



We hope you enjoyed your Earth Day celebrations and as discussed below, we encourage you to remain empowered when considering your role in conservation efforts. If you need a dose of optimism, catch the new episodes of PBS's *Changing Planet*, where Dr. M. Sanjayan discusses where ecosystem protections are working around the world.

FEATURED PARK



Photos and facts of
your favorite parks,
one issue at a time

Back Bay Fens

Boston, Massachusetts

FACT 1: The Fens was a marshland restoration project where the park's renowned architect, Frederick Law Olmstead, employed nature-based solutions to convert the sewage-laden bog into an ecologically healthy floodplain... **nearly 140 years ago.**



PHOTO CREDIT: Leslie Jones

FACT 2: When the Charles River was dammed in 1910, the Fens required a significant redesign to accommodate the transition of the parks' Muddy River from a saltwater tidal creek to its current form of freshwater marsh.

BONUS FACT: Back Bay Fens is also called the Fenway but *not* Fenway Park, which solely describes the adjacent world-famous baseball stadium subject of the first installment of David Rubenstein's new PBS series: *Iconic America*.

Nominate *your* favorite local, state, or national park [here](#) so our subscribers can learn about it.

PARK PERKS



Visualizing key research to show why parks matter

Humans have always interacted with the planet's wildlife, plants, air, water, and minerals, but in an opinion article published last year in the journal *PLoS Sustainability and Transformation*, scholars suggest that **how** conservation is performed requires significant reflection. The team argues that conservation science, policy, and interventions should be approached in a way that is:

- C** **co-produced** - collaborating with impacted stakeholders on all aspects of the approach (problem definition, knowledge gap analysis, course of action development, implementation) increases the output's relevance
- O** **open** - ensuring research outputs, datasets, and tools are free and accessible to all stakeholders increases transparency, reproducibility, and rapid knowledge transfer needed for evidence-based decision making
- N** **nimble** - tools like decision trees and contingency plans help shorten the time between problem definition and decision making/intervention; management delays incur both environmental and financial costs
- S** **solutions-oriented** - use proven, evidence-based approaches to ensure interventions are both socially acceptable and durable; vigorously monitor these interventions to grow the evidence patterns
- E** **empowering** - celebrate individual and community successes when framing conservation challenges in order to motivate stakeholders by demonstrating their true agency to affect positive change
- R** **relational** - when evaluating conservation approaches and solutions, consider that every individual's relationship with nature (specifically land) is personal and uniquely framed by historical power dynamics
- V** **values-based** - plan decision making in a way that reflects the social, cultural, economic and even political values of diverse stakeholder groups to establish long-term support for decisions and interventions
- A** **actionable** - generate reliable information and evidence using tools like collaborative planning, research mentorship, and diverse communications strategies; these help prevent wasting time, resources, and data
- T** **transdisciplinary** - since human behavior spurs natural responses, conservation frameworks must incorporate the best available science on human psychology, decision theory, and behavioral economics
- I** **inclusive** - the contribution of all people is necessary to address crisis root causes; any conservation gains remain at risk if not aligned with societal movements away from exploitative and inequitable power structures
- O** **optimistic** - avoid discussing problem statements without also messaging corresponding evidence-based solutions; this balances the emotional responses of fear and guilt against those of confidence and vigor
- N** **nurturing** - consistent, empathetic, trust-building interactions create capacity for resilience and increase an individual's ability to cope with and make long-term adaptations to a changing world

Acrostic reproduced from Cooke SJ et al. (2022). <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pstr.0000016>



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Why don't alligators go to parties?

PLAYGROUND

They're always too swamped.