

A large-scale photograph of an offshore wind farm. In the foreground, a massive white wind turbine stands on a yellow steel lattice foundation over the ocean. Several other similar turbines are visible in the distance against a clear blue sky. The overall scene conveys a sense of clean energy and environmental stewardship.

# CONSERVATION **MATTERS**

THE JOURNAL OF CONSERVATION LAW FOUNDATION | [www.clf.org](http://www.clf.org)

## STATE OF THE REGION 2016 – 2017

MEET  
THE KILGUSSES  
BACK COVER

## LETTER FROM THE CHAIR

*Sara Molyneux*



**W**hen reflecting on CLF's work, it can be tempting to focus on the technical side of what we do – the far-reaching legal precedent set by our latest court victory, the complexities of market mechanisms impacting clean energy, the nuances that transform a law from words on paper into effective policy.

CLF's legal acumen and policy expertise set us apart, to be sure, but they aren't the only reasons why we have been so effective in tackling New England's biggest environmental challenges for more than 50 years.

Our work makes a difference because every landmark legal outcome, innovative market solution, and breakthrough policy result is grounded in communities like yours and in people like you.

CLF knows that creating change New England-wide often begins in one small town, one city neighborhood, or even one family's living room. That's why we don't just stand up in courtrooms, conference rooms, and boardrooms – we actively stand with our neighbors at town meetings, local hearings, and community gatherings.

But even more importantly, *you* stand with *us*. Your passion and perseverance, your unwavering support, your love for your community and for New England as a whole – this is what inspires us day after day, year after year, especially in the face of long odds, powerful opponents, and gridlock in our nation's capital.

That's why in this special annual report issue of *Conservation Matters* we are featuring some of the people who are working with CLF to build a brighter future for their communities across New England. We're honored to highlight Jason and Erin Olkowski, who are part

of the on-the-ground resistance against a new fossil-fuel power plant in Rhode Island; Crea Lintilhac, who has fought side-by-side with CLF Vermont to help force the clean up of Lake Champlain; Zack Klyver, a veteran naturalist who advocates for the protection of fragile marine wildlife; Rafael Herrero, who is training a new generation of urban farmers to bolster New England's local food movement; and Vedette Gavin, who is helping to put community development efforts back into the hands of communities.

As you read their stories, I hope you will be as proud and inspired as I am to be a part of this work. Thank you for your commitment and your support – you make this work, and so much more, possible.

Sincerely,

Sara Molyneux  
Chair, Board of Trustees

# LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT



**A**s I write this, New England has just celebrated two remarkable milestones. First, in early May, Block Island Power turned off its dirty diesel generators and began powering the island's homes and businesses with electricity generated by the five-turbine wind farm that began turning off its shores last fall.

And, just a few weeks ago, Brayton Point Station, one of the dirtiest coal-fired power plants in New England, shut its doors for good, leaving Massachusetts entirely coal free – and the rest of New England not far behind.

These are successes worth noting in any year, but they are especially poignant in 2017. Even as we celebrate here at home, we can't ignore that in Washington we have an administration spinning fables about the return of dirty coal, promising to open fragile Atlantic waters to oil and gas drilling, and

purging climate science (and scientists) from its ranks. The recently proposed federal budget sacrifices the public interest to polluters' interest. And, of course, the administration has abandoned the historic Paris climate accord.

If Washington is to be believed, protecting our environment, our climate, and our communities is a burden to business and a drain on the economy. But we here in New England know that the opposite is true. We've seen time and again that safeguarding clean air, clean water, and public health go hand in hand with *growing* our economy.

Ultimately, we will not only resist this administration's regressive agenda, but break through it. Four years from now, with you our staff, volunteers, and supporters fighting by our side, we will have shut down the last coal plants in New England, stopped Big Gas from stealing our clean

energy future, slashed climate-damaging emissions across the region, and helped usher in an era of nation-leading innovation and economic growth.

And we will have ensured that Trump's efforts to further endanger those most vulnerable among us fail, because New Englanders understand that a healthy environment means healthy and thriving communities – for all.

Whether you have supported CLF for years or you joined us for the first time in the last nine months, thank you. Your passion and dedication are what fuels our resistance and propels our forward momentum. We can't succeed without you.

Sincerely,

Bradley Campbell  
President



# FIGHTING BIG GAS

## How One Community's Fight Could Shape the Future of New England



Jason and Erin Olkowski are on the frontlines of the climate fight – not just in their hometown, but for all of New England.

**J**ason and Erin Olkowski never saw themselves as activists and community organizers. They were aware of climate concerns, of course, but had never stood on the frontlines of the climate battle themselves.

That all changed when Invenergy came to their small Rhode Island town, with its plans to build a massive new natural gas plant next door to family homes and within a pristine conservation area.

The company tried to use slick PR tactics to persuade residents that its new power plant would benefit them, but the Olkowskis weren't convinced. The idea of their peaceful New England town being overtaken by the crash and hum and belting pollution of a large-scale power plant was disturbing enough in itself.

But their personal mission to protect their hometown soon grew into a broader understanding of what it takes to fight back

against pollution, poor energy choices, and climate change.

Their takeaway: Fighting climate change starts at home, with community education and local battles like this one.

"Climate change is a macro issue, but needs to be fought at the micro level," says Jason. "It really can be won and lost locally."

It's also a battle that's easier waged with help. "Fighting against the system takes organizations like CLF to work at the local level against the big fossil fuel companies," continues Jason. "And if we're going to win, leaders need to feel like there's a tidal wave of support [from both organizations and everyday people]."

For CLF, that tidal wave has included challenging the plant's permit at the state Energy Facility Siting Board (which approves new power plants), confronting

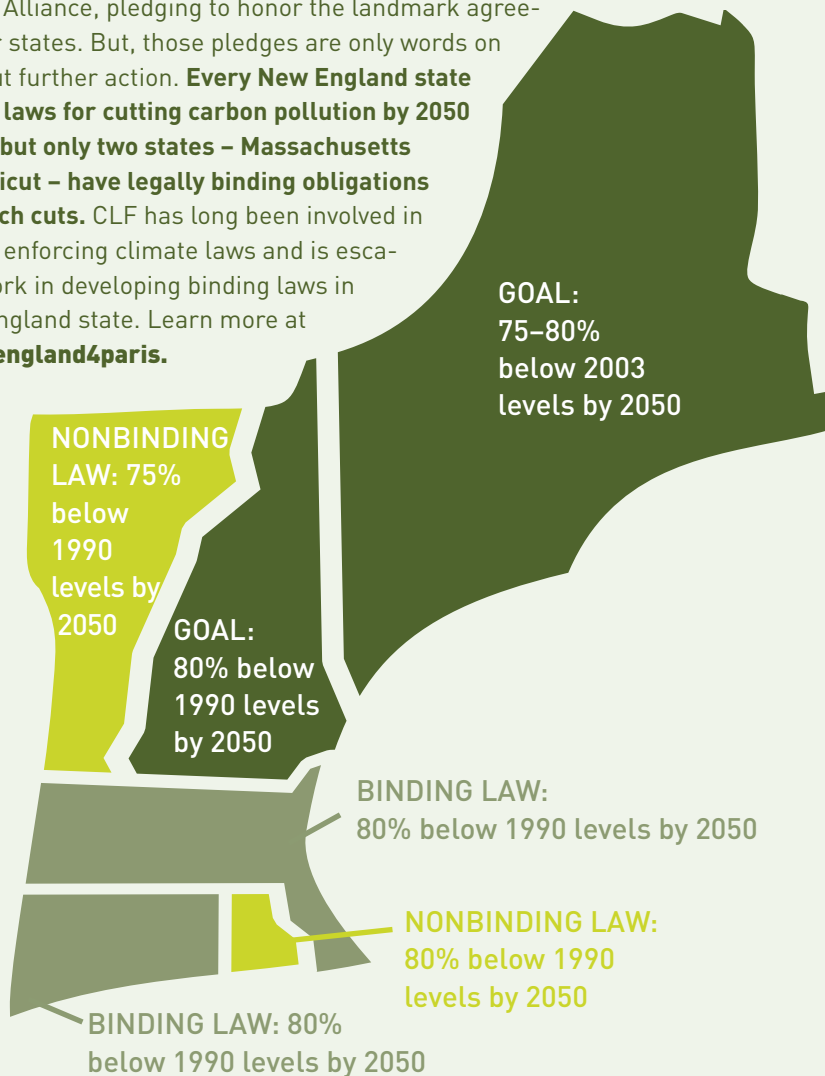
Invenergy for failing to provide information to state agencies charged with evaluating the gas plant proposal, and helping craft legislation that would make such stonewalling illegal. Most recently, CLF filed a lawsuit asserting that the company's plans to buy water from the Town of Johnston to run the plant is illegal.

Back on the ground in Burrillville, the Olkowskis have worked to educate friends and neighbors about the dangers the plant poses – to the town, to the local environment, and to the climate. Together with other concerned residents, they have amassed a small army of opposition. "You can engage people in bite-sized ways," says Erin. "People want to do the right thing, but can be paralyzed by the enormity of the problem."

To date, local residents have spoken out at hearings of the Energy Facility Siting Board, called their legislators, and worked with community leaders in nearby towns to bolster their cause.

## Bringing Paris Home

President Trump's withdrawal from the Paris climate accord raises the stakes for climate action here at home. Governors from Vermont, Massachusetts, Connecticut, and Rhode Island have joined the U.S. Climate Alliance, pledging to honor the landmark agreement in their states. But, those pledges are only words on paper without further action. **Every New England state has goals or laws for cutting carbon pollution by 2050 (SEE GRAPHIC), but only two states – Massachusetts and Connecticut – have legally binding obligations requiring such cuts.** CLF has long been involved in creating and enforcing climate laws and is escalating our work in developing binding laws in every New England state. Learn more at [clf.org/newengland4paris](http://clf.org/newengland4paris).



The outcome of this particular fight reaches far beyond Burrillville, however. This plant is just one of several proposed gas plants currently in the works across the region. New England has the opportunity to be a leader in the transition to an economy built on clean, local, renewable energy. But simply trading dirty coal for dirty gas will scuttle any hope of the region being able to

cut its carbon pollution enough to make a meaningful difference in the climate crisis.

Ultimately, the Olkowskis and their neighbors are fighting for the future of their community, but what they are shaping is the future of New England. As Jason says, "there's bigger work to be done." ♦

## HIGHLIGHTS

**CLF's decade-long campaign to make New England coal free by 2020 reached a major milestone in May** when Brayton Point Station, Massachusetts's last coal-fired power plant, shut its doors for good. With New Hampshire utility Eversource now required to sell its old and inefficient coal-fired plants under a state law passed last year, New England is expected to be entirely coal free by 2020, ushering in a new era of innovation and economic growth through the transition to clean energy sources.

**Big Gas's dominoes fell across the region in the wake of CLF's successful argument before the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court** that consumers should not bear the risks or costs of building ill-conceived and unnecessary new gas pipelines. Other New England states soon followed in pulling the plug on the Access Northeast pipeline proposal, which had sparked the Massachusetts lawsuit. In June, the New England utilities pushing the proposal, along with pipeline operator Enbridge, officially withdrew plans for the project for lack of funding, sending a strong message to other developers that New England doesn't need or want the climate-polluting fuel they're selling.

**Last August, CLF joined Massachusetts Governor Charlie Baker and other dignitaries for the signing of comprehensive energy diversity legislation**, which will help boost the production of local renewable energy and authorizes the largest procurement of offshore wind in the United States. CLF played a key role in helping to strengthen the legislation and is now at work to ensure that the law's implementation is effective in moving Massachusetts – and, ultimately, all of New England – toward a clean energy economy.

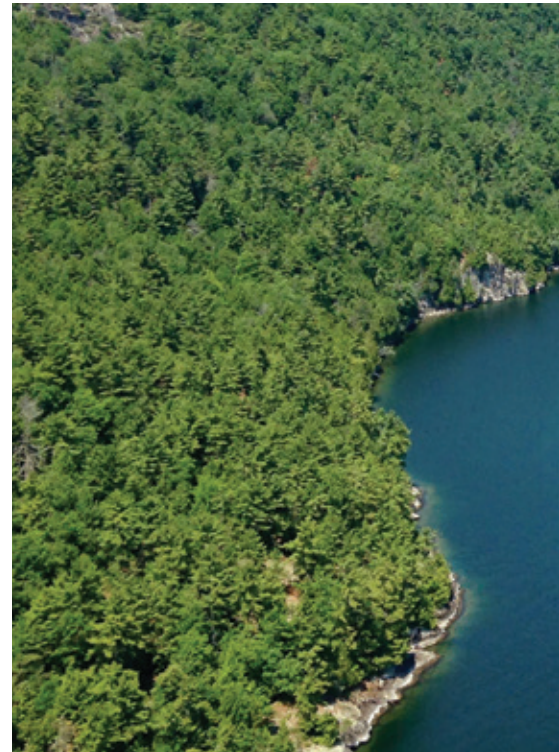


# RESTORING LAKE CHAMPLAIN

## Reasons for Hope after Decades of Degradation



CLF Vermont Board chair Crea Lintilhac has lived on the shores of Lake Champlain for nearly 30 years and credits CLF for the recent spate of action to clean up the polluted waterbody.



**W**hen it comes to the future of Vermont's Lake Champlain, Crea Lintilhac is optimistic. "We're going to clean up our waters," declares the long-time CLF Vermont Board member (and now chair), who has lived on the shores of the iconic lake for nearly 30 years. Given that she has witnessed the lake's increasing degradation over three decades, one wouldn't blame her if her outlook was a bit less rosy.

But Lintilhac has also witnessed a shift in the public's – and the state government's – attention to the lake in recent years, especially as blue-green algae bloomed on the lake's surface more frequently. "People started to say, 'I'm seeing these algal blooms; we've always had them but now it's worse and it's toxic. What's happening to clean, fresh water?'" she recalls.

Lintilhac credits CLF for raising the public's ire about the pollution issues plaguing Lake Champlain. In 2008, the organization sued

the Environmental Protection Agency over unmitigated phosphorus pollution, which is produced when fertilizer runs off of farms and lawns and improperly treated sewage from septic systems leaks into the lake.

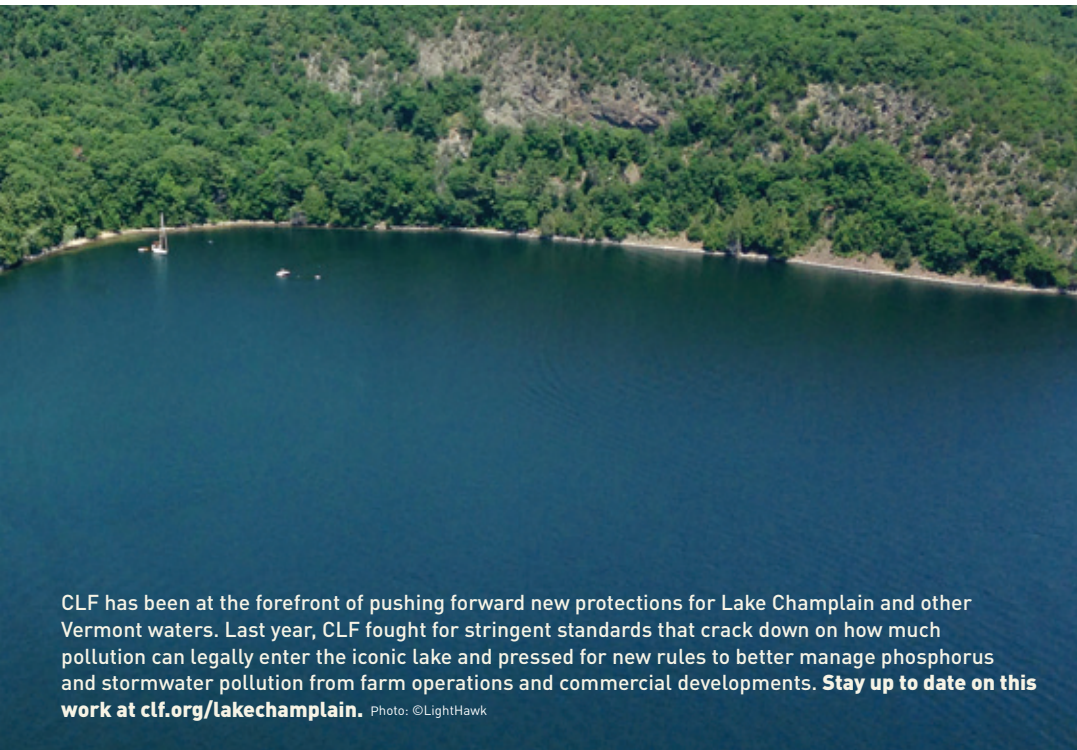
Too much phosphorus triggers the blue-green algae blooms, which literally suck the life out of waterways by absorbing the oxygen that plants, fish, and other wildlife need to live. Such pollution closes beaches, destroys habitats, and taints drinking water. The blooms also sicken people and pets, and developing research has linked them to serious neurological disorders including Lou Gehrig's disease and Parkinson's.

"CLF has helped people understand that they have a right to clean water," says Lintilhac. "I have no doubt in my mind that this litigation gave the public the backbone to speak their outrage about polluted water that they can no longer swim or fish in."

The successful settling of the lawsuit in 2011 has spurred a cascade of action.

EPA established new pollution limits for the lake, and in 2015, then-Governor Peter Shumlin signed landmark legislation aimed at cleaning up the ailing lake. A year later, the state Secretary of Agriculture approved a much-needed plan negotiated by CLF to curb polluted runoff from agricultural operations. This year, newly elected Governor Phil Scott affirmed his own commitment to the clean-up, and the state legislature passed a \$35.9 million funding measure to kick off the effort.

Much work still remains, however. The State Treasurer has estimated it will cost roughly \$62.4 million per year for 20 years to meet Vermont's legal obligations to restore Lake Champlain to health. But even with such a daunting price tag, the people of Vermont understand the price will be much higher if the pollution is left unchecked, says Lintilhac. Besides, she says, "It's not about us alone; it's about posterity. Vermonters want to deliver to the future a better environment and show future generations that we've done our due diligence." ♦



CLF has been at the forefront of pushing forward new protections for Lake Champlain and other Vermont waters. Last year, CLF fought for stringent standards that crack down on how much pollution can legally enter the iconic lake and pressed for new rules to better manage phosphorus and stormwater pollution from farm operations and commercial developments. **Stay up to date on this work at [clf.org/lakechamplain](https://clf.org/lakechamplain).** Photo: ©LightHawk

# HIGHLIGHTS

**A CLF investigation uncovered that New Hampshire's Pease Development Authority, which was created to redevelop the former Pease Air Force base, is dumping toxic chemicals into nearby waterways, putting the environment, pregnant women, and young children at risk.** CLF filed a lawsuit against Pease over its violations, kicking off new work to protect communities from the emerging dangers posed by toxic chemicals in waterways across the region.

**CLF filed a lawsuit against oil giant Shell** for the company's endangerment of the Providence River and local communities. Located along the banks of Providence Harbor, Shell's Providence Terminal sits directly in harm's way as sea levels rise and storms become more extreme. Despite these dangers, Shell has failed to protect its terminal against the effects of climate change. This suit follows CLF's ongoing case against ExxonMobil over its Everett, Massachusetts, terminal. Like Shell, ExxonMobil has not secured its terminal against climate impacts, putting local communities at risk of catastrophic releases of oil and hazardous substances.

**Prompted by CLF's lawsuit** against EPA over its 30 years of inaction to fix Cape Cod's nutrient pollution crisis, the Cape Cod Commission revised the region's Areawide Waste Management Plan. To date, however, progress in implementing the plan does not match up with its promise. This leaves the Cape's waterways and communities vulnerable to continued poisoning from nutrient pollution. In response, CLF is reinvigorating its work on the Cape and committing to a long-term monitoring and litigation strategy to ensure that the regionwide management plan is robust and effective, and that local communities follow through on their individual commitments.

## Enforcement by the Numbers

Across New England, thousands of industrial sites line the shores of our waterways. Most of those facilities discharge waste into public waters, but many lack permits to do so legally. Since 2010, CLF's Enforcement Project has worked to make these illegal polluters pay – while giving back to local communities at the same time.

40

Watersheds, rivers, and streams on the mend

58

Polluters brought into compliance

When enforcement cases are settled, defendants often commit to funding local supplemental environmental projects to benefit public health and environmental issues in the community.

\$1,121M

Supplemental Environmental Project funding to date

29

Community groups implementing Supplemental Environmental Projects

40

New England communities with cleaner water thanks to the Enforcement Project



## LOCAL FOOD 2.0

### Training a New Generation of Farmers in Western Massachusetts



CLF's Legal Food Hub is supporting Holyoke-based Nuestras Raíces as the community organization works to train 100 new urban farmers over the next two years. Learn more about the training program at [nuestras-raices.org](http://nuestras-raices.org).



All Photos: ©EcoPhotography

**F**or Rafael Herrero, farming is a family tradition. Though he admits, it skipped a generation. “My grandfather was a farmer in Puerto Rico,” he says, “but none of his sons became farmers themselves.” Today, Herrero is reviving his family’s heritage by training a new generation of urban farmers in Massachusetts.

As Director of Agriculture and Environment for Nuestras Raíces, a Holyoke-based community organization, Herrero is overseeing an ambitious effort to train 100 new farmers in earth-friendly practices over the next two years. “A lot of our region’s farmers are getting older,” says Herrero, and many have no one to take over the farm when they retire. At the same time, he says, younger people who want to farm often lack the knowledge to be able to run a small farm successfully.

With funding from a Natural Resources Conservation Service Conservation Innovation Grant, the New Farmer Training Program aims to change that. This year’s

class of 60 farmers-in-training began their apprenticeship in April. Ranging in age from 18 to 60, women just outnumber the men. Most trainees speak English, but for others in this largely Latino city, Spanish remains their first language. Each week through October, they will spend time in the fields at La Finca, Nuestras Raíces’ 30-acre farm, as well as in the classroom, learning the ins and outs of managing a small business.

Those ins and outs include knowing why and how to engage a lawyer. Small businesses are often put off by the cost of legal help, but such assistance is critical when negotiating contracts or forming a business entity. Farmers also face unique legal issues around leasing or buying land and navigating laws around food processing and safety.

To help develop legal training materials, Nuestras Raíces turned to CLF’s Legal Food Hub. Now entering its fourth year, the Hub matches small farmers and food businesses with legal help and offers workshops on legal issues. Working with Nuestras Raíces provided an opportunity to build on its educational mission.

“This is a great way for us to help a new generation of farmers start out with the knowledge they need to launch a strong business,” says CLF Farm and Food Director Jenny Rushlow. “That will in turn strengthen the local food economy in the region and make more fresh, healthy food available for the people of Holyoke and Springfield.”

To that end, the apprentice farmers are intentionally focused on growing crops familiar to the region’s large Latin and Central American immigrant population. “We’re hoping to impact communities that are under-served and don’t traditionally eat what farmers in Massachusetts usually produce,” Herrero says.

The ultimate goal is for graduates of the program to move on to another apprenticeship where they can continue to learn different aspects of farming or start their own urban farm. No matter which direction the trainees take, says Herrero, “we’re going to try to help them and give them the tools they need to be successful.” ♦



## Planting Seeds

By supporting those who grow, produce, and sell New England's local food, CLF's Legal Food Hub is helping to foster a sustainable, resilient, and equitable food system – which contributes to a healthy environment, climate, and economy for all. Since its launch in 2014, the Hub has leveraged more than \$1.5 million in pro bono legal services. Last year, CLF continued to expand the Hub's reach in Massachusetts and Maine – surpassing 100 cases in the Pine Tree state in June of this year – while launching a new Hub in Rhode Island. CLF is now collaborating with Yale Law School to open a Hub in Connecticut over the next year and is planning to replicate the model nationwide.

Learn more at [clf.org/legalfoodhub](http://clf.org/legalfoodhub).

126

**LAW FIRMS IN  
OUR NETWORK**

3,255

**SINCE 2014  
HOURS DONATED BY  
VOLUNTEER ATTORNEYS**

230

**SINCE 2014  
CASES PLACED**

## HIGHLIGHTS

**CLF reached a landmark agreement with the Massachusetts Port Authority** (Massport) to offset negative impacts from a proposed 5,000-space parking expansion at Logan Airport. Among other commitments, Massport has agreed to electrify within ten years all ground-service equipment for which electric alternatives are commercially available, expand capacity and access for Silver Line and Logan Express services, and substantially increase passengers reaching the airport in high occupancy vehicles. The measures increase accessibility, promote public transit, and reduce emissions associated with airport travel and maintenance.

**After months of negotiations, CLF celebrated a major victory** when a developer agreed to protect 152 acres of valuable farmland in the town of Randolph, Vermont, which had been targeted for a massive commercial development. Under the agreement, nearly 90 percent of the land at the site was permanently protected. A fundraising push by CLF partners Preservation Trust of Vermont, Vermont Natural Resources Council, and the Exit 4 Open Space citizens group resulted in the remaining 22 acres at the site also being protected, putting the entirety of this valuable land back in the hands of Vermont farmers and the local community.

**CLF has joined with the City of Lawrence,** community groups, and local property owners in an effort to restore the Massachusetts city's deteriorating canal infrastructure. Two historic canals that powered Lawrence's booming mill economy in the late 19th and early 20th centuries have fallen into disrepair in recent years as a result of neglect by their current owner, Enel Green Power North America. CLF and its partners want Enel to take immediate action to restore the canals to make them an economic asset to the struggling community.

# WHALE WATCH

## Saving North Atlantic Right Whales from Extinction



Brian Skerry

Veteran naturalist Zack Klyver (ABOVE, RIGHT) guides thousands of people on whale watching tours every year, but spots only a handful of endangered North Atlantic right whales during a season.



That's why CLF, which has long been a champion for the North Atlantic right whale, is redoubling its efforts to help safeguard whales from New England's increasingly "urban" waters.

**L**istening to Zack Klyver describe North Atlantic right whales, it's clear how much the veteran naturalist holds them in awe. "They are magnificent," he says. "They're over a hundred thousand pounds and 50 to 60 feet long, with an enormous black tail that's very symmetrical and beautiful when they bring it up out of the water. They are just amazing animals to see."

Seeing a right whale, however, is increasingly rare. Klyver has guided whale watching trips for more than 25 years, currently as head naturalist for the Bar Harbor Whale Watch company. Tour boats, he says, spot right whales only a couple of times in a season.

The story of this rare whale is a sadly familiar one. Historically, they were targeted by whalers because they were commercially lucrative and easy to kill. Today, with barely 500 North Atlantic right whales left on the planet, they face threats from warming waters, which push their food sources north, as well as fishing net entanglements

and ship collisions. "The East coast between the Gulf of Maine and Florida is really an urban environment," Klyver says, noting that 82 percent of surviving whales today have scars from entanglements with nets or ship strikes.

If the Trump administration moves forward with plans to aggressively search for oil and gas resources in the Atlantic, then the Eastern corridor along which the whales migrate could get even more dangerous. The seismic testing required to find those oil and gas reserves can disrupt whales' mating and feeding, cause hearing loss, and even lead to death.

And if those challenges weren't enough, the population has suffered a major setback this summer: seven right whales were found dead in Canada's Gulf of St. Lawrence. While the cause of the deaths is not yet known, losing even one whale is a tragedy. Seven is catastrophic.

These are significant headwinds to overcome if the species is ever to recover.

One such effort is using accurate, accessible data from the Northeast Ocean Portal, part of the implementation of the landmark Northeast Ocean Plan. Knowing the locations of whale migration corridors, for example, can help avoid potentially deadly conflicts, say by moving a shipping lane a quarter mile east or west.

Also, with more and larger offshore wind farms now planned for the waters off of Massachusetts, CLF will be actively working with developers to ensure that New England's transition to a clean energy economy doesn't come at the expense of the area's most fragile marine wildlife. The organization and its partners made history in 2014 when they reached an agreement with Deepwater Wind to protect whales from harm during wind farm site assessment and construction activities. CLF will build off of that success and work towards similar agreements for new wind projects planned for the region.

In addition to these efforts, Klyver cites the need for protected areas, including the Gulf of Maine's Cashes Ledge, an area that



Some corals [BELOW] found in the monument are 1,000 years old. Corals and deep-sea anemones [RIGHT] provide food and cover for other species, but are especially vulnerable to disturbance from fishing gear and other threats.



NOAA Okeanos Explorer Program, 2013 Northeast U.S. Canyons Expedition Science Team



Image courtesy Northeast Canyons 2013 Science Team/NOAA Okeanos Explorer Program



Image courtesy Northeast Canyons 2013 Science Team/NOAA Okeanos Explorer Program

[ABOVE] The monument is an important underwater laboratory for scientists studying creatures like this octopus. [RIGHT] Puffins and other seabirds rely on the monument as winter feeding grounds.



Jean-Jacques Boujot, Flickr CC BY-SA 2.0

## DEFENDING THE ATLANTIC'S FIRST MARINE MONUMENT

In September, CLF and its partners made history when President Obama designated the Northeast Canyons and Seamounts as the Atlantic's first Marine National Monument. But the change in presidential administrations has put the monument under dire threat. The Trump administration has ordered a review of nearly 30 national monuments, including this first one in the Atlantic.

CLF is fighting to defend this historic achievement and the delicate corals and other ocean wildlife that depend on it.

**What's at stake if the Trump administration succeeds in rolling back protections?** Here is just a handful of wildlife, both common and rare, that call the Canyons and Seamounts home.

CLF is fighting to protect permanently. In 2012, Klyver was with New England Aquarium researchers when they discovered that Cashes Ledge is a winter breeding ground for the imperiled species. "We saw 35 whales in one day and finished at sunset with right whales breaching all around us," he says. While breeding grounds can range over hundreds of square miles, "Cashes Ledge is critically important," Klyver says, making CLF's ongoing efforts to protect the area even more urgent and necessary. "Having a protected area for wildlife and whales in the Gulf of Maine would be a wonderful thing."

For Klyver, protecting North Atlantic right whales is part of being a responsible steward of New England's ocean. Every year, as he shares his awe for whales with tens of thousands of visitors on his tour boats, he revels in their experiences. "You never forget seeing your first whale," he says. "I just feel incredibly fortunate to be an ambassador for this environment." ♦

## HIGHLIGHTS

CLF and Friends of the Presumpscot River reached an agreement with Sappi Paper and federal and state agencies **to remove two dams that block migratory fish passage along the Maine river.** Restoring passage for dwindling populations of important forage fish will support the recovery of not only alewives and herring, but the region's iconic groundfish populations as well. CLF will continue to work to free other rivers of dams that impede the resurgence of species critical to the overall health of our rivers, oceans, and economy.

Last fall, CLF celebrated the approval of the **Northeast Ocean Plan**, a first-in-the-nation blueprint for managing and protecting New England's ocean resources. CLF played an active role in creating the plan, which provides guidance on making coordinated, science-based decisions about using and protecting those resources. CLF is now working with stakeholders to ensure the plan is implemented successfully so that it can serve as a model for other areas of the country.

This June, a committee of the New England Fishery Management Council made limited progress **on efforts to protect fragile deep-sea corals in the Atlantic**, voting to protect Outer Schoodic Ridge and Mt. Desert Rock from destructive bottom trawling. These two Gulf of Maine areas comprise about 40 square miles. The committee delayed a vote, however, on a 20,000-square-mile area south of Georges Bank, citing a need for more updated fishery data. CLF hopes the committee approves an option that affords greater protections for this area's shallower waters, where fishing gear presents higher threats to the region's delicate corals.

# MEASURING COMMUNITY HEALTH

## A New Research Model Puts the Community in the Driver's Seat



CLF Director of Research Vedette Gavin worked with MIT, community partners, and 40 resident researchers to develop a health research model that puts the community at the heart of the work. [LEFT TO RIGHT] Ramo Sepulveda from Brockton, Andrew Binet with MIT, Gavin, and Ronel Remy from Brockton.



One of the most significant ways to transform health and grow local economies is by improving neighborhoods through

a type of development called transit-oriented development: high-density housing that integrates commercial, retail, and green space within easy walking distance of public transportation.

Promoting such development was the impetus behind the 2014 launch of the Healthy Neighborhoods Equity Fund, a partnership between CLF and the Massachusetts Housing Investment Corporation. Over the past three years, the Fund has helped bring \$18 million in financing to support six development projects in the Greater Boston area.

But, completing a new development is really just the beginning of the story. The true success of such targeted investment

will come with the changes it brings to a community over time. That's where Vedette Gavin, CLF's Director of Research, comes in. "The reality is that the relationship between development and health is extremely complex," she says.

Development can affect income security, housing stability, neighborhood safety, population mobility, and culture – all of which influence health. Understanding how those factors interact is critical to measuring the effectiveness of transit-oriented development on neighborhoods and people. So in 2015, Gavin launched the Healthy Neighborhoods Study, with funding from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and in partnership with MIT's Department of Urban Studies and Planning Community Innovators Lab.

Traditional research on neighborhoods and health relies on academic experts analyzing big data sets over time – lifespans, ages,

race, and health outcomes of residents, for example, and changes in average income and education. This data is valuable, but Gavin knows it's only part of the story. "It's my fundamental belief that if you're trying to know if a community is actually healthy, you go straight to the source – the residents," she says.

With her partners at MIT, Gavin identified nine communities in Eastern Massachusetts with struggling health and economies, and where high levels of new development are most likely – three of which have active projects invested in by the Healthy Neighborhoods Equity Fund. She then partnered with an organization in each community that is leading work around health, development, or environmental justice. Those groups in turn recruited 40 local researchers to conduct 400 on-the-ground interviews with fellow residents about what matters most for health when developing neighborhoods.



## Healthy Neighborhoods Study Key Findings

Gavin wanted to ensure the resident researchers didn't just collect data, however, with no opportunity to use it to help their own communities once the research was completed. She facilitated a process through which the residents and partners co-created research questions and measures so that the data collected will be as meaningful and useful to their work in helping to build healthier communities as it is to CLF and MIT.

That process created a dynamic rarely seen in research circles. "The institutional and community researchers were on an equal playing field," she says. "Having them create and share the work as peers was phenomenal. Research comes and goes, but if you're learning in a community, it's a process, and it's a culture that's created."

The Healthy Neighborhoods Study will unfold over the course of several years as the researchers continue to measure development impacts on their communities. But that doesn't mean the information gathered so far is languishing in a researcher's database. The partner organizations in each community are already sharing the first year's data with local politicians, developers, and citizens in an effort to shape ongoing conversations about residents' needs and priorities.

Together, the Healthy Neighborhoods Equity Fund and this community-based research approach are providing unique and replicable models for a new kind of impact investing that builds healthy places for healthy people. For Gavin, the success of the research project is also inspiring new ideas for engaging communities across CLF's work. "There's an amazing opportunity to support conservation at the community level by using these same methods, not for the sake of asking questions, but for working with communities to build solutions to environmental challenges," she says. ♦

CLF and its partners wanted to know **what matters most** to local residents when it comes to good health and their neighborhoods. Resident researchers surveyed **400** people in **9** neighborhoods in communities that have the **greatest opportunity to improve** health and grow the local economy through urban development.

### North of Boston

Lynn  
Everett  
Chelsea

### Boston Area

Roxbury  
Dorchester  
Mattapan

### South of Boston

Brockton  
Fall River  
New Bedford

**Development can improve neighborhood conditions, but what we build, why we build, and who we build for can help or harm residents' health.**

### DISPLACEMENT threatens good health.

In communities that have seen rapid development and displacement, **people feel less stable.**

**40–50%** of people surveyed think **they will have to leave** their neighborhood in the next five years.

For example, in Chelsea, **34%** of those surveyed think they will move. **75%** of respondents are renters and **1 in 3** renters receive rental assistance. They are more likely to:

have moved  
in the past  
five years



report having  
poorer mental  
health



have less  
social  
support



### SOCIAL SUPPORT MATTERS FOR HEALTH

Half of people surveyed have trouble meeting their basic expenses. But having strong social support in their community is nearly as important as income to help meet their family's needs. In Chelsea:

**67%**

of people say they get support from people, programs, and places in their neighborhood.

**91%**  
everyday  
favors

**85%**  
have a  
confidant

**85%**  
caregiver  
if ill

**81%**  
feel valued  
by others

**87%**  
relationship  
advice

**74%**  
locate  
housing

# FINANCIAL REPORT



Over the past fiscal year, which closed on July 31, 2016, CLF once again demonstrated fiscal responsibility by balancing our finances and ending the year with an operating surplus.

We achieved these results even as we continue to invest in the core administrative areas of Development and Communications – investments that are showing a positive return. Not only are current donors giving more, we have also seen an influx of new supporters to the organization.

At the same time, we have amplified our public profile with a stronger presence in traditional and social media while more effectively engaging our supporters through email, local events, and other outreach.

Our endowment fund is also strong, as we benefited from the receipt of a number of bequests. This is an important source of support that I hope all of us will consider.

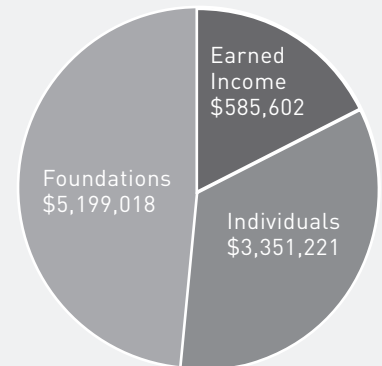
As I begin my first fiscal year as Treasurer, I am honored to follow in the footsteps of Gene Clapp, who served as CLF's treasurer for nearly 20 years. Gene's dedicated leadership has helped us achieve our current financial strength and stability and we are grateful for his service and commitment.

I also want to acknowledge all of you, the generous members and volunteers who make it possible for CLF to accomplish so much. You are the key to our success and your support has never been more important than it is right now. We have new challenges ahead, yes, but also new opportunities, and we are thankful to have you by our side as we continue to pursue groundbreaking initiatives that benefit all New Englanders.

Andy Falender  
Treasurer  
Board of Trustees

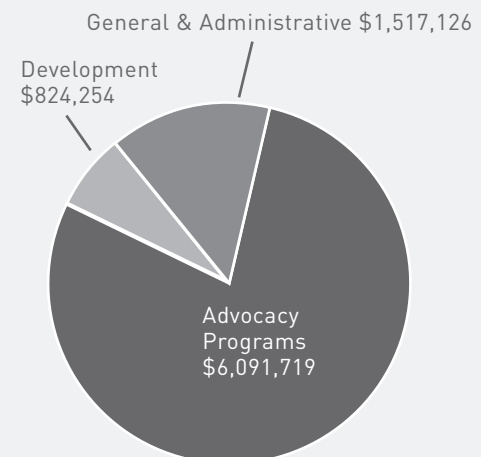
## SOURCES OF OPERATING FUNDS

Total Operating Funds: \$9,135,841



## USES OF OPERATING FUNDS

Total Operating Expenses: \$8,433,099



## NET ASSETS [as of July 31, 2016]

Unrestricted Net Assets:  
**\$4,441,631**

Temporarily Restricted Net Assets:  
**\$6,171,818**

Permanently Restricted Net Assets:  
**\$5,587,509**

**TOTAL** **\$16,200,958**



## SUPPORTERS AND FRIENDS OF CLF

The following individuals, foundations, and organizations supported CLF during the 2016 Fiscal Year, August 1, 2015, through July 31, 2016. Their generosity and shared vision – of a healthy, thriving New England for all – have made CLF's work possible. We thank our invaluable members whose continuing support helps protect New England's environment for all. **THANK YOU.**

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### KATE & HOWARD KILGUSS

*Advocates Society Members. Kate also serves on CLF's Board of Trustees and chairs the CLF Rhode Island State Board.*

"CLF is extremely effective at thinking and acting strategically, especially in terms of climate change adaptation and mitigation, which is a primary concern of ours. They see the big picture as well as the smaller steps it takes to achieve long-range strategic goals. For instance, CLF helped close coal-burning power plants in New England while at the same time working in a collaborative way to establish the country's first offshore wind farm off of Block Island.

In our view, CLF's climate work is a model that others at both the federal and state level should follow. We are proud to be part of the CLF team. We are making a difference."

**FOR MORE INFORMATION ON THE ADVOCATES SOCIETY**  
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