

## NEWS RELEASE

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### **Harwich Conservation Trust Honored with Excellence in Conservation Award**

AMHERST, Massachusetts - The Harwich Conservation Trust was honored with the Massachusetts Land Trust Coalition's inaugural **Excellence in Conservation Award** at the [2025 Massachusetts Land Conservation Conference](#), held on March 21<sup>st</sup> at UMass Amherst. An audience of 600 was on hand for the presentation, which was followed by a keynote address by Congressman Jim McGovern.

This award is in recognition of the Harwich Conservation Trust's Cold Brook Eco-Restoration Project at the Robert F. Smith Cold Brook Preserve in Harwich Port. This multiyear restoration project was undertaken in partnership with the Town of Harwich Community Preservation Committee, the Massachusetts Division of Ecological Restoration, and U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service.

The project successfully restored retired cranberry bogs to improve public access to the land and enhance nearly a mile of stream and over 44 acres of adjacent wetland habitat. The restoration included the addition of ponds, a salt marsh, and native plant species.

This project has already seen notable ecological benefits, such as increased habitat diversity, improved water quality of the stream, improved fish passage, and increased wetland stormwater absorption. Additionally, this project improved community access to public lands through the addition of a half-mile wheelchair accessible trail.

A Town of Harwich feasibility study commissioned during the design process concluded that the restored wetlands' ability to reduce nitrogen releases to the Harbor will help the Town avoid \$6 million in sewer installation costs.

More information on the Cold Brook Eco-Restoration Project is available on the Harwich Conservation Trust's [website](#).

Founded in 1988, [Harwich Conservation Trust](#) is a non-profit land trust organization working to preserve land that protects woods, water, wildlife and quality of life in Harwich, Massachusetts.

[The Massachusetts Land Trust Coalition](#) advances land conservation across the Commonwealth by providing education, tools, networking and advocacy to 140 land trusts and their partners.



Photos: Steve and Eileen Furlong