



Monthly E-Sierran Newsletter

March 2020

Editor's Note: As we all begin to deal with a global pandemic with COVID-19, we wanted to let you know [how the Sierra Club is adapting and responding](#), so we can keep doing the important work of protecting our natural and human environment and fighting for a just, clean energy future.

What's Happening at the Massachusetts Chapter

Massachusetts Chapter Response to COVID-19

As an organization, we're closely following the developing COVID-19 situation and its impact on the residents of the Bay State. The health and safety of workers and families, particularly those most vulnerable, must be the urgent priority right now. Here are some of the ways we're responding locally, and nationally:

- Nationally, the Club was deeply involved in the recently passed Families First Coronavirus Response Act, and will continue to advocate for meaningful support for workers and families during this time.
- Locally, we're coordinating with our movement allies to determine how best to participate in efforts to provide aid--and facilitate mutual support for--communities and organizations. This also includes participating in advocacy efforts to secure relief for people who are unable to work or are sick and quarantined.
- Finally, we have closed our physical office and have settled into working from home until at least April 12. In the meantime, we've forwarded our phone lines and are available if you need to reach us.

We have been blown away by all of the mutual aid resources popping up around the state and the country as a response to COVID-19. We want to share some of the most comprehensive and helpful links that we've found. Note that these resources are growing daily, so please continue to check back! Many also include area-specific resources inside the larger documents.

- [Coronavirus Resource Kit](#)
- [Collective Care is our Best Weapon Against COVID-19](#)
- [Boston COVID-19 Community Care](#)

We have also endorsed the following four recommendations for elected officials and are encouraging constituents to contact their electeds to take action immediately.

1. Ensure immigrants have safe access to testing and treatment.
2. Ensure everyone has access to safe quarantine.
3. Pass emergency paid sick time.
4. Enact a moratorium on evictions, foreclosures, and termination of public benefits.

For more information, and to find contact information for your local officials, [please visit this document](#).

Weekly Virtual Office Hours

Wednesdays at 1:00pm
Virtual via Zoom

Join Chapter Director Deb Pasternak on Zoom for [weekly office hours](#), every Wednesday from 1:00pm to 2:00pm starting on April 1st. This is an opportunity to check in with staff and connect as a community as we move forward.

Join Our Office Hours

Clean Energy & Climate

Postponed: East Bridgewater Climate Advocacy Training

The East Bridgewater Climate Advocacy training was originally scheduled for April 29th at 5:45pm, but **it is being postponed and will now occur at a later date**. [Please RSVP](#) to stay informed.

Stay Updated



Stop the Money Pipeline Campaign Update

The [Stop The Money Pipeline campaign](#) is calling on banks, insurance companies, asset managers, and institutional investors to stop funding, insuring and investing in the climate crisis.

The **Holding Asset Managers Accountable** action that was planned for March 25th has been postponed and will now occur digitally at a later date. An announcement will be made with new details in the coming weeks.



Earth Day Climate Strike Update

In light of the COVID-19 crisis, an in-person mass strike is no longer being organized. Instead, a series of digital actions are planned. More details will be announced in the coming weeks. [Please RSVP](#) to stay informed of the plan as it continues to evolve. In light of the COVID-19 crisis, an in-person mass strike is no longer being organized.

RSVP Here

Transportation Matters

Transit Agencies Need Support

State transit agencies have been hit hard by a drop in [ridership levels and loss of farebox revenue](#) due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Transit connects people to essential services. Many people including those working in our health care, public safety, food and emergency service system rely on transit. Without federal financial assistance, many transit agencies will be forced to dramatically reduce or eliminate critical service both during and after this public health crisis. Sierra Club joined several other organizations from across the nation in sending [this letter](#) asking Congress to take action. [Click on this message from our partners at Transportation for America](#) to tell your [member of Congress](#) to include funding for public transit in any relief package.

House Passes Transportation Package

This month, the Massachusetts House of Representatives passed two transportation bills. A finance package that will provide up to \$622 million annually in additional revenue for transportation projects and an \$18 billion bond bill that authorizes spending on transportation projects and infrastructure over the next 10 years. These bills include new investments in MBTA, regional transit authorities, and rural transit and designates funding for municipal roadways and bridges, regional rail and transit, and improvements in pedestrian and biking infrastructure.



You responded to the Sierra Club call to action and asked your Representative to vote in support of these bills. Thank you. You can read more about the bills [here](#) and [here](#). We hope the Senate will take up these bills in the coming months and we will be working to strengthen provisions that expand and improve our transportation system.

Every Year is an Election Year

Election Updates

During this time The Sierra Club Massachusetts Chapter is encouraging everyone to [vote by mail](#). You'll need to [download an application](#) and send it to the election official at your city or town hall. In the wake of the COVID-19 crisis, we are also encouraging state legislators to expand options to vote by mail, such as passing bill [HD.4957 \(Mark/Sabadosa\)](#) so that no voter is forced to choose between their health and their right to participate in our democracy. The four Special Elections originally scheduled for March 31st have been [postponed](#); the Senate Special Election will now be held on May 19th, and the House Special Election will now be held on June 2nd.

Stand in Solidarity

Emergency Paid Sick Time For All Workers

Sierra Club Massachusetts Chapter is a member of the [Raise Up Massachusetts](#) (RUM) coalition, which normally focuses its campaigns on the [Fair Share Amendment](#) and [Corporate Fair Share](#). In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, RUM has directed all its attention on writing policy for emergency paid sick time, which would guarantee all workers at least fifteen additional work-days (120) of job-protected paid sick time for immediate use during the COVID-19

outbreak. A fact sheet with more information will soon be available to the public. Please help us protect millions of people during this pandemic by sharing [this Facebook post](#) or [Twitter post](#).

Share on Facebook

Share on Twitter

Read the [Sierra Club Statement on Relief Package & Need for Economic Stimulus](#) and [COVID-19 National Emergency Declaration: Put People First](#).

Chapter Committee and Team Meetings

Executive Committee Meeting

Thursday, April 16 at 6:30pm

Virtual Meeting

The monthly meeting of the Executive Committee. Details for joining the meeting will be announced soon.

RSVP Here

Plant-Based Planet Team Meeting

Wednesday, April 29 at 7:00pm

Virtual Meeting

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. Details for joining the meeting will be announced soon.

RSVP Here

Friend and Partner Events



MCLA'S SPRING SEMESTER GREEN LIVING SEMINAR:

ENVIRONMENTAL POLLUTION

THURSDAYS AT 5:30 PM – FEIGENBAUM CENTER FOR SCIENCE AND INNOVATION RM 121

Green Living Seminar Series 2020

Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts

Every semester the Green Living Seminars center around a different topic, timely and relevant in current sustainability issues. Presented by the Environmental Studies Department and the MCLA Berkshire Environmental Resource Center. Due to MCLA's one week cancellation of classes following spring break, this presentation will be held as an online webinar via Skype.

PCBS and the Housatonic River

Jim Murphy

Thursday, March 26

[Join via Skype](#)

Learn More

Call for Volunteers: Mass Audubon

Mass Audubon is looking for volunteers to help monitor bird-window collisions this spring. Window collisions kill between [300-900 million migratory birds each year](#), and last year, our pilot program documented [193 in Boston](#) with relatively little searching. We're trying to understand the scale of the problem here, and prove that it's a local issue for future advocacy actions.

Volunteers walk predetermined routes every morning, filling out data sheets, and documenting window-killed birds. Rescuing injured birds is optional but encouraged (and we can often facilitate getting them to Tufts Wildlife Clinic).

Project Details:

Commitment: 1–4 days per week, April 11–June 2

Timing: Saturdays-Tuesdays, any time from 6am-9am

Surveys last around 20-45 minutes and can be done on Saturdays–Tuesdays between 6-9am. Volunteers should be able to commit to at least one weekly survey (2 is ideal). Missing some weeks is no issue.

All volunteers sign up for and attend a one hour training via Zoom. Please email Will at wfreedberg@massaudubon.org with any questions!

Sign Up Here

Our Reading List

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

- [Vineyard Wind executive offers take on delayed start](#) (2/27/2020 The Herald News)
- [State push to promote electric buses faces obstacles](#) (3/3/2020 The Salem News)
- [Weymouth may take state's lead on plastic bag ban](#) (3/10/2020 The Patriot Ledger)
- [Should Massachusetts require all new residential and commercial buildings to be carbon net zero?](#) (3/13/2020 The Boston Globe)
- [Should the state prohibit businesses from selling or dispensing food in disposable polystyrene containers?](#) (3/21/2020 The Boston Globe)

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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