



## Monthly E-Sierran Newsletter

May 2020

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### What's Happening at the Massachusetts Chapter

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#### Digital Organizing at the Massachusetts Chapter

For the last few months, the Massachusetts Chapter has been hard at work transitioning our work fully online. While we haven't been able to meet in person, we have found some creative ways to get together and take collective action.

#### Advocacy Hour Every Wednesday at 5:00pm

Advocacy Hour is your opportunity to take immediate action for environmental justice across the state. Through conversation with Sierra Club staff, learn about timely issues and different ways that you can make a difference. New members and volunteers are all welcome! To find all upcoming Advocacy Hour meetings, check out our [Events Calendar](#).

[View Upcoming Advocacy Hour Events](#)

#### Digital Tools Resources

The ongoing pandemic has necessitated the use of online tools like Zoom, Slack, and Google Docs — a transition which has not been easy for everyone. To help folks get more comfortable with the tools, the Chapter has written a series of guides. The guides are available here:

- [Zoom Guide](#)
- [Google Drive Guide](#)
- [Google Hangouts Guide](#)
- [Google Calendar Guide](#)
- [Slack Guide](#)

#### Digital Tools Trainings

In addition to written guides (available online, anytime), the Chapter is also offering small-group trainings held via Zoom with Communications Associate, Emma Brown. Upcoming trainings include:

**Introduction to Slack**  
Friday, May 29 at 4:00pm

**Introduction to Zoom**  
Monday, June 1 at 6:00pm

[RSVP Here](#)

[RSVP Here](#)

For more upcoming trainings, keep an eye on our [Events Calendar](#).

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## Let's Get Creative!

Friday, May 29 at 1:00pm

This is an unusual time. None of us have experienced a global pandemic, with a sudden and abrupt shift to all-digital working + living. Join us on Friday, May 29th at 1pm to learn about existing online organizing tactics and some of our important campaign goals. Then, let's brainstorm together various ways to engage with individuals, communities, and representatives during this unprecedented time.



While the brainstorming will be focused on our campaign goals around clean energy + climate, the intention is for anyone, regardless of their involvement with Sierra Club, to walk away feeling empowered to make change in their own realm of passion during a pandemic. Human connection, action, and change can continue online, and we want you to leave feeling inspired with new ideas for engaging folks digitally through a variety of means.

[RSVP Here](#)

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## Help Cape Cod Commission Lead on Climate Crisis

Comments due by 3:00pm on Thursday, May 28

For more than 2 years, Sierra Club's Cape Cod Group has been encouraging the Cape Cod Commission to integrate the state's climate policy goals in the Cape Cod Regional Policy Plan (RPP) and to take a leadership role in mitigating (reducing) greenhouse gas emissions and avoiding the worst effects of climate change.

On Thursday, May 28 at 3pm, the Commission is holding a virtual public hearing to consider [RPP amendments](#), submitted by citizen petition, that would do exactly that: They would promote net-zero construction, renewable energy, electrification of buildings and vehicles, tree planting, and other solutions for protecting the Cape's economy and environment (click here for "Summary of Impacts"). Written comments can be submitted by email to [regulatory@capecodcommission.org](mailto:regulatory@capecodcommission.org). Citizens also can testify orally during the hearing. The proposed amendments, information on attending the hearing, and other relevant materials are available [here](#).

[Learn More](#)

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## COVID-19 Recovery and Renewal Week of Action

June 22 - 26

Right now, Congress is debating how to spend trillions of dollars to provide relief and recovery to the many facets of American life impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. The way that money — our taxpayer money — is spent will influence our society and economy for years to come. We have an opportunity and an obligation to make sure that money is spent for the public good — remaking our economy so it doesn't continue to exacerbate inequality and the ongoing climate crisis. Sierra Club is leading a week of action from June 22nd - 26th targeting Congress with a flurry of lobby visits, social media activity, and creative actions. There are two upcoming trainings where you can learn more:

### **Creative Activism | Wednesday May 27 at 8:00pm | [RSVP HERE](#)**

On this training, we'll talk about the role of art and narrative in our social movements. We'll think about how storytelling plays a role in creating lasting change, and get a chance to play

with and experiment with some creative tactics to express the narrative and message of this campaign. We'll all have a chance to work on these creative pieces and share with the group.

**Virtual Lobbying & Grassroots Advocacy | Wednesday June 3 at 8:00pm | [RSVP HERE](#)**

This training will prepare activists for a face to face interaction with their elected leaders! We'll go over the policy asks we're pushing in Washington right now, how to get a meeting, and how to be an effective grassroots lobbyist in virtual meetings. [Click here to see our virtual lobbying toolkit.](#)

You can find more information at [sc.org/relief](https://sc.org/relief).

[Learn More](#)



**Virtual Plant-Based Potluck Dinner**

**Friday, June 5 at 6:00pm**

Eat in with the Plant-based Planet Team! Have fun while we show you how to make a healthy, plant-based dinner. Feel free to ask us questions; we'll be happy to help you.

[RSVP Here](#)

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## Clean Energy & Climate

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**Massachusetts Solar Policy, a.k.a. the SMART Program, needs your support**

**Comments due by June 1**

The COVID-19 pandemic hit as the Baker administration was finalizing a major revision to the solar regulations and incentives. The deadline for public comments has been extended to June 1st. There are several aspects of new proposed policies that need to be improved, and this is your moment to amplify these concerns by submitting comments. [Please go here](#) for more information. Two major concerns are that:

- The proposal does not remove significant barriers to solar for low income residents, renters and environmental justice neighborhoods
- More than half of the 8,200 people employed in solar in Massachusetts have lost their jobs from the beginning of the year through March.

[Submit your Comments](#)

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## Take Action to Halt Weymouth Compressor Station Construction

In the midst of an unprecedented global pandemic, Enbridge Inc. wants to rush construction of a massive fracked gas compressor station in environmental justice neighborhoods in the Fore River Basin of eastern Massachusetts. [Sign this](#)

[petition and post on social media](#) to ask Gov. Baker to put a halt to construction and email [Robert](#) if you want to get more involved.

Sign the Petition



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## Transportation Matters

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### Want to Make a Difference for Clean Air in the Greater Boston Area?

Vehicles are a major source of air pollution and carbon emissions that are a threat to our health. Shifting the public transit bus fleet to electric in the Greater Boston area is a solution that can be implemented today to provide cleaner air and better health for everyone. [Click here to show your support and ask the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority \(MBTA\) to speed the transition to an all-electric bus fleet.](#)



This summer the MBTA will decide on the procurement of a new fleet of over 45 buses. At a time when the pandemic is deepening long standing health and transportation inequities, it is critical that MBTA stop investing in fossil fuel technologies and commit to all electric bus procurements in fiscal year 2021 and beyond. [Tell the MBTA to become a leader in transportation electrification](#) and reinforce its commitment to building a system that is accessible, equitable, and sustainable.

Sign the Petition

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### Provide Your Input on MassDOT's FY 21 Capital Investment Plan (CIP)

Does the draft [FY 21 CIP](#) reflect transportation projects critical to your community? If not, this is an opportunity to make your voice heard. The CIP guides how local and statewide transportation projects are prioritized. It determines funding for new buses and trains, rail expansion, transit, paratransit, accessibility upgrades, roadway improvements, municipal projects, the MBTA and regional airports and transit authorities. Your input will help MassDOT understand the level of community support for proposed projects and ensure that investments align with the needs and priorities of all Massachusetts residents.

MassDOT will hold the last of the six virtual public meetings on May 27 at 6:00 pm. [Click here to join the meeting](#) (Dial-In: +1 872 240 3412 Meeting ID: 893 636 477). Comments can also be submitted using [this online comment tool](#) or emailed to [MassCIP@state.ma.us](mailto:MassCIP@state.ma.us) by June 1.

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### National Stimulus Proposals for Transportation Electrification

Discussions in Congress are increasingly



Join the Webinar

focusing on strategies to help our national economy recover. Several organizations and networks have released proposals and plans with suggestions for how transportation electrification and other smart transportation investments can help achieve these goals. Hear from Gina Coplon-Newfield, Director of Sierra Club's Clean Transportation for All campaign and other speakers about several of these leading proposals. Join us on June 2, 1:00 - 2:00 pm to hear what these proposals have in common, how they differ and their prospects for success. [Click here to register.](#)

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## Every Year is an Election Year

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### Massachusetts Election Kickoff

Thursday, May 28 at 6:00pm

In Massachusetts, most state races will be decided during our September 1st primary. We're making it a top priority to elect new climate champions to the state legislature. This 2020 elections are a critical step to establishing a **climate majority** in the Massachusetts legislature, where a majority of State Representatives and State Senators support urgent climate action. Join our our Election Kickoff to learn about our strategy to support Sierra Club-endorsed climate champions running in local and state races in Massachusetts and win in September. **Please note:** This event is for **members only**, as required by state campaign law. All are welcome, but you must already be or become a Sierra Club member to join (\$15-\$40 per year to join). [Click here to become a member.](#) If you're not sure if you're a member, feel free to email [Jacob](#).

RSVP Here

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## Standing in Solidarity

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### Reject Canadian Hydropower

A longtime ally of the Mass Chapter, the [North American Megadam Resistance Alliance](#) (NAMRA) works to protect rivers and their communities by resisting megadams and associated transmission corridors. NAMRA seeks to: debunk the myth that Canadian hydropower is "clean" and renewable energy, shut down markets for dirty Canadian hydropower by stopping transmission corridors to the U.S., and promote alternatives to fossil fuels and megadam hydropower.

[Sign NAMRA's petition](#) to Governor Baker in Massachusetts and Governor Mills in Maine to stop the NECEC corridor and to NYC Mayor DeBlasio to stop the CHPE corridor.



Sign the Petition

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## Community Support & Mutual Aid

**The One Chelsea Fund:** Outbreaks in Chelsea have spiked these past weeks leading to a

citywide lockdown. Chelsea is home to some of the most vulnerable groups in the Boston region: newly-arrived immigrants, undocumented families, non-English speakers, and low-income workers and families. We're working with our allies at [GreenRoots](#) to raise money to support families in need. [Click here to donate](#).

**Mutual Aid for Lawrence and East Boston:** Two mutual aid efforts coordinated by our ally, Ania Camargo. Last week they supplied groceries to 111 people in Lawrence and 5,000 meals to residents in East Boston. These programs are bringing meals, plants, and food to people in their homes. This [GoFundMe link](#) funds both programs and [Mutual Aid Eastie Fund](#) link goes to East Boston.

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## Chapter Committee and Team Meetings

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### Political Committee Meeting

**Tuesday, June 9 at 6:00pm**

The monthly meeting of the Political Committee.

[RSVP Here](#)

### Executive Committee Meeting

**Thursday, June 11 at 6:30pm**

The monthly meeting of the Executive Committee.

[RSVP Here](#)

### Plant-Based Planet Team Meeting

**Wednesday, June 17 at 7:00pm**

The monthly meeting of the Plant-Based Planet Team. Join to discuss how a plant-based diet can reduce your impact.

[RSVP Here](#)

### Transportation Committee Meeting

**Thursday, June 18 at 6:00pm**

The monthly meeting of the Transportation Committee. Join to discuss and respond to critical transportation issues affecting Massachusetts.

[RSVP Here](#)

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## Friend and Partner Events

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**SPEAK FOR THE TREES**  
Boston

### Friends of Boston's Urban Forest Meeting

**Monday, June 1 at 2:00pm**

Join a diverse coalition of advocates for Boston's Urban Forests to discuss how to preserve, protect, and grow Boston's tree canopy.

[RSVP Here](#)

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## Protecting Massachusetts Forests: Upcoming Webinars

Climate Action Now and Save Massachusetts Forests are sponsoring this series to educate the public about the critical importance of forests for storing carbon to fight climate change, providing critical habitat for native plants and wildlife, purifying air and water, and offering opportunities for nature-based recreation. Yet, almost all of our forests are currently open to

logging and resource extraction. For more information on each webinar, visit [Save Massachusetts Forests](#).

**Paying to cut and burn forests: is this really what we want for renewable energy?**

**Dr. Mary Booth, Director of the Partnership for Policy Integrity**  
Tuesday, June 9 at 7:00pm

RSVP Here

Biomass energy is growing rapidly worldwide due to its inclusion in renewable energy programs that make it eligible for financial incentives, including in Massachusetts. However, despite being treated as “green” and carbon neutral, burning forest wood for energy actually emits more climate and air pollution per unit energy than most fossil fuels.

**Forests and Brain Health: Emerging Research**

**Dr. Susan A. Masino, Vernon Roosa Professor of Applied Science at Trinity College**  
Tuesday, June 16 at 7:00pm

RSVP Here

The link between forests and brain health is a public policy imperative: we face increasing costs for disorders ranging from Alzheimer’s disease to addiction, and forests offer exercise, mindfulness and stress reduction. We are still discovering new species, and forests are a former and a likely future source of new medicines.

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## Our Reading List

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

- [Chairman: Delaying transportation emissions pact a mistake](#) (Boston Globe/SHNS, 5/19/20)
- [Solar power growth, jobs decline during pandemic](#) (Gloucester Daily Times/SHNS, 5/18/20)
- [We need to start using less natural gas](#) (Commonwealth Magazine, 5/16/20)
- [Rev. Vernon K. Walker talks voting rights](#) (Fox25 News, 5/6/20)
- [Ashland consultant says Eversource pipeline project is unnecessary](#) (Metro West Daily News, 5/13/20)
- [What love of our neighbors looks like in the age of coronavirus \(opinion\)](#) by Rev. Vernon K. Walker, MA ExCom member (Dig Boston, 5/8/20)
- [Solar, wind energy struggle as coronavirus takes toll](#) (Telegram Gazette, 5/2/20)
- [DeLeo drops proposed rule making roll calls more difficult](#) (Commonwealth Magazine, 4/28/20)

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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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As we all 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 helping our communities, protecting our natural environment and fighting for a just, clean energy future.

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