

M A S S A C H U S E T T S

# SIERRAN

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Fall 2009

Reaching More Than  
20,000 Sierra Club Members  
in Massachusetts

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## Massachusetts Sierra Club

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Annual dues in the Sierra Club are \$39, of which \$1 is for a subscription to the Massachusetts Sierran.

## BIOMASS ENERGY: THE BURNING QUESTION

Letter from the desk of James McCaffrey, Director

**B**iomass is all the rage in the energy policy sector these days. Nationwide, dozens of large-scale plants are being proposed as a necessary "part of the mix" for the renewable energy future and a way to combat global warming. But is biomass energy truly renewable, or even remotely environmentally friendly? To understand what's at stake, besides 100-year-old trees being combusted for energy in a mere 17 seconds, we need to understand why there is such a rush to burn biomass now in the commonwealth and nationwide.

The problem began with biomass being promoted, by some environmentalists and the energy industry alike, as a potentially "carbon-neutral" renewable energy source. As recent laws were being drafted, few questioned these assumptions, let alone what the actual environmental impacts or policy implications would be of such laws.

### What is Biomass?

Biomass can be defined as organic matter used to generate energy — everything from whole trees to animal waste to algae crops. Most biomass facilities use combustion to release energy. They burn materials. Some facilities even burn construction and demolition debris, or "C&D." These are materials salvaged from the construction industry, but burning these substances release not only carbon dioxide, but an airborne toxic stew of lead, mercury, cadmium, arsenic, and dioxins.

Certain forms of biomass, particularly those with very short growth cycles, could theoretically be "carbon neutral" (a net carbon release of zero) over time. These include certain types of algae crops, or farm crops such as switch grass, woody herbaceous crops, and short rotation woody crops such as willow. While these crops may provide some interim energy capacity for society, the Sierra Club is increasingly concerned over utility-scale facilities that

*continued on page 6*

ON THE COVER: Hiking in the autumn Photo by Elisa Campbell

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Opinions, unless otherwise stated, are of the author only; positions adopted by the Sierra Club are identified as such.

Circulation of the Massachusetts Sierran is over 20,000 outdoor-minded, environmentally aware readers.

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# Forest Site Visits

by Elisa Campbell

The Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) has responded to significant criticism of its forest cutting practices in the State Forests by setting up a process for public information and input about the forests and forestry. The “Forest Visioning” process was defined and is being run by an independent mediation team, the Massachusetts Office of Dispute Resolution.

The Chapter’s director, Jay McCaffrey, has attended several of the “stakeholder” meetings set up by MODR. Partly because I currently serve on the DCR’s Stewardship Council, I have not attended the stakeholder meetings; however, always interested in seeing forestry in action and learning about it, I have attended three of the “site visits” that were scheduled with the meetings.

The first site visit was to the Federated Womens Club State Forest, which is northeast of the Quabbin Reservation. That visit coincided with a “Forum” at Harvard Forest in Petersham in mid-May that was designed to present a baseline of information about the different types of forestry to the participants in the Visioning process. Those of us who braved the insects and wet ground were able to go with Chuck Perna, regional supervisor, to see three different types of forest management approaches, plus a non-cut area, in close proximity. We saw a couple of acres each that had been high-graded (the best trees taken out, the others left to grow — not recommended by anyone), selectively cut (taking some trees but leaving other trees that can both grow into bigger and better timber and provide seeds for future generations of high-quality timber), group selection (to us non-foresters, a very small clear cut), and not cut. Experienced foresters who happened to be on the trip immediately recognized the high-graded area; I’m not sure the rest of us would have known what to look for compared to the selective cut. The photo shows the area that was not cut.

The second site visit, on June 23, was to the Leominster State Forest. Perna happens to be in charge of this forest, too — and he turns out to be an excellent tour guide. The accompanying picture shows him with some members of the group that came on the tour — as you can tell from the clothes, the weather was threatening to rain again — in an area where pines had been thinned.

The third site visit was to Savoy State Forest, in the Berkshires. This is one of the areas that



Federated Womens Club State Forest

Photos by Elisa Campbell

has generated the most controversy. There is a large area that was cut and most of it became the “landing” for the timber that was cut (see photos on page 12). Next to it was another area that had been cut a few years ago and where “regeneration” (new growth of native trees) is growing very well. The landing area had recently been cleaned up (the branches on the ground had been removed and the area graded and covered in hay); some people complained that DCR had cleaned it up just prior to the site visit. DCR has said that many things went wrong at Savoy, including the fact that the regeneration that existed in the now-open area was demolished by the cutting and equipment used to cut the trees (mostly Norway Spruce, a non-native tree planted in “plantations” six or seven decades ago) in between the strips of regeneration. We also went to another area in Savoy where there had been a selective cut. I did not get any usable photos there, unfortunately. Also unfortunately, I had to leave the tour before it went to the third site that was scheduled, an old cemetery.



Leominster State Forest

In the meantime, McCaffrey and I, with two other environmentalists, went to October Mountain State Forest, one of the other sites

*continued on page 12*

# Learning about Recycling from Nantucket

by Lillian Dunlap

In 2007, the most recent year for which comparative information is available, Nantucket achieved a recycling rate of nearly 90 percent. Compare this to the state's median for households of 26.1 percent, or Boston's 11 percent.\*

How did they do it? Necessity helped.

Nantucket Solid Waste Recycling and Composting Facility incorporates the traditional recycling of paper products, plastic, metal, and glass with the more challenging and non-traditional recycling of items such as tires, clothing, mattresses, furniture, and even large home appliances such

*Composting and recycling not only help shrink landfills and preserve natural resources, but they are also believed to be essential for the reduction of carbon emissions.*



Photo by Mohamed Nabulsi

During the early 1990s, Nantucket, along with many Cape Cod towns, experienced a significant population increase that put a strain on local resources. By 1994 the island was confronted with serious issues regarding its management of solid waste material and the state of Massachusetts mandated that Nantucket start shipping its waste off the island for disposal elsewhere, a move which would have significantly increased residents' trash bills.

As an alternative to this costly option the island's approximately 10,000 year-round residents decided instead to rethink their approach to waste management. In 1996 in conjunction with Rhode Island-based Waste Options, Inc., Nantucket began implementation of a complex solid waste disposal program that incorporated landfill clean-up, recycling, and composting to develop the most complete waste management system in the Commonwealth. The

as refrigerators and stoves. The facility also recycles construction and demolition waste and processes yard waste.

In 1999 Nantucket and Waste Options Inc. introduced an innovative composting facility that eventually helped the island achieve a 90 percent recycling rate, by far the highest in the state.

The need for improved recycling rates becomes more urgent as the state's waste production rises. In 2006, the most recent year for which complete data is available, businesses, institutions, and private homes in Massachusetts were responsible for producing close to 13.9 million tons of waste material. This figure equates to approximately 12 pounds of waste produced every day by each of the 6.35 million Massachusetts residents, and it represents a 14.5 percent increase in waste production since 2000.

Composting and recycling not only help shrink landfills and pre-

serve natural resources, but they are also believed to be essential for the reduction of carbon emissions. Landfills are America's biggest man-made source of methane gas, the second most prevalent greenhouse gas found in the atmosphere. More waste in more landfills means more methane gas released into the atmosphere. It's estimated that if we reduced our waste production to 1990 levels, the nation would be able to cut greenhouse gas emissions by 11.6 million metric tons. Increasing the national recycling rate to 35 percent (it is currently estimated at 28 percent) would decrease national emissions by an additional 9.8 million metric tons. These two efforts combined would result in greenhouse gas reductions equal to the current yearly emissions produced by 11 million American households.

While not every community in the state may possess the resources to institute a recycling and composting system as advanced as Nantucket's, they can certainly take a cue from the island and treat its high recycling rates as something to strive toward. The state of Massachusetts has thus far maintained a strong record in the area of recycling, but there remains plenty of room for improvement. Officials across Massachusetts should not only applaud Nantucket's achievements, but reexamine waste management programs elsewhere in the state in search of ways to further improve recycling rates and remain active on this important issue. ❖

*\* Recycling rate percentage reports can vary based on the data set used. The numbers reported here (90 percent for Nantucket, 11 percent for Boston, and 26.1 percent for the state's median) all use the same reporting methodology.*

*Lillian Dunlap is a volunteer on the Chapter's Legislative Action Committee.*

# Massachusetts to Manage its Ocean Resources

by David Dow

As a result of increasing conflicts over the protection and uses of ocean resources and the need to see the “big picture,” the Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA) is developing a plan that is similar to zoning on land. On June 30, EEA released a two-volume draft report on the Massachusetts Ocean Management Plan (MOMP).

## The Massachusetts Ocean Management Plan

The MOMP proposes three general areas in the waters and sea bed within the state’s jurisdiction (between three tenths and three miles offshore). Those areas are: a Prohibited Area (Cape Cod Ocean Sanctuary) in which a variety of activities are banned by the Ocean Sanctuaries Act; a Renewable Energy Area in which large-scale wind farms are permitted (off of the Elizabeth Islands and No Mans Island); and a Multi-use Area which occupies most of the state jurisdictional waters.



Photo by Ms. Caroline Theberge courtesy of NOAA

The Multi-use area will allow small-scale community wind farms (fewer than 10 wind turbines), commercial fishing and saltwater angling, aquaculture, sand and gravel extraction for beach renourishment, marine transportation and recreation, and other water-dependent uses. Within the Multi-use area, some important and sensitive areas will be given environmental protection. They will be designated

as Special, Sensitive and Unique habitats (SSU) or given a high score on an Ecological Valuation Index (EVI) for wildlife. SSUs include eelgrass beds and intertidal flats, while EVIs address core habitats for North Atlantic right whales, roseate terns, and long-tailed ducks plus nesting areas for Leach’s storm petrel and colonial waterbirds.

Within the Multi-use areas human activities and environmental protection will be balanced through siting and performance standards for various human uses and the Massachusetts Environmental Policy Act (MEPA) process to “avoid, minimize and mitigate environmental damage to the maximum extent feasible.”

The funds generated from the use of public bottom lands for renewable energy projects will go into an Ocean Resources and Waterways Trust Fund which will be operated by EEA. Under

MOMP most of the large scale wind farms will be located within federal jurisdictional waters (between three and two hundred miles off shore). Facilities in federal waters are regulated by the US Minerals Management Service (MMS) which is within the Department of Interior. MMS will share 27 percent of the revenues from large scale wind farms within three to six miles from shore with the state.



Photo by Ricki Pappo

## Beyond Cape Wind: Community Benefits

Earlier in June, the Cape Cod and the Islands Group (CC&I) co-sponsored a conference with the Cape Cod and the Islands Renewable Energy Collaborative to explore ways in which local towns and county governments could receive economic benefits from renewable energy development in the adjacent ocean and be involved proactively in the planning process. The conference was called “Beyond Cape Wind: Community Benefits” and it was a great success.

## What’s Next?

The Massachusetts Chapter and CC&I Group testified at the September public hearings (after the *Sierra’s* deadline) on the draft MOMP report and submitted written comments to the EEA. (The comments are on the Chapter web site; go to [www.sierraclub-mass.org](http://www.sierraclub-mass.org)). The revised MOMP report will be submitted to the legislature by December 30, 2009 and will be implemented after it is approved. MMS plans to develop state task forces of local, state, federal, and tribal officials to provide advice on wind farm siting and coordination of environmental review/permitting processes. It is likely that the regional electrical grid on land will have to be upgraded to accommodate the “green electricity” from these renewable energy projects in the coastal ocean. ♦

*David Dow has been active with the Cape Cod and Islands Group for decades, and is currently its Chair.*

## From the Director

(continued from page 2)

will burn C&D and/or large amounts of trees — much of it harvested from functioning living forests.

One operative word here is “time” — something that we don’t have much of if we are to solve the global climate crisis. A typical utility-scale biomass plant will emit 1.5 times as much CO<sub>2</sub> as a comparable coal plant. If the fuel used is 100 year old trees, it would take 100 years to reabsorb this carbon. Consensus in the scientific community calls for a reduction in CO<sub>2</sub> emissions of at least 2 to 3 percent per year, a goal that is already extremely hard to reach. So a major net increase in CO<sub>2</sub> now is therefore not part of the solution; it’s part of the problem.

The other operative word is “theoretically.” Most data suggesting biomass is carbon neutral ignores externalities like energy needed for harvesting, processing, and transporting fuel. Unsustainable land use practices may release soil carbon. Accelerated and poorly managed harvesting of forests and crops and the conversion of natural ecosystems to fuel farms can increase global warming and degrade the environment.

### It Gets Worse

With the passage of the Green Communities Act and the Global Warming Solutions Act (GWSA) in Massachusetts in 2008, biomass was defined as renewable energy, making it eligible for various incentives to promote its development. Following the adoption of the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative and the GWSA, the commonwealth embarked on an aggres-

sive campaign promoting biomass as a means to meet CO<sub>2</sub> reduction targets, claiming “as much as 1.7 million green tons of woody biomass could be sustainably produced annually in Massachusetts, mostly from forests and forest products industries.” The claims were poorly documented, and widely criticized so the Massachusetts Department of Energy Resources has initiated a study on the impacts of biomass harvesting.

There is at least 165 MW of woody biomass capacity proposed in Massachusetts at this time, with three large-scale facilities (135 MW) already in the permitting stage. In May 2009, the state determined that no environmental review was required for a 47 MW plant in Greenfield that will potentially burn millions of trees. At least two more plants are expected to enter the permitting process, and it is expected the state will not require environmental review for them either. At least one coal-fired power-plant in Massachusetts has proposed converting to biomass in order to take advantage of carbon credits and other incentives.

Instead, biomass facilities should be held to the same level of environmental scrutiny as any combustion-based power plant. Fueling the carbon neutral myth of the energy source is the fact that most regulatory schemes now technically define biomass as “carbon neutral” with emissions from such plants not even counted towards CO<sub>2</sub> levels for any given source. This needs to be fixed, and soon.

### Some Opportunities

There may be some room in our

energy mix for smaller, local combined heat and power projects, which avoid inefficient transportation of fuel stocks by providing distributed power directly to the end users or in places remote from power plants. While some forests may benefit from a better market for low-grade wood for biomass fuel at this scale, we are not confident that regulatory schemes exist at this time to provide the necessary protections from even these projects. Small-scale facilities would need to be carefully monitored and designed as part of a sustainable system similar to that required for Forest Stewardship Council certification.

The Sierra Club has significant concerns over the production of energy from forest or woody biomass and/or the burning of construction and demolition debris. Our concerns include the inefficiency of utility-scale wood-burning biomass energy production, CO<sub>2</sub> emissions and airborne toxins, impact on forest ecosystems and public health, and the broadly debated assumptions regarding “carbon neutrality” of such operations.

As the *Sierran* goes to press, we face many of these same challenges and loopholes at the federal level as Congress prepares to pass a national energy bill. Will harvesting limits be set? What will qualify as renewable and what should not? So the burning question remains: Should the state and federal government embark on an ambitious program of incentives and subsidies to promote inefficient carbon-spewing biomass, while brushing aside the devastating environmental and public health impacts? ❖

## Curb Your Paper!

by Molly Fraust

According to the Department of Environmental Protection, we throw away 1.5 million tons of paper each year even though prices for scrap paper are at their longest sustained high in 20 years. Disposed of, that paper costs us \$100 million; recycled, it would be worth \$30-50 million.

Recycling that paper would also reduce greenhouse gas emissions by

928,000 metric tons of carbon equivalents and save approximately 22 trillion BTUs of energy. That’s the energy equivalent of 3.8 million barrels of oil or 177 million gallons of gas, or removing 318,000 passenger cars from the road. It’s enough to power 212,000 homes.

Recycled paper mills in the northeast compete with overseas markets for precious feedstock. Paper mills in Haverhill and Fitchburg used 100 percent recycled feedstock to produce new products such as game boards, notebooks, and book covers including the newest Harry Potter book. The

Massachusetts recycling and reuse industry supports more than 1,400 businesses, 19,000 jobs, generates over \$550 million in annual payroll and \$3.5 billion in receipts and generates roughly \$64 million in state tax revenues. ❖

Molly Fraust is the campaign manager for MassRecycle. MassRecycle is a statewide coalition dedicated to promoting the environmental, social, and economic benefits created by reducing, reusing, and recycling waste materials, and by purchasing recycled products. Their website is [www.massrecyclespaper.org](http://www.massrecyclespaper.org)

# Supporting the Environment With Your License Plate

by Susan Lanza

Massachusetts offers several special license plates that benefit the environment.

For years, drivers have had the opportunity to purchase one of three different license plates that benefit the Commonwealth's waterways. Proceeds from the sale of the plates have funded more than \$17 million in environmental protection and education projects throughout the Commonwealth, with approximately \$1 million in grants awarded annually. Grants from the Massachusetts Environmental Trust (MET) have been used to: find sources of pollution, restore marine and freshwater habitat, protect endangered species, monitor water quality throughout the state, educate students on environmental issues, and much more.

There is also a new plate — the "Land and Water Conservation" plate — that will support the conservation of land critical to the protection of the Commonwealth's water resources.

For information on all the plates, or to submit your reservation for one of the "Land and Water Conservation" plates, visit MET's web site at [www.MassEnvironmentalTrust.org](http://www.MassEnvironmentalTrust.org); to purchase your environmental specialty plate visit your local Registry of Motor Vehicles or log on to [www.mass.gov/rmv](http://www.mass.gov/rmv) and select "Order Special Plates."

The initial registration fee for the new plate is \$36; the special plate fee is \$40 (\$28 is tax-deductible; \$12 is to manufacture the plate); the total first time cost of the environmental specialty plates is \$76. The renewal fee, due every two years, is \$81, of which \$40 is tax-deductible. ❖

*Susan Lanza works for the Massachusetts Environmental Trust.*

## Examples of Plates

### Right Whale and Roseate Terns

Offered since 1994, this popular plate features the fluke of a northern right whale and two roseate terns. The North Atlantic Right Whale is the state marine mammal and the world's most endangered large whale. Roseate terns are native to Massachusetts and also endangered. Both of these animals are federally recognized endangered species and are dependent upon healthy Massachusetts ecosystems for their survival.



### Leaping Brook Trout

Introduced in 1998 to represent the waterways of central and western Massachusetts. A native to the state's western streams, this popular game fish serves as a symbol of both the pristine water in which it thrives, and the recreational benefits of a healthy environment.

### Blackstone Valley Mill

The Blackstone Valley, running through the central part of the state, was the birthplace of the American industrial revolution. Offered since 1999, the Blackstone Valley Mill Plate highlights the need to restore our urban rivers and streams to enhance their ecology and improve the health of riverfront communities.



### Land and Water Conservation

This plate is being introduced to provide funds for the acquisition, stewardship and restoration of land affecting 9,000 miles of streams and rivers, 1,100 lakes and ponds and over

1,500 miles of coastline. Development near our lakes, ponds, rivers and coasts — and the fertilizer, storm water run-off and other non-point source pollution it brings — is the greatest single threat to Massachusetts waters. ❖

## Massachusetts Chapter and Group Elections

*Your membership number must appear on the outside of your envelope in order for your ballot to be valid.  
(An extra ballot is provided for households with joint memberships.)*

### Voting Instructions and Election Procedures

You elect the Sierra Club leadership each year. In this issue of the *Sierran*, you will find candidates' statements and ballots (on page 10) for four separate Sierra Club Executive Committee Elections: Massachusetts Chapter, Cape Cod and Islands Group, Essex County Group, and the Thoreau Group. All Massachusetts Sierra Club members may vote for the Chapter Executive Committee. You may also vote for the executive committee of the group of which you are a member. Please contact the chapter office if you have a question about your group membership.

*Mail ballots to: **Sierra Club Elections, 10 Milk Street, Suite 632, Boston, MA 02108.** Ballots must be received by 5:00 PM, Monday, November 30, 2009 in order to be counted. Vote for no more than the number of candidates indicated on each ballot.*

In order to validate your ballots, please write your membership number on the upper left hand corner of your envelope. Your eight-digit membership number appears on the mailing label of the *Sierran*. A second ballot is provided for those households with joint memberships so that each member can vote. If you have any questions, please call the chapter office at (617) 423-5775.

### Massachusetts Chapter Executive Committee Candidates' Statements

*(Ballots are on page 10)*

**CRAIG ALTEMOSE** – I am a 25 year-old graduate student studying law and public policy at Harvard University. I am running for re-election on ExCom to continue representing the youth perspective. I have previously served on the Executive Committee of the Sierra Student Coalition (SSC), and lead the SSC-affiliated student state network, Massachusetts Power Shift. I favor immediate, comprehensive, and bold action on climate change. As a member of the MA Executive Committee, I hope to continue encouraging the Sierra Club to advocate for the policies we believe our world and the people on it need (like 350PPM) – not the policies deemed politically feasible in the very short term. Rather, I hope that we can change what is politically possible through our actions and advocacy efforts.

**DAVID HEIMANN** – As Energy Chair I have coordinated comments on such issues as Cape Wind, RGGI, and the current ACES climate-change bill. I also organized the "Continuing The Conversation" offshore wind energy conference the Chapter held at Tufts last December. I serve as Chapter delegate to the Northeast Regional Committee (NERC) and run the NERC Web site, and also serve as Council of Club Leaders delegate.

Chapter strategy has identified energy/global warming and transportation as significant issues. I will move ahead on these issues, including developing tools and programs to expand the use of East Coast wind power and commenting on proposed state and Federal policies and regulations.

I bring many years of ExCom experience and institutional memory, including Chapter Chair and Treasurer.

**DEBORAH HOLT** – I view the Sierra Club as the organization best-positioned to promote positive local and national environmental outcomes through personal activism.

At the local level I have served on the Boston Group and Chapter Executive Committees, a North-South Rail Link strategy committee, chaired the Chapter outings program, led outings for the Chapter, and authored articles for the *Sierran*. At the National level, I am in year four of a five-year commitment chairing the Northeast outings subcommittee.

This potpourri of experience informs my perspective about the Club, its strengths and weaknesses, and how important member involvement is.

I would like to serve a second two-year term on the Chapter Executive Committee. Please vote, and please give me your vote.

**CRAIG KELLEY** – I am running for the Executive Committee of the Sierra Club's Massachusetts Chapter because I'd like to continue to help the Sierra Club lead the nation, and the world, in the direction of true sustainability. The future of environmentalism will, I believe, be not just about preserving wilderness areas or mitigating environmental chemical exposures, but also about promoting lifestyle changes that will allow, even encourage, people to accept a simpler, less consumer-driven lifestyle in order to minimize our individual and group impacts on our world. I hope to help people understand that we simply can't build enough wind turbines, lay down enough high speed rail or recycle enough newspapers to allow us to keep living the sort of resource intensive lifestyle we've become accustomed to.



## Massachusetts Chapter and Group Elections

### Cape Cod and the Islands Group Executive Committee Candidates' Statements

*(Ballots are on page 10)*

**BILLIE BATES** – I have enjoyed working with Sierrans while serving on the ExCom during the last couple of years. I hope to continue to help lead our local Sierra activities to improve the environmental health of our corner of the planet, and beyond.

Although numerous behind-the-scenes responsibilities take up a lot of time, it's vitally important to ensure our strong Cape and Islands Sierra voice continues to be

heard at the local, state and national level. Please take this opportunity to cast your vote for me.

**ROBERT MURPHY** – In the midst of a global recession, I'm especially concerned about environmental justice. In order to protect the natural environment, the Sierra Club must respond to human rights concerns. I support our Cape Cod and Islands Group in this effort.

### Essex Group Executive Committee Candidates' Statements

*(Ballots are on page 10)*

**BILL CARLSON** – This year I played a significant role in the passage of a waste reduction program in Wenham that has resulted in a 25% reduction in solid waste tonnage. Working with another Essex Group member we were able to secure a Salem State intern who provided the necessary resource to jump start stalled waste reduction activities within the town. Significant financial savings to the town and reduced incinerator input are two major benefits. The efforts by Salem to implement a recycling program were also aided by another intern who assisted with awareness/education of town residents. I'd like to do more.

**JOAN LONGWELL** - I am interested in joining as a member of the executive committee for the Essex County area. I have been a member in the recent past, so I have a pretty good sense of how local Sierra chapters operate. I have many interests concerning our environment, but I am particularly excited about working on creating and running outings groups for the spring of 2010.

**VICKI MELCHIOR** – In addition to broad commitments to environmental preservation and sustainability, I am specifically interested in both tracking and promoting technological development of alternative energy use, and to other approaches, large and small, to the problems of global warming. As a recent transplant from the western U.S., I am interested in understanding the relevant problems and politics of the New England area.

**HEIDI ROBERTS** – I have been active as an ExCom member for the last 8 years when we resurrected the group. I have served as the membership chair and in the past have also been the group's outings chair. It is important to keep our group active in the area, so that we can help the Sierra Club with the many environmental issues that need to be addressed. Please vote for me and attend one of our monthly meetings to see how you can make a difference. And help protect our environment and our planet. Thank you.

### Thoreau Group Executive Committee Candidates' Statements

*(Ballots are on page 10)*

**NANCY CARAPEZZA** – Nancy lives in Wayland and has served one term on the ExCom. During one year she was vice-chair of the Group. She is a past president of Massachusetts League of Women Voters.

**JON HARDING** – Jon resides in Sudbury. He is completing his first term on the ExCom, during which he served as Secretary/Treasurer. He was a Group Conservation Chair while living in Long Beach, CA.

**DAN PROCTOR** – Dan lives in Concord and has served as chair of Thoreau Group for the past 2 years. Earlier he served as vice-chair of chapter political committee for 5 years.

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**MAIL BALLOTS TO: Sierra Club Elections**

10 Milk Street, Suite 632, Boston MA 02108

*Your membership number must appear on the **outside**  
of your envelope in order for your ballot to be valid.*

Ballots must be received by 5:00 PM on November 30,2009 in order to be counted.

**BALLOT**

**Massachusetts Chapter  
Executive Committee Election**

*Vote for no more than four candidates.*

- Craig Altemose       Deborah Holt  
 David Heimann       Craig Kelley

**BALLOT**

**Massachusetts Chapter  
Executive Committee Election**

*Vote for no more than four candidates.*

- Craig Altemose       Deborah Holt  
 David Heimann       Craig Kelley

**BALLOT**

**Cape Cod and Islands Group  
Executive Committee Election**

*Vote for no more than two candidates*

- Billie Bates       Robert Murphy

**BALLOT**

**Cape Cod and Islands Group  
Executive Committee Election**

*Vote for no more than two candidates*

- Billie Bates       Robert Murphy

**BALLOT**

**Essex Group  
Executive Committee Election**

*Vote for no more than four candidates.*

- Bill Carlson       Vicki Melchior  
 Joan Longwell       Heidi Roberts

**BALLOT**

**Essex Group  
Executive Committee Election**

*Vote for no more than four candidates.*

- Bill Carlson       Vicki Melchior  
 Joan Longwell       Heidi Roberts

**BALLOT**

**Thoreau Group  
Executive Committee Election**

*Vote for no more than three candidates*

- Nancy Carapezza       Jon Harding  
 Dan Proctor

**BALLOT**

**Thoreau Group  
Executive Committee Election**

*Vote for no more than three candidates*

- Nancy Carapezza       Jon Harding  
 Dan Proctor

## Sierra Club Endorses Seven Candidates in Race for Boston City Council At-Large

In a break with tradition, the Massachusetts Sierra Club has endorsed seven candidates — more candidates than can win the four Boston City Council At-Large seats. This highly unusual move was prompted by the environmental caliber of the candidates. In addition to having excellent environmental qualifications and pledging to further the work of protecting the environment, they have all taken serious steps in their personal lives to reduce carbon emissions.

All had replaced their incandescent bulbs with CFLs, a simple step; most have undertaken weatherization in their homes, and focus on alternative transportation. One candidate has given up owning a car. ❖

## Where's My Community?

In odd-numbered years (such as this one), we try to review and endorse in as many of the 351 municipalities as we can. Our decisions are based on the number of contested seats, Sierra Club resources, how many candidates respond to our questionnaire, requests from members and/or candidates, and if a key environmental issue is being decided in that municipality.

Once we decide to endorse in a race, there are many factors that could lead us to endorse or choose to not endorse a candidate. The Sierra Club's endorsement process takes into account a candidate's record (if they've held public office), public statements and positions, website information, our questionnaire, blog entries, newspaper articles, scorecards, activities on behalf of the environment, and feedback from Sierra Club members. In all cases, when the Sierra Club makes an endorsement, we do so with the full confidence that our endorsee is the best choice for those concerned with environmental issues.

The candidates we've endorsed this year represent some of the most dedicated and knowledgeable we've ever seen. The environment — and particularly global warming and alternative energy — are now familiar to all. Additional important components of environmentalism have also moved to the forefront, such as recycling, toxins, pollution, incineration, land conservation, transportation, growth/zoning/sprawl, resource management, wildlife protection, watershed management, air quality, and environmental justice. ❖

## Endorsed Candidates, 2009 General Election

### Boston

#### City Council At-Large

Ayanna Pressley  
John Connolly  
Stephen Murphy  
Felix Arroyo  
Andrew Kenneally  
Tito Jackson  
Tomas Gonzalez

#### City Council District 8

Michael Ross

#### City Council District 9

Mark Ciommo

### Cambridge

#### City Council

Henrietta Davis  
Marjorie Decker\*  
Craig Kelley  
Sam Seidel  
Denise Simmons  
Timothy Toomey, Jr.  
Minka vanBeuzekom

\* *write-in candidate*

### Watertown

#### Councilor-at-Large

Susan Falkoff  
Councilor District C  
Vincent Piccirilli  
Council President  
Mark Sideris

### Saugus

#### Board of Selectmen

Michael Kelleher  
Sean Maltais

### Somerville

#### Board of Aldermen

Rebekah Gewertz

### Springfield

#### City Council Ward 2

Michael Fenton  
City Council Ward 6  
Amaad Rivera

### US Senate

As of presstime, we're just beginning the endorsement process. Visit our website for updates and endorsement news.

Get Involved! Volunteer to help elect Sierra Club endorsed candidates.

Contact Phil Sego: [phil@sierraclubmass.org](mailto:phil@sierraclubmass.org)

## Springfield

### District Representation Shakes Up the Status Quo

After years of court battles and narrow losses at the ballot box, ward representation finally began this year in Springfield. Formerly, Springfield elected nine city councilors on an at-large basis. Now they'll elect one councilor from each of eight wards and five at-large. This has shaken up the political landscape of the city, and a number of superb candidates have emerged. The two we've endorsed will bring a new focus on environmentalism that's been too often neglected. ❖

## Saugus: Incineration Moves to the Forefront

### Selectmen's race becomes a referendum on increased incineration.

Winner of the 2003 Dirty Dozen Award, the RESCO/Wheelabrator incinerator facility has been trying to win approval for expansion, despite widespread community opposition. Massachusetts has had a moratorium on increasing incineration capacity since 1989. The threats to public health posed by the incinerators' emissions were indisputable. However, under industry pressure, the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection is now considering lifting the state moratorium, which would open the door for expansion of this and other incinerators, belching toxins, heavy metals, and global warming gases. These candidates oppose the expansion of the incinerator and represent the Sierra Club's environmental concerns. Their presence on the Board of Selectmen will help the community and the environment. ❖

# Guarding Our Resources

by Elisa Campbell

Invasive plants, animals, insects and pests are everywhere in the news now. The state is working to make sure that Zebra mussels, a non-native animal that has spread widely from the Great Lakes where it was accidentally introduced, does not get carried into the Quabbin in bilge water or on a boat.

State officials at the Quabbin Reservoir have inspected and cleaned boats owned by fisherman who want to continue fishing in the reservoir. They then put a seal on the connection between the boat and its trailer to identify boats that only enter the water in Quabbin.

The Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) closed the Quabbin in July to private boats after the Zebra mussel was discovered in Laurel Lake in Berkshire County. It was re-opened in August with the inspection and cleaning program. Canoes and kayaks, however, are still not allowed in the two areas where they were permitted; since they are not normally locked to trailers no one has come up with a way to be sure the canoe or kayak hasn't been in other waters.

In the meantime, work continues to find all the trees in Worcester County and beyond that have been

infested by the Asian Longhorn Beetle. Over 20,000 trees were cut down last winter to kill the beetle's larvae; this summer, more infested trees were found during cleanup from last December's ice storm. The trees are in Worcester, Boylston, West Boylston, Shrewsbury, and Holden. No one knows how far the beetles might have spread in the decade or more since they were brought here in shipping pallets. The biggest fear is that people taking firewood to summer camps may have carried the larvae to forests throughout the state and beyond. Officials in the other New England states plus New York, Pennsylvania, and New Jersey are on the lookout.

At the same time, the Emerald Ash borer, another invasive insect, is moving closer, having been found in western New York. Other types of aquatic invasives are infesting our rivers, ponds, and lakes. To help us help protect our lakes and ponds, DCR has issued a free pamphlet about plants, animals, and algae that are current threats, and how to clean boats and other gear to avoid carrying them from one pond or stream to another.



A fisherman puts his cleaned and inspected boat into the Quabbin Reservoir at Fishing Area 2.

Photo by Elisa Campbell

Among the organisms to watch for are: Eurasian Milfoil, Water Chestnut, Fanwort, Curly-leaved Pondweed, Asian Clam, Hydrilla, South American Waterweed, Snakehead Fish, and Rock Snot. Many of these organisms have microscopic larval stages that we can't see; the only prevention is careful cleaning of all gear, including waders.

There is not enough space here to list all the non-native threats to our natural resources. It is up to all of us to protect our resources from accidental transportation of them to new places and to identify any outbreaks that do occur as quickly as possible.

For DCR publications about aquatic invasives, see their web page: <http://www.mass.gov/dcr/watersupply/lake-pond/publications.htm>

Elisa Campbell represents the Sierra Club on the Quabbin Watershed Advisory Committee.

## Forest Site Visits *(continued from page 3)*

causing a lot of controversy, on a private trip with one of the prominent critics. While there were some problems with invasive species and some cosmetic issues, the forestry was not bad forestry per se, and in the areas cut a few years ago regeneration was healthy and significant.

I think the site visits demonstrate that DCR foresters usually do good work, and sometimes make mistakes. I am glad I took the time to see most of the sites so I will know what people are talking about. I encourage all Sierra Club members to inform themselves and ask questions; I am sorry the site visits were not scheduled far enough

in advance for us to publish a schedule for our members.

What's next? McCaffrey will continue to participate as a stakeholder in the Visioning Process for the Sierra Club. As a member of the DCR Stewardship Council, I am waiting to hear the report and recommendations from the overall Visioning Process.



Savoy Mountain State Forest:  
Top: landing area  
Bottom: talking in regeneration area

Photos by Elisa Campbell

# Connecting Population and Resource Depletion

by Anita King

World population, now 6.7 billion, is growing at the rate of 78 million people per year. The United Nations (UN) predicts that by 2050 there will be 9 billion people.

The population program of the Massachusetts Chapter was organized fifteen years ago. It is part of the Global Population and Environmental Program of Sierra Club. We have been supported by grants, individual donations, and in-kind contributions by Smith College in Northampton. The program's purpose is to teach students the connection between growing population and depletion of natural resources. We have volunteers from the colleges and the community.

Over the years we have had 20 lectures with many speakers from important organizations. For example, Thoraya Obaid, the president of the UN Family Planning Program, the President of International Planned Parenthood, and Margaret Catley-Carlson (who is chair of the largest group of water experts in the world).

Pressure on food and water resources

is one of the worst effects of population growth. The UN Food and Agriculture Organization estimates

*One billion people lack clean water and 2.5 billion lack sanitation, therefore 4,000 children die every day from dirty water and every day 25,000 people die from hunger.*

that in 2006 854 million (820 in developing countries) people were undernourished. In his book *The Future of Life*, E.O. Wilson says there are 68 countries in the developing world with 40 percent of their population under the age of 15. He also says "As the population continues to explode water and arable land grow scarce."

One billion people lack clean water and 2.5 billion lack sanitation, therefore 4,000 children die every day from dirty water and every day 25,000 people die from hunger.

Because of competition (such as corn being used for biofuels), high oil prices, and increasing middle classes

in some countries, food prices rose 50 percent between 2006 and 2008. Soil erosion reduces the fertility of crop lands.

We have also drawn attention to the importance of education for women, since women who are educated usually want to use contraception if it is available. Despite significant improvements in education in many parts of the world, in Africa one half of the women still have no education.

As the chair, I write a newsletter three or four times a year. This newsletter goes to people who have attended our events and have asked to be on our list, including students in the Five Colleges (Hampshire, Amherst, Mt. Holyoke, University of Massachusetts and Smith) and community people. We depend on donations from the public as we receive no money from Sierra Club.

Volunteers are always welcome. ❖

*Anita King is chair of the Population Committee; she can be reached at 413-268-9212.*

## Green Certification Audit for State Lands Posted

by Elisa Campbell

In September, the Secretary of Energy and the Environment posted the latest Green Certification audit of forests on state-managed lands on its website.

The original (2004) Green Certification required that management plans be developed for each site, and neither the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) nor the Division of Fisheries and Wildlife (DFW) has completed all its plans.

For DCR, Forest Resource Management Plans (FRMPs) have been completed for the Northern Berkshire District, Central Berkshire District,

Southern Berkshire District, and the Western Connecticut Valley. For DFW, the Forest Management Zone (FMZ) plans have been developed for the Berkshire Highlands and the Taconic Mountains and Marble Valley

The evaluation team recommended that the Commonwealth of Massachusetts not be awarded FSC-endorsed forest management certification as a "Well-Managed Forest" until the Major Corrective Action Requests (MCAR) are "closed." Those MCARs require (1) monitoring of operations and that summaries of the monitoring be publically available; and (2)

complete lists, from each agency, of which lands are excluded from the scope of certification, and why. There must be an opportunity for public participation in making this change to the scope of the certification.

The audit also includes lists of strengths and weaknesses of each agency, and numerous "minor" CARs which the agencies must meet by specified deadlines to receive Green Certification. The Green Certification process thus provides a knowledgeable critique of forestry on our public lands. ❖

The audit is available at: [www.mass.gov/](http://www.mass.gov/) In the Search box, enter Green Certification audit.

See maps of proposed cutting plans at [www.sierraclubmass.org/earth](http://www.sierraclubmass.org/earth)

Alexandra  
"Alex" Oster,  
our wonderful  
administrative  
assistant for  
two years, left  
in July to go  
to graduate  
school.  
We miss her.

Photo by Deborah Holt



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## SPECIAL EVENTS

### GREEN BAG LUNCH SERIES AN EASY WAY TO GET GREEN!

Thursday, Oct 15

Time: 12:00 – 1:00 PM

Join us for our "Green Bag Lunch," our series of get-togethers. Each month features a different environmental topic and offers a way to get involved and make a difference. Bring your own lunch and beverage. We'll spend the first 15 minutes socializing, about 20 minutes hearing about the process, and the rest of the time working on specific action. Sponsored by the Sierra Club's Greater Boston Group. RSVPs welcome but not required. This is a free event and open to all.

For more information: Mary Ann Nelson 617-442-0123 or [manelsonnew@gmail.com](mailto:manelsonnew@gmail.com).

## NON-SIERRA CLUB EVENTS

### SUSTAINABLE SOUTH SHORE WINTER MEETING

November 10

Time: 7:00 PM

Join more than 2,000 volunteers. Sustainable South Shore is a group from various south shore communities who are interested in promoting sustainable livability and growth.

For information, see [www.sustainablesouthshore.org](http://www.sustainablesouthshore.org) or contact Judeth Van Hamm at [one@hullportside.net](mailto:one@hullportside.net)

## Massachusetts Chapter Outings

### QUABBIN RESERVATION FORESTRY HIKE, HARDWICK (E)

October 24 (rain date October 31)

Time: 10:00 AM

"Bogs and beaver ponds – south Quabbin's great north woods" with one of the foresters at Quabbin Reservation. Mostly on old woods roads with some light bushwacking. Sorry: no dogs. Contact Elisa at 413-256-4247 or by email at [campbell@oit.umass.edu](mailto:campbell@oit.umass.edu).

### QUABBIN RESERVATION FORESTRY HIKE, NEW SALEM (E)

November 7 (rain date November 14)

Time: 9:30 AM

A hike guided by the former chief forester of Quabbin. We'll visit some big pines and some recently cut areas, plus take in the view from Rattlesnake Hill. Sorry: no dogs. Contact Elisa at 413-256-4247 or by email at [campbell@oit.umass.edu](mailto:campbell@oit.umass.edu).

*Please note that an outing may be cancelled for insufficient interest up to three days before the scheduled date. If you are interested in an outing, do not wait until the last minute to contact the leader.*

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## Mt Greylock



Mt Greylock, our tallest mountain, is accessible by road again after two years of extensive work. This photograph was taken just after dawn in early September after a delicious dinner and pleasant night in Bascom Lodge, which was built by the Civilian Conservation Corps in 1937.

*Photo by Elisa Campbell*

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## GROUP & CHAPTER MEETINGS

*Unless otherwise noted, meetings are at the Chapter's office,  
10 Milk St., Suite 632, (enter at 294 Washington St.), Boston.  
For all meetings and events, please check the Chapter's website  
for current information: [www.sierraclubmass.org](http://www.sierraclubmass.org)*

### CHAPTER POLITICAL COMMITTEE

October 14

Time: 6:30 PM

Upcoming Meetings: November 11,  
December 9

Politicos, Activists, Organizers, Bloggers, People who like to breathe clean air... The Sierra Club Needs YOU! Do you want to make sure we elect politicians who want to protect the environment? Do you enjoy politics and want to make a difference in elections? The Sierra Club needs your help! The Chapter Political Committee endorses and supports environmental candidates in local, state, and national elections. This meeting would be a great opportunity to see what the Political Committee does. We have openings on our committee and urgently need your help.

Contact [cpc@sierraclubmass.org](mailto:cpc@sierraclubmass.org)

### CHAPTER TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

October 22

Upcoming Meetings: December 17

The highways that are built to sustain our sprawling suburbs add to our pollution and energy problems, and increase our dependence on an auto-centric way of life which is unhealthy, anti-social, and unsustainable. The Big Dig has drained fiscal support away from maintaining the deteriorating highways that we already have and from expanding our public transit infrastructure, beyond a few ill-conceived projects like the "Silver Line" bus and the "Urban Ring" busway. Join us and help the Sierra Club encourage public transit and pedestrian- and bicycle-friendly neighborhoods.

Contact John Kyper, Transportation Committee 617-445-8662,  
[jkyper@sierraclubmass.org](mailto:jkyper@sierraclubmass.org).

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