



March 2016

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**Dear Members + Supporters**



We live in a state known for environmental leadership, yet we argue over solar caps and net-metering rates while solar projects are shuttered or put on hold. We debate the merits of forcing electricity ratepayers to pay \$8 billion to construct natural gas pipelines, while [new research from Harvard](#) suggests the U.S. is responsible for a huge spike in global methane emissions. We consider the environmental and economic impacts of importing hydroelectricity from Canada, while our own offshore wind resources-labeled the "Saudi Arabia of wind"- remain unutilized.

The Sierra Club is working hard to address these issues, but we need your help. **March is our fundraising month, please give** and help keep our work going. Thank you.

Keith Burrows  
Chair, Greater Boston Group

**The Fight for Solar Continues**



Electric utilities continue to push legislation that will gut our solar industry, shortchange our clean energy future and put 15,000 solar jobs at risk. Read our letter to legislators [here](#).

We issued a call for help last month and thousands of you responded - thank you! **Your calls and letters made a difference** in getting 100 State Reps to sign onto a letter to House and Senate leaders calling for strengthening, not gutting, our state's solar energy industry. See press coverage [here](#) and [here](#).

**Action Alert: Solar Still At Risk**



**Let's keep the pressure on. Send a message to your State Rep.** that you want Massachusetts to make it easier, not harder, for residents, businesses and municipalities to go solar.

**Join Our Clean Energy Action Brigade**



The #1 thing legislators care about is YOU - their constituents. But so few people contact their state legislators that it doesn't take much to get their attention - literally 5 phone calls on an issue is a big deal.

This spring the legislature will be debating numerous energy policies - some we will like, some we will strongly oppose. **We need all hands on deck.**

**Will you join our Clean Energy Action Brigade?** That means when we need you, you pledge to put in a call to your legislator. We'll provide the talking points and any background you need. If you're willing to play this critical role in making our democracy work for us, click [here](#) and Outreach Coordinator Kevin O'Brien will be in touch.

**No, Electricity Customers Should Not Pay for Fracked Gas Pipelines**



The Mass. Department of Public Utilities (DPU) recently decided that electric ratepayers - which includes us all - could be liable to pay for the new high-pressure pipelines planned to bring fracked gas from the midwest - at an estimated cost of \$8 billion. Now the utilities are requesting that money. At recent DPU hearings, the Massachusetts Sierra Club testified against both the [Eversource](#) and [National Grid](#) petitions.

**Please join us at the next public hearing at Walpole High School on Monday, May 23, at 7:00 PM.**

**Six More Towns Resolve to Support the Gas Leaks Bills**



Elected officials in Medford, Quincy, Reading, Wellesley, Weston, and Worcester have now resolved to support [H.2870](#) and [H.2871](#), joining 21 other towns representing almost 30% of our state's residents. Your town can join too - with you help.

**ACTION:** Utilities must move faster to repair the 25,000 gas leaks in Massachusetts. [Call your legislators](#) and ask them to vote in support of [H.2870](#) and [H.2871](#)!

**ACTION:** [Ask your local elected officials](#) to join these 27 cities and town to adopt resolutions supporting [H.2870](#) and [H.2871](#). For materials, contact Ed Woll at [ewoll@sierraclubmass.org](mailto:ewoll@sierraclubmass.org).

**Meetings + Events**

**"Quiet Season" Walking Tour in Franklin Park**

Saturday, March 26, 2:00-3:30 PM  
*Free, but must register by 3/24*  
Organized by the National Service Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site, to register, email [Mark\\_Swartz@nps.gov](mailto:Mark_Swartz@nps.gov) and provide number of people in your party. Go [here](#) for more info.

**COP21 "Unconference"**

Tuesday, March 29, 8:30-Noon  
*50 Milk Street, 17th Floor, Boston*  
Sierra Club is a proud partner of the U.S. Green Building Council's [COP21 Paris Climate Talks Unconference](#). Join local experts from a variety of organizations and firms, including panelists who attended the historic December 2015 United Nations Congress of the Parties in Paris. [Register here](#).

**Executive Committee Meeting**

Saturday, April 2, 10:00-12:30 PM  
*Chapter Office, 294 Washington Street entrance, Suite 417, Boston (ring bell in upper right corner of entrance.)* All are welcome. Contact Cathy Buckley [chapter-chair@sierraclubmass.org](mailto:chapter-chair@sierraclubmass.org).

**Transportation Committee Meeting**

Tuesday, April 5, 6:30-8:30 PM  
*Chapter Office, 294 Washington Street entrance, Suite 417, Boston (ring bell in upper right corner of entrance.)* All are welcome. Contact John Kyper [jkyper47@gmail.com](mailto:jkyper47@gmail.com).

**Greater Boston Group Meeting**

Tuesday, April 12, 6:00-7:30 PM  
*Chapter Office, 294 Washington Street entrance, Suite 417, Boston (ring bell in upper right corner of entrance.)* All are welcome. Contact Keith Burrows [keithburrows@gmail.com](mailto:keithburrows@gmail.com).

**Arnold Arboretum Tree Spotters Needed**

Thursday, April 14, 2016, 5:00-7:30 PM (*training session*)  
If you enjoy learning about plants and their unique characteristics, you can contribute to science as a participant in the Arnold Arboretum's Tree Spotters Program. Contact Suzanne Mrozak, Tree Spotters Volunteer Coordinator [TreeSpotters@fas.harvard.edu](mailto:TreeSpotters@fas.harvard.edu) and go [here](#) to read more about it.

**Democracy Awakening Rally**

April 16-17, Washington, DC  
On the weekend of April 16-17, thousands of people from over 170 organizations are mobilizing in Washington, DC for Democracy Awakening. Amid the blossoming cherry trees, we will demand a re-awakening of our democracy where every vote is heard and counted, and money doesn't buy access and power. Democracy Awakening presents an opportunity for Sierra Club members to stand alongside those from civil rights, labor, reform, and economic, racial and social justice movements. RSVP [here](#) for the Rally for Democracy on Sunday, April 17th. For more info and about weekend events and potential buses, go to <http://democracyawakening.org/>.



**Do Good and Go Solar with Sungevity**

Solar costs have come down and government incentives have made the installation of solar panels an even smarter financial decision. You can now install a solar system on your rooftop for a fraction of what it used to cost. Within minutes after installation, you'll become a clean-energy producer, even selling power back to your electric company.

**Learn more.** Special Offer - Sign up [here](#) and you'll receive a \$750 cash gift card and Sierra Club receives \$750, too. Note that you must use the [link](#) to obtain the gift card and Sierra Club donation. Request your quote now and find out how solar is more affordable than ever!



**What Will Be Your Legacy?**

Ensure your legacy by making a gift to the Massachusetts Sierra Club in your will or trust by beneficiary designation. Planned gifts are particularly important to the Chapter as they provide significant resources to continue conservation activities over an extended period of time. For more information on naming the Massachusetts Chapter as a beneficiary of a bequest or on creating life-income gifts, call (800) 932-4270 or email [giftplanning@sierraclub.org](mailto:giftplanning@sierraclub.org).

**Please Donate and Help Our Advocacy Here in Massachusetts!**



March is our fundraising time, please give and help us work to protect the environment here in our beautiful Commonwealth.

**Your gift directly supports our advocacy here in Massachusetts!**

We are looking to raise **\$20,000** by March 31st to meet our goal. Please give today. Thank you!

**The Sierra Club Opposes the Trans-Pacific Partnership**



The Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) only serves the wealthy corporations who wrote it, would run it, and would make massive profits from it. It will cause systemic environmental destruction and push even more good U.S. jobs overseas where workers are often paid very little to work under poor conditions. **The Sierra Club has taken a strong stance against it.** Our Chapter Chair was joined by the Local 201 Union last month on a Northeastern University panel to present the effects of the TPP on local jobs, the economy, climate and our environment.

**ACTION: Tell Congress to Vote NO on toxic TPP!** Congressmen Kennedy, Moulton and Neal have yet to come out against it. If you live in their districts, it is particularly important that they hear from you.

**Plastic Pollution - State legislation: Reducing versus Recycling**



Senator Michael Moore and Rep. Mark Cusack held an informational briefing at the State House on their bill H.646.

**The good news:** the bill would implement a fee on all beverage containers including those that would have been covered in the expanded bottle bill. The fee would be used to fund recycling improvement projects.

**The bad news:** the fee is temporary (3 years) and the bill repeals the existing container deposit system. Studies by the Container Recycling Institute have shown that such a system is nowhere near as effective as deposits in improving the quantity and quality of recycling.

**ACTION: We cannot just recycle our way out of a problem.** We need to reduce plastic consumption. Call your legislators and tell them you oppose H.646.

**Reducing Plastic Bags Locally**



Congratulations Bridgewater, the 19th community to restrict plastic bags in Massachusetts! On

March 8th, the Bridgewater Town Council passed an ordinance to eliminate single-use plastic shopping bags. The Sierra Club supported the Bridgewater Green Committee in this effort. We are currently involved in several municipal campaigns that address plastic pollution and promote sustainable packaging. With your help we will have more such victories in 2016! Visit our plastics page on our website to learn more and **please use a reusable cloth bag and say no to plastic!**

**Love Thy Nature Film Narrated by Liam Neeson**

Wednesday, April 20, 6:00-7:30 PM, *free but must RSVP.*

*Fort Point Room, Atlantic Wharf, 280 Congress Street, Boston*



**Love Thy Nature** with Liam Neeson narrating as the voice of Sapiens, takes viewers on a cinematic journey into the beauty and intimacy of our relationship with the natural world, leaving audiences inspired to connect with nature. You may view the trailer [here](#). All are welcome but please RSVP. **Organized by the Chapter's Greater Boston Group.**

TO DATE, THE SIERRA CLUB HAS HELPED:

1,224 HOMES GO SOLAR