC PLAN

FRIENDS OF THE BLUE HILLS



*Photo Credit: Kate Galvin*

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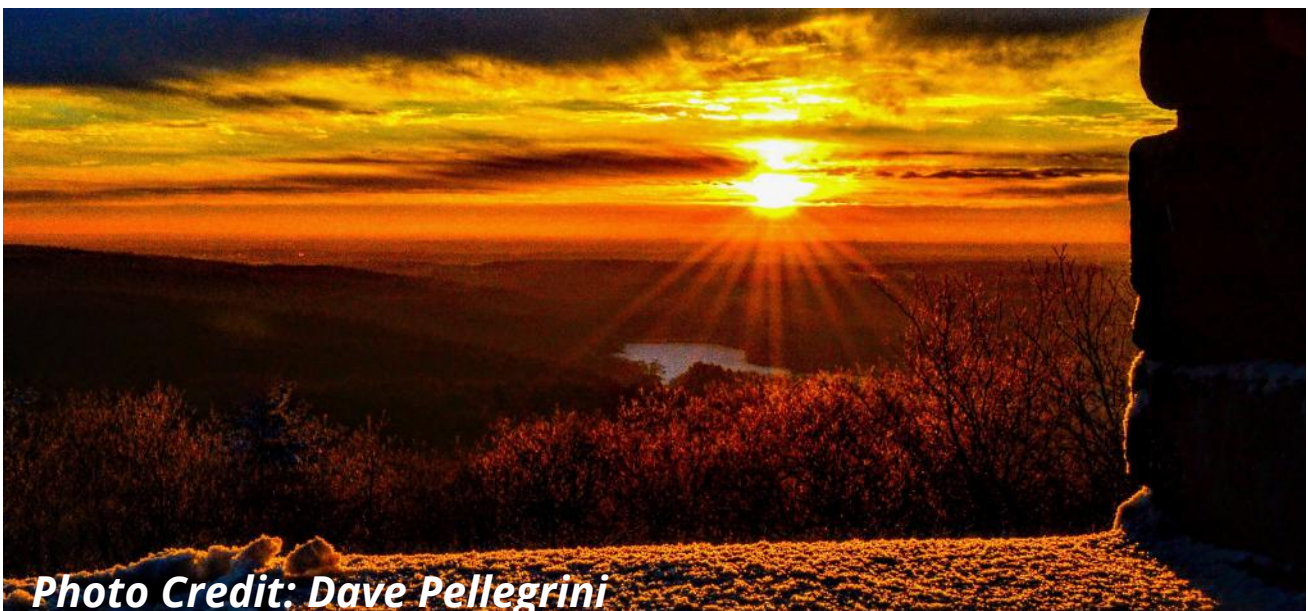
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# FRIENDS OF THE BLUE HILLS STRATEGIC PLAN 2020

## Building a stronger community for the future

As the Friends of the Blue Hills celebrates its 40th anniversary, we look toward the future with a renewed sense of how our mission fits into the larger landscape of environmental and preservation work in Massachusetts and beyond. We acknowledge the changing needs of our community, as well as the larger social priorities and challenges that make our concern for preserving and protecting the Blue Hills more urgent than ever before.

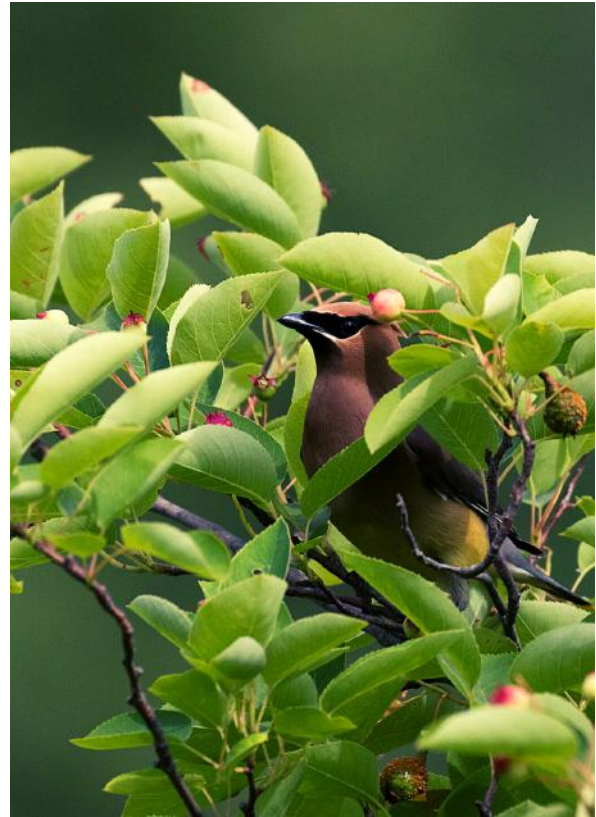
Our charge -- to ensure that the land and its resources are here for future generations to enjoy -- is made possible only through the participation of those around us. Whether through membership, volunteerism, partnership or simply respectful use of the park, every individual in our region has a potential role to play in our continued success. We enter our forty-first year invigorated by the opportunity to more fully engage with the broader community in pursuit of a stronger, more sustainable legacy for the Blue Hills.





## MISSION

The Friends of the Blue Hills (FBH) is a 1,000-member non-profit organization devoted to preserving and protecting the Blue Hills Reservation's natural beauty, diverse natural habitats and many recreational opportunities.



*Photo Credit: Charlene McNeil*

## VISION

Current and future generations will enjoy, value, and preserve the Blue Hills Reservation. The Reservation's diverse, healthy ecosystems will intrigue visitors, its scenic vistas will provide serenity, its well-maintained infrastructure will allow for easy access. Visitors will explore the Reservation, feel a sense of ownership of our natural inheritance and be willing to work to protect it.

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## VALUES

Our primary values:

- We value healthy, natural ecology.
- We value the entire Reservation as a gift to us and to future generations.

Our secondary values:

- We value visitors' ability to enjoy the natural beauty and striking natural vistas of the Reservation.
- We value open and easy access to the Reservation.
- We value passive and active recreation and the infrastructure to support these activities.



*Photo Credit: Sarah Keddell*



## CORE PRINCIPLES

In order to more fully meet the needs of a changing community, and to hold ourselves and our stakeholders accountable for working with the greatest integrity and shared purpose toward our goals, we have adopted the following Core Principles to guide our work.

### *In Our Work Together:*

We promote positivity, flexibility, openness, accountability and personal responsibility. We reject selfishness, personal agendas, apathy and lack of focus.

### *In Our Collaborations:*

For the good of our lands, users, inhabitants and environment, we seek collaboration focused on shared purpose, resource enhancement, listening and responding, and a spirit of equity between partners.

### *In Our Pursuit of Positive Impact:*

We hold ourselves accountable for understanding how our activities impact the size, health and growth of our lands and inhabitants. We remain unique because we protect and preserve the entire Blue Hills, and only the Blue Hills. We don't elevate one area or special interest over another to the detriment of the whole.



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## GOALS

Over the next five years, we will pursue four key goal areas aligned with preserving, protecting and enhancing participation in the Blue Hills.

- By 2025, the Blue Hills Reservation will have maintained or increased its acreage through good stewardship of the land and resources and protection of the buffer zones.
- By 2025, Friends of the Blue Hills will have increased participation and engagement by individual stakeholders in the mission and activities of Friends of the Blue Hills expressly for the benefits of improved visibility, sustainability and a heightened profile of support.
- By 2025, Friends of the Blue Hills will have expanded its network of support across local and state levels to allow for greater influence and increased resources.
- By 2025, Friends of the Blue Hills will have increased its own organizational effectiveness through restructuring of practices, governance model and resourcing to improve staff and board capacity.



*Photo credit: John Blough*

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# OBJECTIVES

Within each of our ambitious goal areas, we have adopted a number of key objectives to assist us in pursuing our vision. Over the next five years, Friends of the Blue Hills will:

- Work to spearhead efforts that will improve resourcing -- both financial and collaborative support -- to the management of the Blue Hills
- Research buffer zones surrounding the Reservation and draft a plan to protect each zone, as appropriate to our mission, stewardship and feasibility
- Promote a regular review and improvement plan for the ecological health of our existing and future acreage
- Strategically increase our engaged subscriber audiences by 50% to grow our messaging
- Increase our membership by 50% to help secure our future
- Double meaningful participation in volunteerism to engage more community members in the preservation of the Blue Hills
- Work to improve user experience across the Reservation to allow for sustainable increases in all areas of participation
- Leverage current and potential collaborative opportunities to increase the influence of Friends of the Blue Hills
- Grow the base of support for the Blue Hills and Friends of the Blue Hills' priorities among decision makers and influencers
- Work on reinvigorating fund development efforts to support future priorities
- Adopt a revised governance model to maximize our capacity to achieve our goals
- Expand our staffing model to reflect a robust organization ready to tackle the challenges of the future
- Explore ways to respectfully create a staff, board and base of participants that more closely reflects the demographic makeup of the diverse communities that surround the Blue Hills

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## PRESERVE

Over the next five years, we will continue our work to preserve the Blue Hills by delving more deeply into understanding the dynamics that govern the buffer zones and their connectedness to the Reservation. We will review the geography of the area and research how each individual parcel impacts the use and ecological health of the Blue Hills. Armed with a greater understanding of how our existing acreage fits into the big picture geographically and ecologically, we intend to work with the appropriate local and regional stakeholders to help us build relationships and sensitively integrate those lands into the user experience and habitat management of the Blue Hills Reservation.

## PROTECT

Working with our partners and active supporters of our mission, we will improve our understanding of the needs of our habitats and native species. We will further plan to collaboratively engage in a systematized process designed to control invasive species, protect native species, and improve the ecological health of our habitats and resources. Taking into account larger environmental contexts such as climate concerns, we will expand our advocacy efforts to push for improved resourcing and codified protection of the Blue Hills.

## PARTICIPATE

Understanding that participation is at the heart of any sustainable long-term effort to preserve and protect our lands for future generations, we will continue to offer quality programming, stewardship opportunities and volunteerism and advocacy roles to engage the community in our work. We will seek to promote the growth and evolution of our representation across all types of participation until it is meaningfully reflective of the diversity of the surrounding communities, ensuring that all community members feel there is a welcoming place secured for them in the preservation and enjoyment of the Blue Hills.





## WE WILL ACHIEVE SUCCESS WHEN...

- **Participants experience excitement and wonder in the Blue Hills;**
- **We have spread the love of the Blue Hills and its rich history to a larger audience;**
- **We have reached leaders and decision-makers with messages that effectively convey the power of the Blue Hills as a natural resource;**
- **The health and accessibility of the lands have been improved for future generations;**
- **And all stakeholders -- from partner organizations to individual community members -- recognize that we all have a shared interest in supporting the protection of the Reservation.**



*Photo Credit: Tom Amsterburg*