



As people across the country protest in defense of Black lives, the Sierra Club recognizes the need to dismantle systemic racism in the United States and within our own organization. We must reckon with how white supremacy -- both past and present -- has shaped our institutions and do the critical anti-racism work necessary to repair the harm done. The environmental movement does not exist in a vacuum, and it is our responsibility to use our power to help abolish systemic racism, which is destroying lives, communities, and the planet.

Monthly E-Sierran Newsletter

July 2020

Take Action for Climate Legislation!

Today, the Massachusetts House of Representatives released their version of the MA Senate's Next Generation Climate bill that passed earlier this year. However, this bill is significantly different from the original Senate version. This new bill, H.4912, most closely resembles Rep. Meschino's roadmap bill, but there are some substantial changes worth noting. This bill is a step in the right direction, but there are also significant pieces missing.

That's why we're asking you to contact your State Representative TODAY! Please ask your legislators to:

- Pass environmental justice protections for historically marginalized and impacted populations in Massachusetts,
- Allow a rapid statewide transition to 100% renewable energy and renewable electricity,
- Accelerate the timeline to reduce our states' emissions,
- And build more infrastructure for electric vehicles.

The House is scheduled to vote by midday on July 30, so time is of the essence.

[Take Action Now: Contact Your Legislator](#)

What's Happening at the Massachusetts Chapter

[Weekly Advocacy Hour: Campaign Updates](#)

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](#).

On Wednesday, August 5th, Clint Richmond, the Chapter's lead on Plastics and Toxics will lead a discussion on plastics reduction work here in Massachusetts. We will discuss two films about plastic pollution: Frontline's [War on Plastics](#) and Story of Stuff's [The Story of Plastic](#). We encourage attendees to view one or both films in advance of August 5th. **If you are interested in watching The Story of Plastic, you must [RSVP to the event](#) so that we can share the link to view the film.**

[View Upcoming Advocacy Hour Events](#)

Blog Post: Climate and Racism

Last month we asked our volunteers to comment on why racial justice is important to them as environmentalists and climate activists. We received a number of great responses, including this [blog post](#) from Massachusetts Sierra Club member Ken McDonnell. Ken writes, "Money and power work to keep our social and economic systems unjust. The rich and powerful extract value from the natural world ultimately to benefit people like themselves. Who pays? Black, Brown and Indigenous Americans, the poor, and other marginalized communities have been paying with their lives for the continued comfort of people in power. "

[Read the Blog](#)

A Changing Climate: Anti-Racism and Boston's Environmental Justice

Thursday, July 30 at 5:30pm

"A Changing Climate: Anti-Racism & Boston's Environmental Justice" will address the topic of how Systemic Racism affects the Boston's climate and environmental work to create disparate realities for Black communities in Boston. Black communities in Boston are disproportionately climate and environmental justice communities, as the projections of all of the greatest climate impacts will drastically impact this community. This is common not only in these impacts, but also within the realm of rampant income & wealth disparities, gentrification & displacement, and many other societal impacts. At the core, each of these come from the same source: Systemic Racism.



**A CHANGING CLIMATE:
ANTI-RACISM & BOSTON'S
ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE**

Join a conversation on how systemic racism disproportionately impacts Black communities in Boston's Climate and Environment.

WHEN: Thurs., July 30th
5:30pm

WHERE: Virtual
Link forwarded following registration

REGISTER: Fill out form or email greenovate@boston.gov



[RSVP Here](#)

Racial Justice Organizing Is Environmental Justice Organizing

Jocelyn L. Travis is an organizing manager at the Sierra Club. She is the former Ready For 100 campaign coordinator in Cleveland, Ohio. Jocelyn recently wrote a [blog post](#) examining the link between racial justice organizing and environmental justice organizing.

"In my more than 40 years of community organizing, I've seen leaders crash when they didn't listen to the people they served and I've seen "solutions" burn when they weren't influenced by the people they affected. Here's the thing: **People know what they need. They just need to be heard.**"

[Read the Blog](#)

Upcoming Plant-Based Planet Team Events

Join the Plant-Based Planet Team for two great upcoming events!



Our Sustainable Kitchen Cooking Class Tuesday, August 4 at 6:00pm

Professional vegan chef Diana Goldman will teach you virtually how to prepare a delicious plant-based dinner. She'll start with a refreshing smoothie, followed by an entree of whole-grain pasta with dairy-free pesto, cherry tomatoes and basil. A list of ingredients will be sent to people who register, so you can cook along with Diana.

[RSVP Here](#)

Educational Plant-Based Potluck Dinner Sunday, August 16 at 6:00pm

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

[RSVP Here](#)

Clean Energy & Climate

BIG NEWS FOR BOSTON

After a multi-year process beginning with authorization by the Boston City Council in 2017, the City of Boston's [Community Choice Electricity plan](#) has finally been approved by the state's Department of Public Utilities, enabling the City to begin implementation. This program will allow the City to purchase electricity on behalf of all residents and businesses, and leverage its purchasing power to provide affordable renewable electricity, moving us closer to becoming a Carbon-Free Boston!

[Research on other programs across the Commonwealth](#) has proven this to be a cost-effective way for municipalities to reduce carbon emissions while increasing demand for renewable energy, and stabilizing consumer rates. This is a victory to be shared amongst many advocates, stakeholders, and members of the public who have participated in the process, with much credit to our partners at Boston Climate Action Network and the Green Justice Coalition who organized a strong campaign to achieve this critical win for the climate and our community. The Massachusetts Sierra Club is excited to continue working with the City of Boston to see through an equitable implementation of the program that: reduces carbon emissions, prioritizes new and local renewable energy projects, provides affordable and stable electric rates, delivers benefits and economic opportunities to

environmental justice communities, and strengthens community protection around electricity supply.

[Learn More](#)

After three-year grassroots campaign, citizen petitioners convince Cape Cod Commission to include greenhouse gas reduction goal in Cape Cod Regional Policy Plan

On Wednesday July 23rd, the Cape Cod Commission voted to develop [amendments to the Cape Cod Regional Policy Plan](#) (RPP) that will integrate a new greenhouse gas emission reduction goal for use in managing and regulating future growth and development across the 15 communities comprising Barnstable County.

The Commission's vote occurred during a hearing sparked by a citizens' petition signed by more than 300 Cape Cod voters. The petition, which included 11 amendments, was filed on April 1, 2019, after more than a year of grassroots advocacy designed to sharpen the RPP's focus on climate mitigation consistent with the state's Global Warming Solutions Act. Typically amended every five years, the RPP enacted in 2019 is now on schedule for a 2021 update.

Keith Lewison, chair of Sierra Club Cape Cod Group, said, "The Commission's vote is a victory for every Cape Codder concerned we are not doing enough to cut our greenhouse gas emissions and address our climate emergency. Convincing the Commission to amend the RPP at an accelerated pace through a first-of-a-kind petition process demonstrates the power of grassroots action."

Rosemary Dreger Carey, an organizer with 350 Cape Cod, added, "After hundreds of activists testified at multiple public hearings, submitted written public comments, and attended demonstrations, we are seeing tangible progress. It is clear that the Commissioners are listening to constituents when they call for the changes we need to face the existential threat of climate change. The vote yesterday shows the Commission's embrace of leadership on climate while serving all of its stakeholders."

Transportation Matters

MA Commits to Electrification of Medium and Heavy Duty Trucks

Massachusetts joined 14 other states and the District of Columbia released in a joint commitment to truck electrification and eliminating toxic air pollution from medium and heavy-duty trucks and buses by 2050. The new MOU calls for 30 percent of new truck and bus sales to be zero-emission by 2030, and 100 percent zero-emission by 2050. Read Sierra Club's [press statement here](#) and the [MOU here](#).

Drive GREEN, Get GREEN!

More rebates on electric vehicles are now available in Massachusetts and the timing couldn't be better. Seeing the impacts of fewer gasoline cars on the road -- clearer skies and less pollution -- is moving more people toward electric vehicles. Plus, electric vehicles receive amazing rebates, require less maintenance and have lower fuel costs. The Massachusetts Offers Rebates for Electric Vehicles (MOR-EV) Program [offers a rebate up to \\$2,500](#) that can be combined with both federal and local incentives, making this the best time to purchase an



electric vehicle. Find how much you can save on your new electric vehicle at mor-ev.org.

[Learn More](#)

Every Year is an Election Year

Massachusetts Voting Options for September 1 Primary

In Massachusetts, most state elections are determined in the State Primary on September 1st, not the November General Election. At the crossroads of multiple crises, **your vote is more important than ever this year**. Cast a vote for our health, our communities, and our planet.

There are three ways to vote this year in the Massachusetts State Primary:

- Vote by absentee ballot/by mail. Ballots must be received by your city/town by Sept 1 at 8pm.
- Vote early at your municipal office (Aug 22-28)
- Vote at your polling location on the Sept 1 Election Day

The safest way to vote this year is by mail. You no longer need a reason to request an absentee ballot (e.g. out of state or sick), so there's no reason not to take advantage of it. Just fill out [this application](#). [Click here for more information about voting this year.](#)

Toxics and Plastics

Virtual Screening of 'The Story of Plastic' and Discussion Sunday, August 3 at 6:00pm



The [Center for Coastal Studies](#), as part of its *Plastic Free July* campaign, is offering a free, on-demand screening of the documentary [The Story of Plastic](#) from July 27 through July 31. The virtual screening is co-hosted by [Sustainable Practices](#), and will be a part of the [Sustainable Practices Sustainability Film Series](#), now in its third season.

The virtual screening will be followed by a live, online discussion on **August 3, 2020 at 6:00pm** with Laura Ludwig, coordinator of the CCS Marine Debris and Plastics program, and Madhavi Venkatesan, executive director of Sustainable Practices, on the local impact of plastic to marine and terrestrial life and what we can do individually and collectively to take action. [RSVP here for the event on August 3rd.](#)

On August 5th, [Advocacy Hour](#) will feature Sierra Club Massachusetts' Plastics and Toxics Lead, Clint Richmond. Clint will deliver a short presentation on plastics reduction work here in Massachusetts, and answer your questions! [RSVP here for Advocacy Hour on August 5th](#) and to receive a link to view *The Story of Plastics*.

Stand in Solidarity

Help Prevent a Tsunami of Evictions when the Eviction Moratorium Expires

Now is one of the most crucial moments of our lives to take action for housing justice. Everybody deserves stable housing — but a tsunami of evictions will push tens of thousands of families in Boston and across Massachusetts



out of their homes when our eviction moratorium expires. The moratorium is set to end on August 18th, and the Massachusetts legislature has a bill in their hands — the Guaranteed Housing Stability Act — that will prevent this eviction crisis if they pass it this legislative session.

Take action in the following three ways to help stop the flood of evictions:

1. [Call your Massachusetts legislators immediately.](#) Thank them if they're co-sponsoring the Guaranteed Housing Stability Act (HD.5166 / SD. 2992), and request that they ask House Speaker DeLeo and Senate President Spilka to schedule a vote on the bill before July 31st.
2. [Email your Massachusetts legislators too.](#) You can email your legislators with the click of a button (no need to open your email account).
3. [Record video testimony for social media.](#) Use this tool to tell the world why you took action to stop evictions and stabilize housing.

Know Your Rights!

Wednesdays at 6:30pm

The Coalition for Social Justice & Raise Up Mass coalition will be running a series of webinars designed to teach people their rights on a wide number of issues. See the full list below — lots of important topics!

- 8/5: Worker Safety & Health
- 8/12: Food Assistance
- 8/19: Voting Rights
- 8/26: Dealing with the Public
- 9/2: College Students

[RSVP Here](#)

Chapter Committee and Team Meetings

Transportation Committee Meeting

Thursday, July 30 at 6:00pm

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

[RSVP Here](#)

Executive Committee Meeting

Thursday, August 13 at 6:30pm

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

[RSVP Here](#)

Plant-Based Planet Team Meeting

Wednesday August 19 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](#)

Friend and Partner Events

“Who Speaks for the Trees?”: How Forests that Store Carbon Can Help Save the Planet

Wednesday, July 29 at 6:00pm

Over the past four decades, forests have moderated climate change by absorbing about one-quarter of the carbon emitted by human activities. Forests are a vital part of the carbon cycle, storing and releasing this element in a dynamic process of growth, decay, disturbance and renewal. At this free program you can learn what forest management strategies are most successful in solving the climate crisis – and why! Program Speakers include Dr. William Moomaw, PhD. and Dr. Sam Davis, PhD.

RSVP Here

How Big Banks Fuel the Climate Crisis: Part 2

Thursday, July 30 at 12:00pm



Join our partners [Stop the Money Pipeline](#) tomorrow for a webinar to pull back the curtain on bank greenwashing, from their fossil fuel policies to their public statements. Learn about who's financing fossil fuel companies active in your community, and how local activists are fighting fossil fuel finance. You don't need to have attended Part 1 to join this webinar - but you can [watch a recording of it here](#) if you choose.

RSVP Here

Our Reading List

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

- [The Natural Gas Divide](#) (Grist 7/15/20)
- [States set goals to jump-start transition to electric trucks](#) (MetroWest Daily News/Associated Press 7/19/20)
- [State lawmakers call for action on wind farm](#) (Cape Cod Times 7/20/20)
- [AG rejects Brookline's ban on oil, gas pipes in new buildings](#) (Boston Globe 7/21/20)
- [Liberal, progressive — and racist? The Sierra Club faces its white-supremacist history](#) (Washington Post 7/22/20)
- [Bluebikes will expand into Arlington, Chelsea, Newton, Revere, and Watertown](#) (Boston Globe 7/26/20)
- [Send Ed Markey back to the Senate](#) (Boston Globe Opinion 7/28/20)

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!](#)

The [COVID-19 crisis](#) has not passed and continues to [disproportionately harm](#) Black, Indigenous, and Latinx people and other communities of color. The pandemic has revealed how the communities hardest hit are often the same communities that suffer from high levels of pollution and poor access to healthcare. The fight for environmental justice cannot be separated from the fight for racial justice.

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