Protecting Nature. Connecting Community.

FRIENDS OF THE BLUE HILLS

PROTECT • PRESERVE • PARTICIPATE

2025 ANNUAL REPORT

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Cover: Monte Rosa Therapeutics volunteers clean-up day, April 2025.

Friends of the Blue Hills
580 Washington Street,
Canton, MA 02021

Dear Members!

What a remarkable year it has been for Friends of the Blue Hills. As I reflect on 2025, I am filled with immense pride for what we have accomplished together to protect this natural treasure. For example:

- The MBTA 716 bus stop at Houghton's Pond kicked off, making the Blue Hills more accessible to all.
- FBH programs and events grew by 70% in one year, welcoming thousands of participants into the park (including more than 150 students).
- Our partnership with DCR became stronger than ever with a commitment to consciously care for all sections of the Reservation.
- The FBH corporate membership program launched to encourage partnerships that support the park all year long.

None of this would be possible without your unwavering support. Whether you are one of the 1,400+ FBH members, a monthly Blue Hills Champion, or a volunteer out on the trails or behind the scenes, you are the engine of this organization. Your commitment ensures that these 7,000 acres remain a sanctuary for all.

Looking ahead, I am energized by last year's momentum as FBH impact and advocacy for the future of the Blue Hills continue to grow. Thank you for being such a vital part of the Blue Hills community.

Warmly,

Mike Paglia
Board Chair, Friends of the Blue Hills

GROWING IMPACT. STRENGTHENED CONNECTION. A BETTER BLUE HILLS.

SOME 2025 STATS

57+ ACRES

protected from trash and invasives to keep our parkland beautiful and habitats healthier

690 VOLUNTEERS

helped out in the park, on committees, with communications, and at events

3,400+ HOURS

donated to the park by volunteers

20+ MILES

of trailwork done by volunteers improving drainage, brushing along paths, and removing storm debris

159 STUDENTS

reached through educational programming, hands-on civic engagement exercises, and community connection

97 COMMUNITY EVENTS

hosted by FBH with 98% of them free to the public!

11 MORE TRAIL ADOPTERS

bringing the total to 51 volunteers promising to care for their favorite trails at least every quarter

Every number represents people investing in the future of the Blue Hills.

Reopening a Missing Piece of the Blue Hills

2012

For generations, Ponkapoag Pond has been a favorite destination for Blue Hills visitors. At its heart was Ponkapoag Boardwalk. This treasured pathway invited people into one of the Reservation's most unique landscapes, offering an up-close view of the rare Ponkapoag Bog and the wildlife that live there.

Over time, the boardwalk fell into disrepair and is now closed for public safety. What was once a beloved destination is currently inaccessible, leaving many visitors with only memories of the experience.

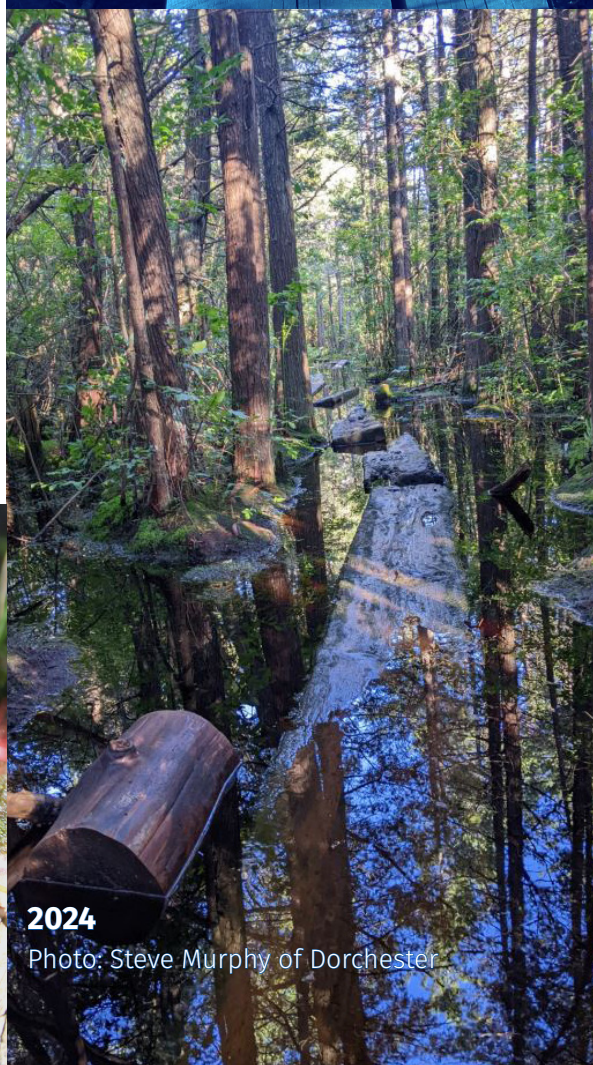
For years, repairing or replacing the boardwalk felt out of reach. The scale and cost of the project were simply too great for any one organization. Yet Friends of the Blue Hills, together with supporters, legislators, and state partners, continued to champion the boardwalk's future and advocate for a path forward.

That persistence paid off in 2025. Through sustained outreach, $100,000 was secured in the state budget for the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation to begin a feasibility study (the critical first step toward restoring public access to the bog). The study, now underway, is evaluating options for a new boardwalk as step one in bringing this iconic Blue Hills experience back to life.

This achievement is a powerful reminder that your support does more than fund programs and events. It gives Friends of the Blue Hills a voice in decisions that shape the future of the Reservation. Together, we're helping ensure that future generations can experience the wonder of Ponkapoag Bog for themselves.

Stay tuned for updates as this exciting project moves forward in 2026.

"The journey to a new boardwalk begins with a single step. Together, we helped make it happen."


2024
Photo: Steve Murphy of Dorchester

Help protect the places and experiences that make the Blue Hills special. Become a member, donate, or volunteer today.

friendsofthebluehills.org

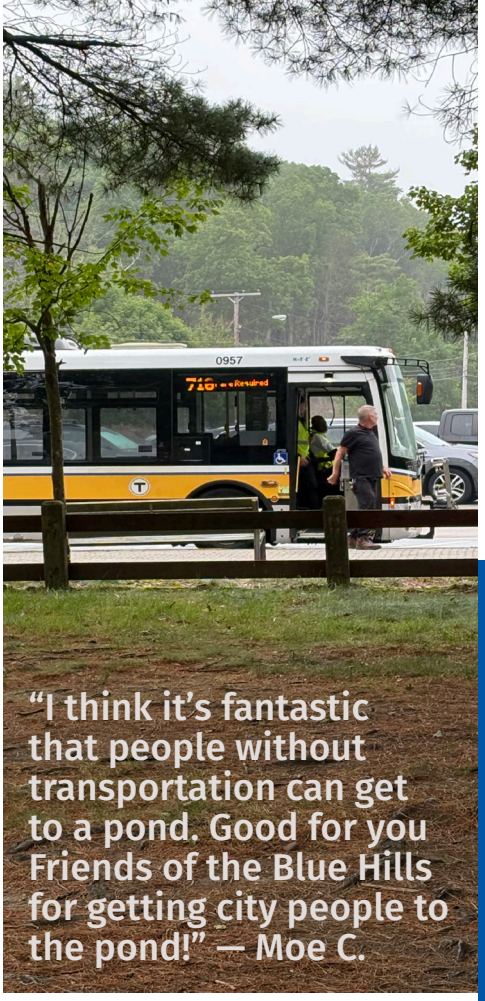
Advocacy Milestone Achieved: Seasonal Bus Stop

by Nick Iandolo, FBH Member

Public transportation options for getting to the Blue Hills have always been pretty limited — until Summer 2025. After years of advocacy by Friends of the Blue Hills and its partners, more public transit access to the Blue Hills Reservation became a reality. The MBTA launched a seasonal pilot extension of bus route 716 on Saturdays to Houghton's Pond in 2025. The route runs between Mattapan Station and the Village Shoppes in Canton. People were happy to hear about the pilot.

Ridership increased by 45 percent, prompting the return of seasonal service in 2026 on Saturdays and Sundays with more frequent buses. If you saw FBH tabling at the pond to welcome visitors to the park last summer, we're doing it again in 2026.

Come say hello or sign up for one of our guided hikes, family activities, or educational programs. You'll find these free events on our website calendar.



"I think it's fantastic that people without transportation can get to a pond. Good for you Friends of the Blue Hills for getting city people to the pond!" — Moe C.

Volunteers in the Field, Insights for the Future

When a brush fire burned nearly 50 acres on Houghton's Hill in November 2024, Friends of the Blue Hills launched a first-of-its-kind community science project with DCR to track how the landscape responded. In 2025, 15 volunteers collected 596 observations using the iNaturalist app across 20 monitoring plots, collecting valuable data at a fraction of the cost of a consultant-led study.

The results are encouraging so far. Volunteers documented more than twice as many plant species in burned plots as in unburned areas (250 compared to 117). Native wildflowers such as American burnweed, goldenrod, pokeweed, and forked witchgrass returned quickly, while flowering plants expanded important habitat for bees and other pollinators. Burned areas also showed signs of healthy regeneration, with a mix of grasses, wildflowers, shrubs, and young tree seedlings creating a more diverse landscape.

This study is helping FBH and DCR better understand how fire impacts forest health and biodiversity.

Interested in joining the study? Volunteer recruitment for 2027 begins Fall 2026.

Monthly Champions
Patricia Boone
Kevin Doyle
Mark Franklin
Mary Harper
Danielle Jenkins
Emmett Knox
Philip McDermott
Jennifer McKenna
Jackson Miller
Donald Parker
Michelle Walsh
Jean Walter

Annual Autorenewing Members
Mark and Stacey Cornforth
Caroline Hillier
Lillian Horin
Maddie Hutchinson
Charlie Phillips
Tez Ritchie
Molly Rodin
Joseph Weiner

Donors
Christine Eaton
Melanie Gárate
Jessica J. Hodge
Stephen Kruskall
Lisa Leake
Macy Lee
Erin McBride
Carla Morey
Beth Murphy
Christie Ricaldi

In Honor or Memory of Someone
Susan Benslimane
Ms. Sara Frischer (Espowood)
Anne Bilodeau
Dr. Alan Christian
Kathleen and Jim Coffey
Sinead Conlon
Laura Cronin
Carter Fahy
Dominick Ferreira
Kristin Filo
Joseph Foley
Jonna Grimsby
Paul Hackett
Tammi Halley
Ms. Lisa Hellmuth
Stephen Johnson
Albert Kao
Amy Kavadlo
Mr. Devon Kesseli
Mr. Cooper Kimball-Rhines
Holly Kissane
Stacey Klasnick
Joan L.
Susan Lague
Lee Lang
Kelly Lawson
Ms. Erika Libertini
Theresa, Kristen & Kathy Mattson
Patrick E. McGuire
Mr. Bob S. Miller

Welcome!

The Blue Hills community grew stronger in 2025. We are grateful for these new members whose commitment to the Blue Hills helps advance conservation, expand public engagement, and ensure that this treasured landscape remains vibrant and accessible for future generations.

Norman Sheppard
Ebba Legaspi St. Silva
Michael Stockwood
Lester Zuniga

Gift Memberships
Michael Bagshaw
Kimberly Baker
Diana Griffith
Ravi Jain
Elisabeth Mielke
Gail Schustek
Paulette Torrey

Grants
Cybergrants/ GE Aero Space
CyberGrants-Comcast
Milton Mass Cultural Council

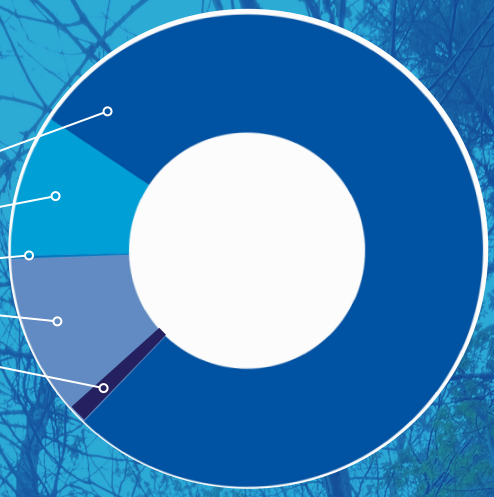
Ms. Barbara Nathan
Margaret Noonan
Ms. Connie L. ODell
O'Neill Family 2020 Revocable Trust
Jennifer Forman Orth
Lawrence O'Toole
Jeremy Potter
Ms. Deepa Ramaswami
Amelie Ratliff
William Rico
Mary Roach
Ann Marie Rosa
Celestina Rosa
Ron Saverse
Geraldine Shea
Steve Spelman and Diane Schulman
Ms. Jessica Stanton
Elizabeth Torrey
Kevin Linette Tyler
Alyson Vidoli
Sara White
William Woods Woods
Amanda Marie Zagami

Members
Gintas Adomkaitis
Sandra Alisch
Bob Allen
Sareh Amber
Hari Arisetty
Stacy Arlock-Rousseau
Frank Ascoli
Richard Bagge
Jared Baker
Lesley Bannatyne
James Barrett
Brenda Begin
Robert Begin
Tom Bender
Ciola Bennett
Alex Bermudez
Nora Bernazzani
Justin Blais
Larkin Bohanan and Nicole Mance
Shawna Boles
Alexandre Bou-rhodes
Liberty Bradford
Amy Brady
Eileen Brady
Brian Brazean
Danielle Briggs
Kelly Brooks
Conor Brosnan
April Brunelle
Susan and Robert Brunelli
Ms. Theresa Buiel
Donna Bulka
Sarina Burke
Dan Busler
Danielle Bynoe
Mrs. Colleen Cahill-Vieira
Irina Callahan
Cynthia Cantin
Rebecca Capo
Shanayta Carmody
Arthur Caron
Glenn Carrano
Susan Carrillo
Evan Cartwright
Bee Chaffers
Bridget Charville
Patti Chitvanni
Maria Elisa Ciampa
Dana Clancy
Mary Jo Clasby Oneill
Cara Cloutier
Diane Coletta
Lisa Colucci
Barry Commette
Dr. Don Condie
Joanna Cook
Alyson Cooper
Anne Corrigan
Amy Corsi
Kelly Coughlin
Mary Courtney
Ryan Cox
Tim Crowley
Donna Cruz
Joanne Cullen
Elizabeth Darnell
Shona Daye
Ben de la Cretaz
Jayne Deane-White
Chandra Delaney
David Demeo
Susan Devlin
Michael Diener
Joseph DiGregorio
Zoe Doherty
Kathleen Doherty
Katie Donovan
Lynn Donovan
Allison Donovan
Arthur Doyle
Susan Doyle
Ayoka Drake
Brian Duane
Paul Dullea
Christine Duncan
Bob Dyson
Joyce Elden
Mary Elias
Jeanne Engel
Russell Evans
Patricia Everett
Meredith Faletra
Marjorie Famiglietti
Lorraine Fano
Karen Fasciano
Matthew Fernald
Jason Ferry
Elisabeth Fine
Anne Fischer
Christian Flynn
John Foley
Lynda Forney
Carolyn Freeman
Solomon Friedberg
Shannon Frost
Kristen Fuchs
Amelia Fuss
Martha Gammie
Julie Gamponia
Luke Geneslaw
Noreen and John Giuggio
Susan Goldscheid
Caesar Gonzaga
Andrea Gordon
James Grant
Jason Greely
Alex Greely
Robin Greene
Stacy Greenspan
Michael Gregory
Zaria Griffith
Jess Gropen
Wendy Gross
Denise Habermehl
Brian Haley
Miss Sierra Hall
Gwendolyn Hamilton
Rita Harney
Mr. John Thomas Harrell
Thomas Hart
Denis Haskin
Ryan Haslett
Stacy Hedges
Leah Hesse
Meghan Holmes
Craig Howard
Paul Hrad
Diana Hsu
Nathan Davis Hunt
Harper Hutchins
Nathan Hutto
Nick Iandolo
Arvin Iracheta-Vellve
Courtney Ireland
Jay Ireland
Linda Jackson
Susan Jepsen
Judson Jevon
Matt Joseph
Lisa Kelly
Kelly Kimball
Anne King
Karen Kinsella
Jen Klein
Julie Knopp
Robert Kostigen
Cheryl Kreinbring
Kerry Kubera
Tanya N. Kutasz
Cheryl Ladd
Erick Lahme
Jennifer Lance
Robert Landry
Fran Launie
Douglas Laustsen
Ryan Lavery
Amie Lee
Hong Lee
Barbara Levitov
Amy Lindsay
Maurice Lowenthal
Don Luchini
Bruce Luchner
Jane Lundquist
Marne Mahoney
Matthew Manzi
Theresa McCaffrey
Lisa McCarthy
Nora McClelland
Jim McDonald
Derrill McDonough
Thomas McDougall
Debbie McElwaine
Michael McKay
Robert McKeon
Marthavan McKeon
Andrew McLaughlin
Colleen McLaughlin
Donna McLellan
David Meenan
Pilar Meyer
Robin Mirollo
Suzanne Missert
Heather Montgomery
Miss Denise Montville
Edward Morris
Catherine Mortali
John Morton
Kimberley Mosby
Karl Munger
Christopher Musto
Alfonso Navarro
Carolyn Newman
Melissa Northrup
Robert Oates
Thomas O'Connor
Esther O'Dette
Bob O'Malley
Julie Palazini
Tony Pederson
Kim Pelland
Mr. Matthew Petrikas
Lawrence Petrone
Kaley Phillips
Ms. Jo Ann D. Pierce
Keith Piesco
Matt Pinaud
Justin Pitman
Daniel Place
Jennifer Ponting
Shelby Poon
Grier Potter
Lisa Quinlan
Ellen Quirk
Tristan Richardson
Louise Richardson and Thomas Jevon
Ms. Melissa Ridolfi
Kathryn Roberts
John Rosenberg
Julie Rossi
Rosanne Rozanski
Joan Ruuska
Sofia Sarafoglou
Ms. Barbara Sargent
Nancy Scanlan
Mary Scannell
Roy Schifilliti
Eileen Schwartz
Roxane Scrima
Milan Shah
Lynne Marie Shea
Leila Shea
Alison Shell
Kell Siletti-Schneider
Emily Sinclair
Emily Sinsky
Judith Smith
Lois Anne Smith
Alana Snelson
Barak Soreff
Vickie Spiess
Alyssa St John
Kathy Stevens
Lorin Sullivan
Jake Sullivan
Sara Taccini
Matthew Taylor
Kathryn Tempestoso
Barbara Tennyson
Tran Vu Thu-Hang
Ms. Canice Thynne
Dan Tinney
Patricia Tracy
Van Tran
Louis Trubiano
Mary Unknown
Nora Unknown
Ed Unknown
Darrell Van Meter
Gerrit Vandenberg
Pam Vickery
Karen Victor
Carol Vincent
Lois Walsh
Joseph Ware
Tara Washburn
Jannine Weakley
Nina West
Jennifer West
Bill White
Deirdre Wilson
Jacob Woolf
Erin
Sue Zobel

2025 Income

Individual contributions: 78%
Events: 10%
Grants: <1%
Savings: 11%
Interest: 1%

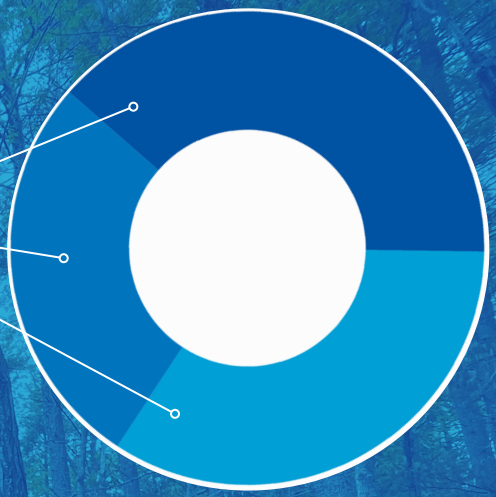
Total revenue: $447,000



2025 Expenses

Programming: 39%
Management: 27%
Fundraising: 34%

Total expenses: $447,000

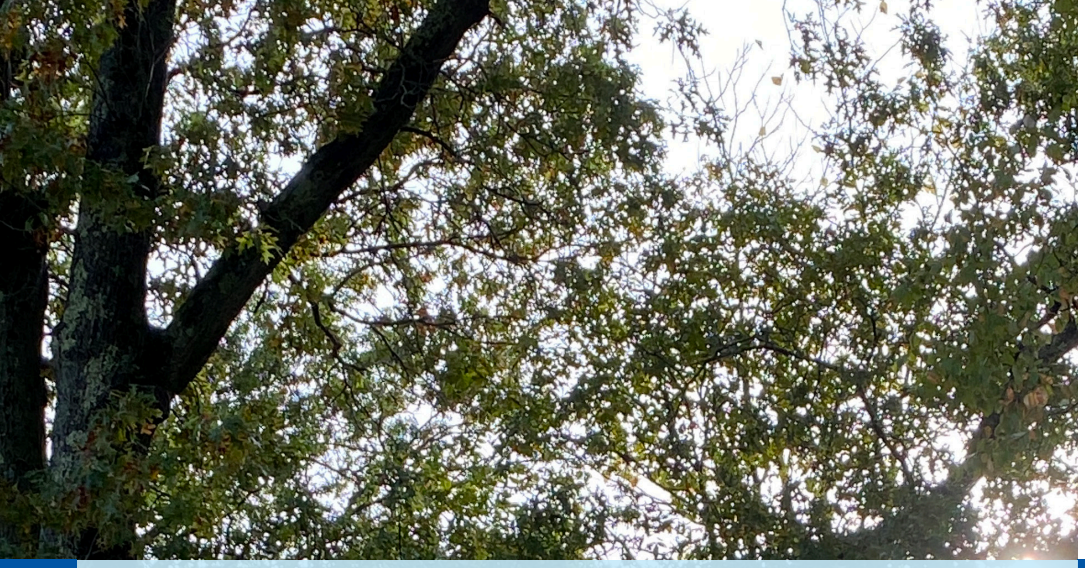


Volunteers contributed more than 3,400 hours of service in 2025. That's equal to nearly $119,000 in donated labor.

Source: https://independentsector.org/

Strategic partnerships with Elevate Youth, Waypoint Adventures, Navigation Games, and others expanded programming and access without extra spend.

97 community events, including 74 guided hikes, 9 education programs, and 31 cleanups were organized and delivered by a staff of four.



What's Next?

Finishing the strategic planning process in late 2025 marked the beginning of an exciting new chapter for Friends of the Blue Hills. Thanks to the support of members, donors, volunteers, and partners, we're already putting that vision into action.

Expanding community partnerships. We're building relationships with more local schools, community organizations, and partners to help more people discover the Blue Hills and feel welcome here.

Becoming your trusted guide to the Blue Hills. Programming continues to grow in 2026, and you can expect even more educational programs, stewardship opportunities, family activities, and resources to help you explore the park safely, confidently, and meaningfully.

Continuing a tradition of advocacy. The expansion of weekend MBTA service in summer 2026 to Houghton's Pond through October 12 shows the power of persistent advocacy. And, so far this year we've successfully secured $2.5 million for DCR projects in the Mass Ready Act. We'll continue working to secure reliable, long-term public transportation access to the Blue Hills and the funding that makes the park a place worth visiting.

Following your lead. Through surveys, community conversations, and collaboration with park partners, we're listening carefully and using what we learn to improve access, strengthen stewardship, protect habitat, and create experiences that help more people feel a sense of belonging in the Blue Hills.

Every one of these efforts is possible because of supporters like you. Together, we're building a future where people can discover, enjoy, and care for this extraordinary place that belongs to all of us.

Join Us!

friendsofthebluehills.org

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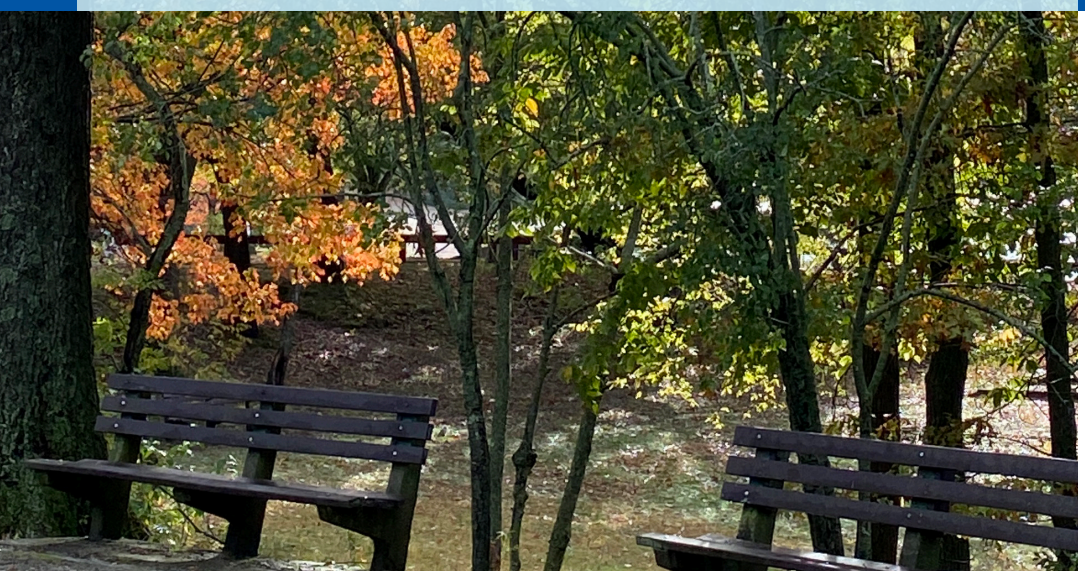
/friends-of-the-blue-hills

Donate today to power conservation, education, and stewardship.



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