



Monthly E-Sierran Newsletter

January 2020

A Week of Climate Commitments from Beacon Hill



Announcements from Baker and Senate

It has been an exciting week in the world of Massachusetts climate advocacy. Both [Governor Baker](#) and the Massachusetts [State Senate](#) have put forward promises to address the climate crisis. While these commitments still leave Massachusetts behind many other states that have pledged urgent action, they represent a [significant step forward for the Commonwealth...](#)

[Read Full Post](#)

Feb 5th Deadline for Committees to Vote

Did you know that this year in the MA legislature, Joint Committees only have until the first Wednesday in February to vote on pending legislation? There are still many critical bills that need a supportive vote before Feb 5. [Contact your legislators](#) and tell them their committees need to vote on priority environmental bills as soon as possible.

[Contact Legislators](#)

Clean Energy & Climate

A Crash Course on State Climate Bills

Monday, January 27 at 6:00pm

Middleborough Public Library, 102 N Main Street, Middleborough

As part of an ongoing campaign, Massachusetts Sierra Club leads educational advocacy events across the Commonwealth for folks to understand solutions to expand



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renewable energy and reduce climate pollution. Attendees will learn more about current Massachusetts energy laws, opportunities/barriers for climate action, best practices for cities and towns, and how they can better engage with public officials to make real progress in their community. Jacob Stern, Deputy Director of Mass. Sierra Club, will be teaching us about three state climate priority bills:

- Environmental Justice: Middleborough Center is an EJ district; learn what this means
- 100% Renewable Energy by 2050
- Equitable Infrastructure, Transportation, and Carbon Pricing



CLIMATE CHANGE RESPONSE FORUM

Tuesday January 28, 2020
7 PM - 9 PM

Congregation Beth Elohim
133 Prospect St. Acton MA

[Read More](#)

Climate Change Response Forum

Tuesday, January 28 at 7:00pm
Congregation Beth Elohim, 133
Prospect Street, Acton

Come to this event to discuss 100% renewable energy, net zero building code, gas leaks, carbon pricing, and more. Sen. Jamie Eldridge and Rep. Tami Gouveia will speak; panelists include representatives from Mothers Out Front, MCAN (Massachusetts Climate Action Network), and the MA chapter of the Sierra Club.

Climate Cafe: Distilling Solutions for Change

Thursday, February 20 at 5:00pm
10 Water Street, Plymouth

Want to taste local made craft drinks and learn about and discuss local climate change impacts and solutions here in Plymouth and on the South Shore? Come to a Climate Café Co-Hosted by Mass Audubon and Sierra Club Massachusetts in Downtown Plymouth at the Dirty Water Distillery. The Climate Café is an opportunity to have conversations with neighbors about the impacts you are seeing and different solutions for climate change.

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Transportation Matters

Electric Vehicle Rebate Program Reinstated

The popular Massachusetts rebate program for electric vehicles (MOR-EV), which ended in September of 2019 after running out of funds, has been reinstated as of January 1,

2020 and will continue at least through December 31, 2021. The Legislature made \$27 million annually available for rebates over the next two years. Funding comes to the state through the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative, which is a multi-state cap-and-invest program to lower emissions from power plants.



Learn More

Battery Electric Vehicles (BEVs) with a sales price under \$50,000 are eligible for a \$2,500 rebate.

Plug-in Hybrid Electric Vehicles (PHEVs) with a sales price under \$50,000 and an all-electric range of 25+ miles are eligible for a \$1,500 rebate.

Westfield Gas + Electric launches a New EV Program with Incentives

This month, Westfield Gas + Electric (WG+E) announced a new Electric Vehicle (EV) awareness & incentives program, WG+EV. In addition to the launch of the new WG+EV website, customers will now have access to comprehensive EV resources and support via a toll-free support line (1.833.443.8363) and [email](#) staffed by EV Specialists.

Whether new to EVs or already an existing EV driver, residents can learn more about the different types of available electric vehicles and charging, get connected with dealers, hear about upcoming local EV events, and connect with EV rebates and incentives for EV charging available only to WG+E customers. Learn more about electric vehicles and their many benefits at <https://wgeld-ev.ene.org/> and sign up to receive the latest information about incentives and upcoming events.

Learn More

Beyond Fossil Fuels

Take Action to Divest MA Pension Systems from Fossil Fuels

It is critical that we pull money out of the industry that's driving the climate crisis, but because of a state regulatory ruling, local independent retirement systems in Massachusetts cannot divest from the fossil fuel industry. Somerville retirement officials discovered that it makes financial sense to divest, but when the city tried to pull some of its money out of fossil fuel companies, the state said it needed legislative approval to do so. MassDivest Coalition is pushing a bill that would allow independent retirement systems to divest, and it needs your help now to get that bill out of committee.



Take Action



Watch the Trailer Here

Under Pressure Upcoming Film Screening

Numerous communities in MA are facing local battles -- with regional and global consequences -- to stop expansion of gas pipelines and infrastructure. We are co-sponsoring screenings of the powerful 2019 student-produced documentary [Under Pressure](#) to educate about the dangers of fracked gas in an era of climate change. To inquire about hosting an **Under Pressure** screening, please visit [Under Pressure online](#).

Westborough Film Screening
Saturday, January 25 at 10:00am
55 W Main Street, Westborough

RSVP Here

Massachusetts Holding Hearings on Gas Disaster

The state Department of Public Utilities announced recently it would be holding two public hearings as part of its investigation into the Sept. 13, 2018 Columbia Gas disaster. The hearings are being held to gather testimony from residents and business owners affected by the blast that damaged or destroyed 131 homes and businesses, injured 22 people and caused the death of one person. The DPU is also accepting written testimony. [Read more...](#)

Lawrence Hearing

Wednesday, January 29 at 6:00pm
North Common Education Campus, 233 Haverhill St.

Andover Hearing

Monday, February 10 at 6:00pm
J. Everett Collins Center for the Performing Arts, 100 Shawsheen Road

Protecting our Planet

MassDEP Action on PFAS

The Baker-Polito Administration and the Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP) have filed two rules with the Secretary of State related to PFAS: a *final* soil and groundwater cleanup rule and a *draft* drinking water rule. The draft drinking water standard would establish a Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL) for drinking water of the sum of 20 ppt for six PFAS compounds. The proposed standards cover a larger subgroup of compounds than any other state and provide a greater degree of protection, particularly for sensitive subgroups including pregnant women, nursing mothers, and infants. MassDEP will be hosting five public hearings on the draft standards and comments will be accepted through February 28, 2020. The dates and locations of the meetings are below:

Thursday, January 23, 2020 – Springfield, MA
Public Hearing: 1:00 p.m.
MassDEP's Western Regional Office

436 Dwight Street, (413) 784-1100

Friday, January 24, 2020 – Boston, MA

Public Hearing: 10:00 a.m.

MassDEP's Boston Headquarters
One Winter Street, (617) 292-5500

Tuesday, January 28, 2020 – Lakeville, MA

Public Hearing: 10:00 a.m.

MassDEP's Southeast Regional Office
20 Riverside Drive, (508) 946-2700

Wednesday, January 29, 2020 – Wilmington, MA

Public Hearing: 1:00 p.m.

MassDEP's Northeast Regional Office
205 Lowell Street, (978) 694-3200

Friday, January 31, 2020 – Worcester, MA

Public Hearing: 10:00 a.m.

MassDEP's Central Regional Office
8 New Bond Street, (508) 792-7650

[Learn more](#)

Massachusetts Announces New Standards for PFAS

In December, Massachusetts state regulators have issued new standards for the toxic compounds Perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) in drinking water. The new regulations state that the total concentration of six chemicals in PFAS must not exceed 20 parts per trillion. The chemicals have been found in 28 of 37 municipal water systems that have provided test results to the state Department of Environmental Protection. Twelve of those exceeded the proposed standards. They have earned the nickname “forever chemicals” because they never fully break down. [Read more...](#)

Solidarity Now

Blog Post: Exploring the Relationship Between Housing Justice & Climate Justice

In December, Miranda Catsambas, Climate Leadership Fellow for the Sierra Club Massachusetts Chapter attended a rally and march in support of affordable housing in the new Suffolk Downs redevelopment project in East Boston. Click below to hear more about the rally and housing justice in Boston, and why housing justice and climate justice are deeply intertwined.

[Read More](#)



Plant-Based Planet



Our Sustainable Kitchen seeking volunteers

The Sierra Club Massachusetts Chapter has a new initiative, Plant-based Planet, eating for the climate and health. As part of that initiative, we will be filming a vegan cooking show, Our Sustainable Kitchen, to be aired on cable TV and youtube channels, starting later this month or early next month. We are looking for volunteers for filming or editing the show at the North Andover Cable Access TV station which has a beautiful new kitchen perfect for a cooking show. Previous experience is preferable. We expect to film once every two weeks for a few hours between 11 am and 3 pm. Exact date and time will depend on the availability of the kitchen for filming. Please contact mass.sierra@gmail.com if you are interested.

I'm Interested in Volunteering!

Plant Based Potluck Dinner

Sunday, January 26 at 5:30pm
6 Eliot Street, Jamaica Plain

Put your concern for the environment into action by minimizing the carbon footprint of your food, and saving habitat for wildlife. Join your fellow Sierra Club members for a plant-based potluck dinner, in partnership with the First Church in Jamaica Plain Unitarian Universalist's Social Justice Action Committee. Please bring a plant-based dish (vegan), free of meat, chicken, fish, meat or fish stock, eggs, dairy products, or honey. Free, but registration is required.



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Friend and Partner Events

North Atlantic Right Whales in Decline: Solutions to an Urgent Problem

Monday, January 27 at 7:00pm
Roslindale House, 120 Poplar Street, Roslindale

North Atlantic right whales inhabit the waters off Massachusetts (that whale tail on many Massachusetts license plates belongs to our state marine mammal, the right whale), but the species only numbers around 400 individuals and has been in decline since 2010. Today, right whales die almost exclusively by getting entangled in fishing gear and hit by ships, and the rates of these deaths are unsustainable. Learn about right whales, how scientists study



Friends of Roslindale Branch Library



North Atlantic Right Whales
In Decline: Solutions To An
Urgent Problem

Monday, January 27
7 - 9 PM

Roslindale House
120 Poplar Street

them, and what is being done to reverse their decline. This lecture will be led by Dr. Mark Baumgartner of the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution.

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Affordable Housing as a Climate Solution Webinar (Part 3) Tuesday, January 28 at 7:00pm

Are you passionate about fighting climate change, while advocating for more affordable housing? Interested in learning from experts and local activists on why accessible and sustainable housing is a key part of the climate solution? Want to learn more about how Net Zero buildings can solve both the housing and climate crises?

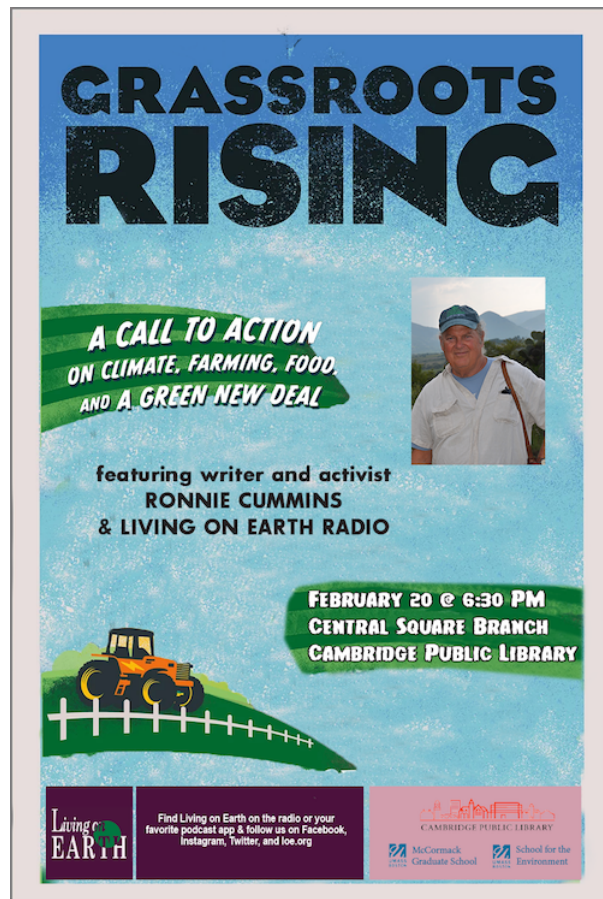
This webinar is the third of a four part webinar series hosted by MCAN, LISC, and the Smart Growth Alliance on affordable housing as a climate solution. Part Three, on January 28th, will ground your understanding on the importance of advocating for housing that is both affordable and Net Zero, in your community and beyond.

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Grassroots Rising: A Call to Action on Climate, Farming, Food, and a Green New Deal Thursday, February 20 at 6:30pm Cambridge Public Library, Central Square Branch, 45 Pearl Street, Cambridge

Join the nationally-syndicated radio show & podcast Living on Earth and activist Ronnie Cummins for a live interview about his new book, Grassroots Rising: A Call to Action on Climate, Farming, Food, and a Green New Deal. Grassroots Rising is a passionate call to action for the global body politic, providing practical solutions for how to survive—and thrive—in catastrophic times. Author Ronnie Cummins aims to educate and inspire citizens worldwide to organize and become active participants in preventing ecological collapse. This is a free event open to the public. Books will be available for sale and signing.

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Chapter Committee and Team Meetings

Energy Committee Meeting Thursday, February 13 at 6:00pm

RSVP Here

Sierra Club Office, 50 Federal Street, 3rd Floor, Boston

Join our Energy Committee on Thursday, February 13 at 6pm to learn what Sierra Club members can do to disrupt fossil finance here in Massachusetts and beyond.

Plant-Based Planet Team Meeting

Thursday, February 20 at 7:00pm

Sierra Club Office, 50 Federal Street, 3rd Floor, Boston

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

RSVP Here

Our Reading List

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

- [How to install an EVSE](#) (Boston.gov)
- [Comments show support for replacing Cape Cod bridges](#) (12/23/2019 Cape Cod Times)
- [A Growing List Of Massachusetts Communities With Single-Use Plastic Bag Bans](#) (12/30/2019 New England Public Radio)
- [In Boston, let's make the bus free](#) (1/1/2020 Boston Globe)
- [Baker's climate program could help rural commuters](#) (1/2/2020 Boston Globe)
- [To save the planet, I subscribe to a stainless steel coffee cup](#) (1/14/2020 Boston Globe)
- [In State of the Commonwealth speech, Baker presses for more aggressive climate action, more money for T](#) (1/22/2020 Boston Globe)
- [Baker's net-zero goal is business-as-usual \(Opinion\)](#) (1/22/2020 Commonwealth Magazine)
- [Weymouth compressor opponents occupy Mass DEP office](#) (1/22/2020 Wicked Local Weymouth)

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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