CAPE COD COMMISSION

Barnstable County
FY27 License Plate Grant Application Submission

Harwich Conservation Trust

CONTACT INFORMATION

Organization Name: Harwich Conservation Trust
Location: 202 Route 28, West Harwich
Project Manager Name: Michael Lach
Project Manager Title: Executive Director
Project Manager Email: mike@harwichconservationtrust.org

PROJECT INFORMATION

Name of Project: Herring River Marsh View Wheelchair Accessible Boardwalk Project

Brief Project Description:
Harwich Conservation Trust (HCT) proposes to complete design, permitting, and construction-ready documentation for new public access trailhead parking on Route 28 in West Harwich and a wheelchair accessible boardwalk leading to panoramic views of the vast Herring River Marsh. The project will relocate existing parking away from sensitive wetland habitat and provide climate-resilient infrastructure that improves visitor access and enhances climate resilience. This work will create a safe, visible, and universally accessible trailhead directly off Route 28, connecting residents and visitors to one of Harwich's most iconic natural landscapes.

How does the project advance one or more 2024 Cape Cod CEDS Key Actions?
This project advances the following 2024 Cape Cod CEDS Key Actions:
Advance Climate Change Resiliency - the Herring River Marsh View Project will complete design and permitting for a nature-based solution that will relocate flood-vulnerable infrastructure away from sensitive coastal wetlands and will design facilities that account for sea-level rise and storm impacts.
Support Year-Round Community Activity and Civic Engagement - the Herring River Marsh View Project will expand access to a year-round outdoor recreation destination. The project aligns with CEDS goals by strengthening outdoor recreation infrastructure, improving accessibility, and supporting sustainable tourism tied to natural resource protection.

The nature-based project design will protect coastal water quality within the watershed to the Herring River which already suffers from impaired water quality.

What economic development needs/priorities will this project address?
The Herring River Marsh View Project meets several regional economic development priorities:

- Accessible Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure: The project will provide universally accessible nature-based amenities that serve residents, visitors, older adults, and individuals with mobility challenges.
- Tourism Diversification: The project expands Harwich's tourism offerings beyond beaches, supporting shoulder-season visitation.
- Climate Resiliency: The project relocates parking out of wetland buffer zones, protecting marsh habitat and reducing long-term maintenance and climate-related risks.
- Visibility & Wayfinding: The project will create a prominent, easily identifiable trailhead on Route 28, improving visitor access and supporting nearby businesses.

What is the anticipated impact of this project on these economic development needs/priorities? How will this project support Cape Cod's economic resiliency?
The Herring River Marsh View Project will strengthen Harwich's tourism economy by enhancing a signature nature-based attraction that draws birders, ecotourists, families, and visitors seeking authentic Cape Cod experiences. Improved accessibility to the stunning views across the Herring River Marsh will increase visitation, length of visit, and spending at nearby Route 28 businesses. By relocating parking away from sensitive wetlands and designing climate-resilient infrastructure, the project reduces long-term environmental and economic risks. The all-person accessible trail and marsh overlook will serve as a year-round asset, supporting a more resilient local economy and providing equitable access to nature for all.

Are there any anticipated challenges to implementing the project within the required timeframe of the grant award?
Potential challenges include permitting timelines, coordination with MassDOT for potential curb cut modifications, and construction cost escalation. These will be mitigated through early regulatory engagement and detailed engineering and are not expected to prevent the project from being implemented during the timeframe of the grant award.

Would the funding be used to support a grant program? Yes / No
No

Which municipality or municipalities are supportive of this project? (Optional)

Town of Harwich (Conservation Commission)

SCOPE OF WORK AND TIMELINE

Task 1 Site Assessment & Analysis

Description:

- Kickoff meeting with project team.
- Review of background data
- Field assessment and site analysis.
- Wetland resource delineation within 100 feet of project limits.
- Topographic and property line survey of 202 Route 28 and adjacent parcels.
- Pre-permitting review and regulatory pathway identification.

Deliverable:

1. Existing conditions plan stamped and signed by Massachusetts Professional Land Surveyor delivered as hardcopy and electronic versions in pdf and AutoCAD file formats to be used for design and permitting.
2. Wetland Delineation.
3. Attendance at up to two virtual pre-permitting meetings with regulatory agencies.
4. Summary of Findings memo.
5. Meeting agendas and summaries.

Estimated Completion Date: December 2026

Task 2 Conceptual Design

Description:

- Development of two conceptual alternatives for parking and trail/boardwalk systems.
- Comparative analysis of alternatives including accessibility, impacts, circulation, and cost.
- Virtual and in-person design review meetings.
- Final preferred concept plan including parking layout, trail alignment, boardwalk, overlook, and restoration areas.

Deliverable:

1. Conceptual design alternatives (plans, memo and cost estimates)
2. Final Concept Plan and cost estimate.
3. Meeting agendas and summaries

Estimated Completion Date: February 2027

Task 3 Final Design & Construction Documents

Description:

- Preparation of 90% and 100% design plans suitable for permitting and construction.
- Detailed grading, drainage, structural, accessibility, and planting plans.
- Geotechnical borings and soil evaluations.
- Stormwater report and operations/maintenance plan.
- Invasive species management plan.
- Final construction specifications and cost estimates.

Deliverable: Phase 3 Deliverables:

1. 90% Design Plans suitable for permitting
2. 100% Final Construction Plans (PDF + CAD)
3. Technical specifications
4. Boring Logs and Geotechnical Report
5. Summary of Finding Memo
6. Technical specifications
7. Stormwater Report and O&M Plan
8. Invasive species Management Plan
9. Meeting agendas and summaries

Estimated Completion Date: July 2027

Task 4 Permitting Support

Description:

- Preparation and filing of Notice of Intent with Harwich Conservation Commission.
- Abutter notifications and public hearing participation.
- MassDOT Access Permit application (if required).
- Coordination with regulatory agencies and response to comments.

Deliverable:

1. Draft and final permit application submittals.
2. Attendance at identified in-person hearings and site visits
3. Permitting documents.

Estimated Completion Date: June 2027

PROJECT PARTNERS

Project Partner 1:

Name: The Compact of Cape Cod Conservation Trusts, Inc.
Title: Mark Robinson, Executive Director
Email: mark@thecompact.net
Role/Description: Under a competitive bid process, the half-acre parcel at 202 Route 28 was recently acquired by our project partner and an interim conservation buyer, The Compact of Cape Cod Conservation Trust, Inc. (The Compact), to allow Harwich Conservation Trust (HCT) the time needed to raise funds for the acquisition. HCT will purchase the property from The Compact in early 2027. While The Compact is the interim owner of the property, HCT will oversee design review, permitting coordination, and will be responsible for construction implementation.

FY27 LICENSE PLATE GRANT APPLICATION BUDGET

Herring River Marsh View Wheelchair Accessible Boardwalk Project

Please upload this sheet as a PDF as part of your application.

Please fill in all budget categories relevant for your proposed project, including a brief description of the funds requested. The total amount requested should equal the total amount noted in the scope of work. All project expenses are provided on a reimbursement basis.

Category	Amount Requested	Match Amount (optional)	Total Project Cost	Budget Narrative
Personnel/Labor from Staffing Plan)		$5,400	$5,400	Per Staffing Plan
Fringe Benefits (from Staffing Plan)				
Travel				
Equipment				
Supplies				
Contractual/Consulting	$25,000	$98,000	$123,000	Costs based on actual RFP response. Includes Site Assessment and Analysis, Conceptual Design, Final Design and Construction Documents and Permitting Support
Small Grants Program				
Other				
Total Direct Cost	$25,000	$103,400	$128,400	Match funding provided through private fundraising
Indirect Costs*				
Total	$25,000	$103,400	$128,400	

*Maximum of 15% of project direct cost unless the project applicant has a Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement.

FY27 LICENSE PLATE GRANT APPLICATION STAFFING PLAN

Herring River Marsh View Wheelchair Accessible Boardwalk Project

Please upload this sheet as a PDF as part of your application.

For each individual participating in this project, please share their name, title, and associated hourly rate, number of hours. In addition, please list the tasks that each staff member/volunteer will participate in. The staffing plan should be uploaded at the end of the application.

Staff Name and Title	**Hourly Rate**	**Number of Hours**	**Total Project Cost**	**Amount Requested**	**Match Amount**
Michael Lach, Executive Director	$81.00	20	$1,620.00	$0	$1,620.00
Kelly Grant, Director of Land Conservation	$54.00	60	$3,240.00	$0	$3,240.00
Connor O'Brien, Director of Land Stewardship	$54.00	10	$540.00	$0	$540.00
Total Personnel			$5,400.00	$0	$5,400.00
Fringe (enter fringe rate as percent):					
TOTAL:			$5,400.00	$0.00	$5,400.00

Staff Name and Title	Tasks/Responsibilities
Michael Lach, Executive Director	The Executive Director will act as Project Manager for the project. He will review design material and provide high-level oversight, ensuring alignment with HCT's mission, strategic priorities, and long-term restoration goals.
Kelly Grant, Director of Land Conservation	Will assist with project management, coordination, grant management and administration, consultant oversight, timeline management, and reporting. Kelly brings extensive experience in land conservation, project development, and multi stakeholder collaboration, ensuring strong leadership throughout the design and permitting period.
Connor O'Brien, Director of Land Stewardship	Will support field coordination, site access, data collection logistics, and provide design review.

TOWN OF HARWICH
CONSERVATION DEPARTMENT

September 16, 2026

Barnstable County Economic Development Council
c/o Cape Cod Commission Barnstable County
3225 Main Street
Barnstable, MA 02630

Re: Letter of Support – FY27 License Plate Grant Program
Herring River Marsh View Trail Project – 202 Route 28, West Harwich

To Whom It May Concern,

As the Conservation Administrator for the Town of Harwich, I am pleased to offer this letter of support for Harwich Conservation Trust's (HCT's) application to the FY27 Barnstable County License Plate Grant Program. HCT's Herring River Marsh View Trail Project represents a significant advancement in public access, ecological protection, and climate-resilient infrastructure within one of the Town's most important natural resource areas.

Harwich Conservation Trust's acquisition of the property at 202 Route 28, West Harwich provides a unique opportunity to relocate existing informal parking away from sensitive wetland habitat and to design a safe, compliant, and environmentally appropriate parking area that meets modern standards for accessibility. The proposed All-Person accessible trail and viewing platform overlooking the Herring River marsh will expand equitable access to nature, support year-round outdoor recreation, and enhance visitor experience along a major travel corridor.

I support HCT's efforts to complete the necessary planning, design, and permitting for this project. These steps are essential to ensuring that improvements are thoughtfully designed, fully compliant with state and local environmental regulations, and protective of the Herring River's salt marsh ecosystem. The project aligns with municipal priorities for climate adaptation, wetland protection, and expansion of accessible outdoor recreation opportunities.

This initiative will also contribute to regional economic resiliency by strengthening nature-based tourism, supporting nearby businesses along Route 28, and enhancing one of Harwich's signature conservation destinations. The Town looks forward to continued collaboration with Harwich Conservation Trust as the project advances through permitting and into construction.

Please feel free to contact me if additional information or clarification is needed.

Sincerely,

Amy Usowski
Conservation Administrator
Town of Harwich

THE COMPACT
OF CAPE COD CONSERVATION TRUSTS, INC.

September 18, 2026

Barnstable County Economic Development Council
c/o Cape Cod Commission
3225 Main Street
Barnstable, MA 02630

Re: Letter of Support – FY27 License Plate Grant Program -
Herring River Marsh View Trail Project – Harwich Conservation Trust

To Whom It May Concern,

The Compact of Cape Cod Conservation Trusts, Inc. is pleased to offer this letter of support for Harwich Conservation Trust's application to the FY27 Barnstable County License Plate Grant Program for the Herring River Marsh View Trail Project. As the regional land trust service organization supporting all 15 Cape Cod towns, The Compact has partnered closely with HCT on land acquisition, conservation planning, and public access improvements for more than three decades. We are proud to serve as a project partner for this important initiative.

In July 2026, The Compact acquired the half-acre parcel at 202 Route 28 as an interim buyer to secure the property and enable the creation of a safe, environmentally appropriate public trailhead. The Compact will continue to support HCT throughout the project by providing regional expertise in conservation planning and public access design.

The proposed All-Persons accessible trail and marsh overlook will significantly enhance nature-based tourism along a major travel corridor, expand equitable access to one of Harwich's most iconic natural landscapes, and relocate informal parking away from sensitive salt marsh habitat. These improvements directly advance key actions of the 2024 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS), including climate resiliency, support for year-round community activity, and strengthening Cape Cod's outdoor recreation economy.

Harwich Conservation Trust has a strong track record of delivering high-quality public access, ecological restoration, and visitor amenity projects—including the Robert F. Smith Cold Brook Eco-Restoration Project and other accessible boardwalks and trails. The organization is well-prepared to lead the design, permitting, and construction-ready documentation supported by this grant.

The Compact strongly endorses this project and encourages its funding. It represents a model of environmental stewardship, and economic resiliency—precisely the type of initiative the License Plate Grant Program is designed to advance.

Please feel free to contact me if additional information is needed.

Sincerely,

Mark H. Robinson
Executive Director