



## Monthly E-Sierran Newsletter

August 2023

Dear Emma,

Happy August!

It's been real hot out there. 🔥 If you didn't see, [July officially set the record for the hottest month in human history](#). Despite the conditions, we are continuing to show up and push for bold climate action and energy justice.

August brings new guided opportunities with City Hike: East Boston, and exciting legislative campaign updates! Read on to see what's been happening at the Chapter and beyond.

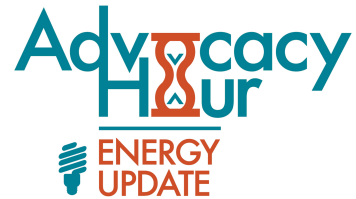
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## What's Happening at the Massachusetts Chapter

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### Advocacy Hour: How to take advantage of IRA benefits with EnergySage

The Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) passed in 2022 offers a wide range of incentives for making your home more energy efficient! Join the Sierra Club Massachusetts Chapter and EnergySage as we walk through what's in the IRA and how you can take advantage of its savings and incentives to electrify your home and lower energy costs.



**AUGUST 15 at 5PM**

[RSVP Here](#)

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### City Hike East Boston: Waterfront Loop

Join us for a 3 mile loop walk around the waterfront in East Boston! We will visit points of interest including a plaque commemorating the activism of the Maverick Mothers, Piers Park, consequences of recent development in Greenway: Portside, and the intersections of public access and climate vulnerability planning along the Boston Harborwalk. Halfway through the route we will take a break at Downeast Brewing company. This outing is transit-accessible from the Blue line of the T. The pace of this walk will be slow, the difficulty rating is easy.



## City Hike East Boston

**AUGUST 18 at 6:30PM**

[RSVP Here](#)

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### Plant Based Cooking Demonstration

Learn how to make healthy plant-based food with the Plant-based Planet Team! We'll demonstrate how to make various plant-based dishes at home. Feel free to ask us questions; we'll be happy to help you.

**AUGUST 20 at 7PM**

[RSVP Here](#)



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### Old Growth Forest Hike at Monroe State Forest

The Sierra Club MA Chapter is offering a wonderful opportunity to see, experience, and learn about Old-Growth forest in the mountains of western Massachusetts. A 1.5 mile hike will be guided by a MA DCR forest interpreter along the beautiful Dunbar Brook Trail in Monroe State Forest in Florida, MA (northwest section of MA near the Vermont border).



**AUGUST 25 at 1PM**

[RSVP Here](#)

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## Put Gas in the Past: Petition Collection Gathering

Signatures signify widespread support for an issue, which is why Gas in the Past petition signatures were cited in the administration's decision to send Eversource's proposed pipeline through Springfield and Longmeadow back to the drawing board! The fight isn't over yet, though. Join Mass Power Forward to learn how to collect petition signatures, practice these skills, and meet new people passionate about climate justice.



**AUGUST 30 at 7PM**

[RSVP Here](#)

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## Support the Chapter



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## Take Action to Save Cape Cod Bay

### Tell MassDEP: No Dumping Radioactive Wastewater in Cape Cod Bay

The Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) has tentatively denied a request by Holtec International, the company decommissioning the Pilgrim Nuclear Power Plant, to release more than a million gallons of radioactive wastewater into Cape Cod Bay. This tentative decision will not be finalized until after a public comment period that ends Aug. 25. This is a giant win for environmental justice. Residents compelled regulators to take the community's health, the local economy, and the harm to the surrounding environment into account.

**To help make this decision final, please send a supporting email to the Department of Environmental Protection!**

You can use the sample email below or create your own by **August 25th**.

[Send a Letter of Support Today!](#)

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## Transportation Matters

### MBTA to Procure 80 Battery Electric Buses

Our long-term advocacy together with your support for bus fleet electrification at the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA) is working!

We had a big win with the climate bill passed last year requiring the MBTA to have an all-electric bus fleet by 2040. **At the July meeting the Board approved a contract for the initial procurement of 80 battery electric buses with an option to procure up to 460 additional electric buses over a five year period.** This is good news but more needs to be done.



**We will continue to advocate for the timely funding, planning, and implementation of garage modernization projects and prioritizing deployment of electric buses on routes that pass through environmental justice populations.**

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## Sierra Club Testifies in Support of Zero Emission Vehicle Legislation

The Joint Committee on Transportation, Utilities, and Energy (TUE) recently held a hearing on several important zero emission vehicle bills. Sierra Club testified in support of one of our priority transportation legislation, H.3139, that requires all publicly-owned and leased vehicles and school bus fleets to be electric by 2035 and prioritizes electrification in locations serving environmental justice populations. We also advocated in support of bill S.2099 that would establish a program to offset the higher upfront cost of electric school buses and bill H.3145 that establishes an e-bike grant initiative to help finance bike share and ownership programs by municipalities, businesses, and non-profits.

[Read Our Testimony Here](#)

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## Massachusetts Vision Zero Coalition Calls for Safety Measures to Reduce Traffic Fatalities

Sierra Club recently joined partners in the Massachusetts Vision Zero Coalition to advocate for policies to reduce traffic injuries and deaths across Massachusetts, while increasing safe, healthy, equitable mobility for all. Mode shift to walking and biking can play a crucial role in reducing carbon pollution and emissions. However, [crashes involving vulnerable road users are on the rise in Massachusetts](#). The Commonwealth saw 101 pedestrian fatalities –the highest on record– and 10 bicycle fatalities in 2022.

**The coalition recently sent two letters to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) with recommendations that can help prevent these tragedies.** [Side underride guards on all large trucks](#) are an important safety measure that could reduce bicyclist-large truck crash fatalities by 55-75 percent and pedestrian-large truck crash fatalities by 20-27 percent. The coalition also called for the [revised New Car Assessment Program \(NCAP\) safety rating to include features](#) capable of sensing and protecting people outside vehicles, intelligent speed assistance systems, and smaller and safer hood and bumper designs.

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## City Hike: East Boston

### ICYMI: City Hike is back with new guided opportunities!

City Hike: East Boston is here! Experience East Boston through a guided tour and learn how local activists have fought for this community.

The 2023 Hike will begin at Belle Isle Marsh, work through East Boston and end at the East Boston harbor walk. **We will be holding 3 guided outings where staff and volunteers will lead folks along part of the route.** (All transit accessible!)

August 18th: Waterfront loop, starting and ending at Maverick

[RSVP Here](#)

September 10th: Wood Island Park to Maverick

[RSVP Here](#)

September 30th: Belle Isle Marsh through Wood Island Park

[RSVP Here](#)

**Even if you cannot make these walks, we welcome you to explore the route with our provided resources! Visit our [City Hike: East Boston webpage](#) for more information.**

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# Clean Energy in Boston

## MA Sierra Club celebrates Boston's new Fossil Fuel Free Municipal Building Executive Order

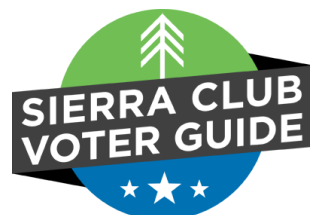
**Boston Mayor Michelle Wu signed an executive order on July 31st requiring new city owned buildings and major rehabilitations to be fossil fuel free!** 🎉🎉

Our Boston Lead Organizer, Michele Brooks was in attendance to applaud the City on this important victory. In taking this action, Boston is leading by example, showcasing that equitable building decarbonization is imperative. With buildings accounting for the majority of Boston's emissions, the executive order checks off a key milestone in the Mayor's Green New Deal agenda for Boston. [Read more here.](#)

## Every Year is an Election Year

### 2023 Endorsements

The 2023 municipal elections season is in full swing, and our volunteer-led political committee has been working hard to identify environmental and climate champions who will advance Sierra Club priorities in key communities across the state. [Watch our endorsed candidates page](#) for endorsements as they come in, and stay tuned for a larger announcement of preliminary endorsements coming later this month.



## Stand in Solidarity

### Fair Share revenue is driving real improvements in Massachusetts. We need to protect it.

We have some great news to share on the Fair Share Amendment that a broad coalition of organizations, including Sierra Club, helped pass in November 2022. The FY24 budget includes information on how the first \$1 billion raised from the Fair Share Amendment – funded by a tax on the richest 1% – will be spent. Allocations include \$476.5 million towards transit improvements, including \$20 million for low-income and fare-free pilot programs, and bridge and road repairs. The remaining \$523.5 million invests in public education infrastructure including improvements to school buildings, increasing access to early education, and free school meals for all students.

We now need to protect the Fair Share Amendment from tax avoidance and ensure that Massachusetts can continue to invest in improving our public education and transportation system. **Urge your state legislator to reject permanent tax breaks for the ultra-rich and large multinational corporations and, instead, use tax dollars to help make Massachusetts more affordable, equitable, and competitive.**

[Email Your Legislator Today](#)

## Chapter Committee and Team Meetings

### Climate Research Team Meeting

**Wednesdays at 6:10pm**

Weekly meeting of the Climate Research Team. This team looks at municipal progress on clean energy/climate issues and seeks opportunities to leverage municipal power for state policy change.

[RSVP Here](#)

### Communications Team Meeting

**Thursday, August 10th at 5:00pm**

The "comms" team handles the Chapter's digital communications, including managing our social media accounts, sending email blasts, and other digital organizing tactics.

[RSVP Here](#)

### Transportation Action Team Meeting

**Thursday, August 10th at 5:00pm**

The new Transportation Action Team will meet twice a month, and will start by focusing on Electric School Bus Advocacy and Regional Transit Electrification.

[RSVP Here](#)

### Forest Protection Team Meeting

**Thursday, August 10th at 7:00pm**

[RSVP Here](#)



The Forest Protection Team is dedicated to protecting and preserving forests and trees throughout Massachusetts through education, advocacy and community involvement. All are welcome to attend!

### **Elections Team Meeting**

**Tuesday, August 15th at 7:00pm**

Join our elections team! We are building Sierra Club volunteer power to elect environmental champions this year and in years to come!

[RSVP Here](#)

### **Cape Cod Group Meeting**

**Tuesday, August 15th at 7:00pm**

Please join us for the bi-weekly meeting of the Cape Cod Group. All interested parties are welcome.

[RSVP Here](#)

### **Executive Committee Meeting**

**Thursday, August 17th at 5:30pm**

The monthly meeting of the Executive Committee. All members welcome to join except for any Executive Session.

[RSVP Here](#)

### **Toxics Team Meeting**

**Monday, August 21st at 5:00pm**

Bi-weekly meeting of the Toxics Team. This team handles toxic pollution issues, including deadly chemicals (e.g. PFAS), plastic-based pollutants, and recycling/solid waste issues.

[RSVP Here](#)

### **Plant-based Planet Team Meeting**

**Tuesday, August 29th at 7:00pm**

Please join us for the monthly meeting of the Plant-based Planet Team. Come discuss strategies to promote a plant-based diet as way of fighting climate change and conserving natural resources.

[RSVP Here](#)

### **Political Committee Meeting**

**Tuesday, September 12 at 6:00pm**

This committee researches political candidates and makes recommendations on who the Chapter should endorse.

[RSVP Here](#)

### **Transportation Committee Meeting**

**Thursday, September 28th at 6:00pm**

Join us to discuss and respond to critical transportation issues affecting Massachusetts, including rail, bus, bike, pedestrian, and traffic pollution policies.

[RSVP Here](#)

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## **Friend and Partner Opportunities**

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### **Sign the petition to oppose the proposed haul road in East Boston**

The Logan Community Clean Air Coalition and allies are concerned about a proposed haul road in East Boston that poses significant air pollution risks to surrounding communities, including Chelsea, Revere, and Winthrop. These communities already shoulder the burden of industrial pollution stemming from the airport and highway, as well as regional stockpiles of jet fuel, residential heating oil, and road salt. The proposed haul road would result in 3000 trucks passing through communities as more airport services shift out of Logan and into East Boston.

[Sign this letter to oppose the haul road](#)

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## **Our Reading List**

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*Read the latest environmental news from Massachusetts and beyond...*

- [People want to go electric. Cambridge is launching a program to help them figure out how.](#) (Boston Globe, 8/4/23)
- [Long Beach in Rockport is a summer paradise. It may also be a climate disaster waiting to happen.](#) (Boston Globe, 8/4/23)
- [More Massachusetts cities seek to ban gas, citing lack of diversity in pilot and urgency of climate crisis](#) (Energy News Network, 8/3/23)
- [\\$12 million plan seeks to promote recreation and climate resilience in Dorchester waterfront](#) (wbur, 8/2/23)
- [How one housing project in Newton may change the way we think about building green](#) (Boston Globe, 8/2/23)
- [Power from offshore wind farms could flow by fall](#) (Boston Globe, 8/2/23)

- [Mayor Wu signs executive order banning fossil fuels in new city-owned buildings](#) (Boston Globe 7/31/23)
- [July has been the hottest month in humanity's history](#) (Grist, 7/28/23)
- [It's cheaper to cut down trees than build solar on rooftops. Can Massachusetts change that?](#) (Energy News Network, 7/26/23)
- [Massachusetts is phasing out natural gas. Why is it expanding in Douglas?](#) (Boston Globe, 7/26/23)
- [Pilgrim Nuclear denied permit to discharge radioactive water into Cape Cod Bay](#) (WGBH, 7/24/23)
- [State says Eversource application for a second gas line in Springfield, Longmeadow is incomplete](#) (MassLive, 7/23/23)
- [The World Is Reeling From Record Heat and Flooding. Scientists Say It's the Cost of Climate Inaction](#) (Inside Climate News, 7/18/23)
- [How climate change drives hotter, more frequent heat waves](#) (Grist, 7/11/23)
- [When it comes to extreme heat, we're all in hot water. But some of us are in deeper than others.](#) (Boston Globe, 7/8/23)
- [How air pollution and the housing crisis are connected](#) (Grist, 7/7/23)
- [Mass. solar potential called enormous](#) (CommonWealth, 7/6/23)

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Always be sure to check our [website calendar](#) for more upcoming events. If you'd like the Sierra Club to co-sponsor your event (and add it to our events digest), [please email us!](#)

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