



THE COMPACT
OF CAPE COD CONSERVATION TRUSTS, INC.

THE FIRST 30 YEARS: 1986-2016

MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS

“The Compact is the oldest (1986), self-sustaining, regional service center for land trusts in the United States and a model for other environmental coalitions.” Land Trust Alliance, Wash. DC (2010)

Helped to establish the last three local land trusts on the Cape in Yarmouth (1986), Dennis (1988) and Harwich (1989), the Mass. Land Trust Coalition (1990, incorp. 2011), and the first native-led land trust east of the Mississippi, the Native Land Conservancy (2013)

Produced the first (1988) regional map showing protected open space parcels on Cape Cod

Promoted the use of conservation restrictions, including a formula for the most generous property tax breaks in Mass.; 14 of 15 Cape towns have adopted The Compact’s model policies (1987-2004)

Created the Cape’s first mapping analysis of critical wildlife habitats by parcels (1998) and statistical analysis of parcels’ priorities as habitats (2003); Identified the most important freshwater pondshore parcels, based on habitat and water quality as part of the Priority Ponds initiative (2004)

Produced a 32-page color booklet and video *To Live Lightly on the Land: A Guide to Private Land Protection in the CCNS*, describing tax benefits available to the 600 private land owners in and near the National Seashore (2012-14); first five land-savings projects completed by 2016

Co-coordinated the successful \$5 million public-private partnership that led to the protection of 40 acres at Chapin Beach in Dennis and the rejuvenation of the Cape’s shellfish hatchery (2015)

Started a revolving fund (1992), now capitalized at \$600,000, that has provided \$4.25 million in low-interest loans which have preserved more than 463 acres of open space on the Cape

Developed the use of charitable trust deeds as an alternative to conservation restrictions to preserve land trust parcels in 2004. Land trusts in all 15 Cape towns (and Marion MA) have since voted to adopt the Compact’s charitable trust model

Have become the acknowledged Cape Cod experts on the drafting of conservation restrictions (CRs); Have processed more successful State Conservation Land Tax Credit open space projects than any other office in Massachusetts (2011-2016)

Filmed and produced (2010-11) four short videos highlighting projects of the Brewster Conservation Trust

Championed the idea and coined the phrase “undevelopment” to identify blighted, developed parcels and restoring them to a natural habitat or park; Published case studies in *Take Back the Cape* booklet

Managed the successful merger of the Mary Barton Land Trust with the Barnstable Land Trust (2010-11)

Accelerated the pace and quality of land trust property transactions:

1962 – 1986: local Cape land trusts completed a total of 7 projects, annual average

1986 The Compact is established

1986 – 1992: local land trusts completed a total of 33 projects, annual average

1992 – 2010: local land trusts completed a total of 42 projects, annual average

Coordinated and drafted 5-Year Town Open Space and Recreation Plans for Orleans (1994), Provincetown (1995), Yarmouth (1996 & 2001), Dennis (1998) and Sandwich (1999)

Provided training and consultation to municipal Cape Cod Land Bank Committees (1998-2007) and since then to Community Preservation Committees (2007 – present). Compiled the exhaustive history of all Land Bank transactions (2008), totaling 234 projects worth \$214 million; secured the first “blanket conservation restriction” on Town Land Bank lands (Yarmouth, 2012), now working on Dennis and Chatham.

Established a model “tax title to conservation” program (2005) in Brewster between the Town and land trust, which has preserved 64 new acres at a cost to the land trust of \$330 per acre

Secured more than \$12 million in State and federal open space grants to Cape towns and land trusts, including \$1.75 million to Dennis for Crowes Pasture (2004) and the record \$3.83 million to 9 towns and 6 land trusts in 2010.

Provide a base for local land trusts to engage in staff-sharing (2002 – present), lowering overhead and providing training of new staff; provide payroll service for 14 land trust staffers Cape-wide (2016)

Serve as the pre-acquisition agent for local land trusts, enabling open space purchases to remain eligible for grants, and holding conservation restrictions as required for grants to land trusts (more than 50 projects)

Drafted the Cape’s first watershed-based open space priority map for four towns around Pleasant Bay (2003)

Designed a series of training workshops for 100-140 conservationists in SE Mass each winter (2002-present); Presented training at national Land Trust Rally (2014, 2016) and state conferences in Mass., Maine, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New Hampshire and New York

Coordinated the first inter-municipal partnerships to fund open space purchases, getting one town to subsidize another town’s purchase: Brewster-Dennis (2005); Orleans-Brewster (2010); Harwich-Chatham (2010), totaling \$7 million for 121 acres

Acknowledged by awards from peers in the land conservation field: USEPA; National Park Service; US Fish & Wildlife Service; MassAudubon; Assoc. to Preserve Cape Cod; Mass. Assoc. of ConComs; Cape Cod Museum of Natural History; represent Governor on the CC National Seashore Advisory Comm.

Established a network of professionals (attorneys, surveyors, appraisers, etc.) who will donate or reduce the rates of their services to help land trusts; Provided expert research for amicus brief in landmark land trust property tax exemption case (NEFF v. Town of Hawley, 2015)

Has secured reliable funding each year, primarily from its member land trusts, without the need to solicit private individuals and compete with its land trusts

The Board thanks all the staff of The Compact who have provided this leadership over the years: Mark H. Robinson, Michael W. Lach, Paula Pariseau, Russell DeConti, Jeff Thibodeau, Heather Lanza, Vincent Ollivier, Matt Boulanger, Eve Vidito, Lisa Strock O’Connell