



**Fiscal Year 2021 Program Report**  
Thanks for making it all possible

# From the director

*Every day, the news delivers more dire warnings about the state of our natural world.*

*Fewer than 400 Right whales remain in the North Atlantic. Fewer than 80 Southern Resident orcas survive in Puget Sound. Nearly 99 percent of western monarch butterflies have disappeared. Climate change is accelerating this loss of wildlife and threatening human life as well.*

*It would be naive to downplay the scale of these problems and heartless not to mourn the losses. But it would be irresponsible to conclude that there's nothing we can do—especially when solutions are all around us.*

*Our country has all of the clean, renewable power we need if we choose to use it. We can accelerate the transition to electric vehicles. U.S. corporations can reduce their use of plastic pollution and their sale of pollinator-killing pesticides. And on and on.*

*Environment Massachusetts and our national network of 29 state environmental groups made progress on all of these issues and more in the past year. None of these problems are completely solved—not even close. But we keep chipping away, breaking down big problems and making them a little more manageable. Incremental change that leads to concrete results is our stock-in-trade because success, one step at a time, is how we build confidence in—and demand for—the changes that are still to come.*

*Our action and progress—all of which is made possible by your support—also provide fuel for hope. Not a passive hope, like that of spectators rooting for their team. Our hope is action-oriented, results-oriented, a hope that serves, as an ally once said, “as a hammer that we use in case of emergency to break the glass, sound the alarm and spring into action.”*

*We're reminded every day about the emergency our natural world faces. And every day, together with you and all of our friends, supporters and allies, we pick up that hammer.*

*Thanks for making it all possible.*



Ben Hellerstein  
State Director

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ben Hellerstein".

# Clean, Green & Renewable Energy

We envision a healthier world powered by clean, renewable energy. With support from Environment Massachusetts' members, our national network bolstered our nation's chances at harnessing our vast renewable energy potential. From our rooftops to our coasts, we keep taking steps toward a future powered by 100% clean energy.

## **Report: After years of advancement in clean technology, it's clear that 'We Have The Power'**

JUNE 16, 2021: It's time for America to move beyond fossil fuels, and fortunately, we have the power to realize our clean, renewable energy potential.

That was the finding of the 2021 edition of our national partner Environment America Research & Policy Center's "We Have The Power" report, released in June. According to the report, America has the technical potential to meet all its electricity needs many times over with wind and solar energy.

"To a visitor from an earlier century, America in 2021 would be unimaginably advanced in all ways but one: We still rely on dirty and dangerous fossil fuels to meet our energy needs," said Susan Rakov, chair of Environment America Research & Policy Center's Clean Energy program.

"But it doesn't have to be that way. This report shows that between the sunshine and the wind, we have the potential to run our society on clean energy, today and in the future."

## **The nation's first major offshore wind farm was approved**

JUNE 8, 2021: The United States recently took a major step toward a future powered not by oil and gas, but by the abundant winds off America's shores.

In May, the Biden administration gave final approval to Vineyard Wind 1, a planned commercial-scale wind farm slated to operate off the coast of Martha's Vineyard. The 800-megawatt wind farm would have the capacity to power 400,000 homes and businesses in Massachusetts.

"Today's historic decision to approve Vineyard Wind 1 is a huge step forward in America's marathon to repower itself with clean, renewable energy," said Johanna Neumann, our national network's senior director of the Campaign for 100% Renewable Energy. "It signals to dozens of other projects that it's time to take off. America only has a tiny amount of offshore wind installed to date, but that will soon change now that Vineyard Wind is first out of the blocks."

Offshore wind projects all along the Atlantic Coast are undergoing a similar review process. Their approval could provide clean electricity for millions more homes.



*Across the country, our national network advanced pro-solar policies and championed solar roof initiatives.*



*Clockwise from top: Environment Massachusetts canvassers spent the summer drumming up support to make Massachusetts the next state to commit to 100% clean energy; Environment Massachusetts State Director Ben Hellerstein spoke during a renewable energy summit back in 2018.*

# Clean Energy Future

Nine states have already set 100% clean electricity targets. Massachusetts can join their ranks and even take the lead by committing to 100% clean heating and transportation. Last year, we championed legislation that could bring the Bay State to a future powered entirely by renewable energy, while we also worked to improve energy efficiency in the state.

## Going door to door to win a clean energy commitment

**JULY 1, 2021:** Today, 1 in 3 Americans live in a place committed to 100% clean energy. We're working to bring Bay Staters into that group.

In June, we relaunched Environment Massachusetts' door-to-door canvassing offices. With a full set of health precautions in place, our staff are visiting neighborhoods across the Bay State to build support for the 100% Clean Act, which would transition Massachusetts to 100% clean electricity by 2035 and 100% clean heating and transportation by 2045.

Our goal is to pass the 100% Clean Act into law before July 31, 2022, the end of the current two-year legislative session. If we succeed, Massachusetts will have the strongest clean energy commitment of any state in the country and we would take a huge step toward a cleaner, healthier future.

This summer, we focused on getting the Legislature's energy committee, chaired by Rep. Jeff Roy and Sen. Michael Barrett, to give a favorable report on the bill. Once that happens, the bill can move on to consideration by the full House and Senate.

We think one of the best ways to convince the chairs and members of the energy committee to advance the 100% Clean Act is to show that their colleagues—other members of the House and Senate members—support it.

That's why we're going door to door in communities across the state. We'll build grassroots support to convince legislators that the 100% Clean Act is a must-pass piece of legislation this session. If enough lawmakers say this bill is a priority, the energy committee will listen.

Our canvassing campaign reached thousands of households this summer, and our staff are continuing to go door to door to build more support for the bill.

And we're not stopping there. Environment Massachusetts is also championing the GREEN Act, which would retrofit homes and apartments to be energy-efficient and fossil-fuel-free, and the Better Buildings Act, which would reduce energy use and harmful pollution from existing large buildings like offices and apartments.





*Clockwise from top: Our staff spoke with legislators at our national network’s “United States Against Plastic” virtual rally; Back in 2019, Environment Massachusetts canvassers began speaking to Bay Staters about saving bees. Last summer, our national network’s canvassers worked to get bee-killing pesticides off Amazon.*

## Conservation: Wildlife

Across Massachusetts, our wildlife and wild places need protection. This year, as bee populations dropped at alarming rates and our plastic waste crisis worsened, tens of thousands of supporters like you took part in campaigns to protect wildlife and the places we love.

### **New restrictions in Massachusetts on bee-killing pesticides will help keep our pollinators safe**

**MARCH 1, 2021:** Too many bees are dying, but Massachusetts is taking action to protect our pollinators from dangerous pesticides.

On March 1, the Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources Pesticide sub-committee approved restrictions on a class of bee-killing pesticides called neonicotinoids, or “neonics.” Bee populations are declining at an alarming rate—in April 2018, Massachusetts beekeepers reported a 64.9% annual loss in colony numbers. Research shows that neonics play a significant role in bee die-offs, but the new regulations will reduce its use by removing pesticides containing neonics from retail stores and by prohibiting the unlicensed use of neonics for lawn care or on turf, trees, shrubs and gardens.

“This is an important step toward curtailing the use of bee-killing neonics,” said Environment Massachusetts Research & Policy Center State Director Ben Hellerstein. “Bees are our best pollinators—and with protections like these, we can start to give bees a chance.”

### **59,000 supporters, 40 lawmakers told Whole Foods to put ‘planet over plastic’**

**MAY 18, 2021:** A massive environmental crisis requires a massive call to action.

That’s why Environment Massachusetts Research & Policy Center, along with our friends at U.S. PIRG Education Fund and the Student PIRGs, delivered a letter to Whole Foods on May 6, 2021—signed by nearly 60,000 supporters, including 40 state lawmakers—calling on the grocer to phase out single-use plastic packaging in its stores. Once an environmental leader that stopped using plastic bags at checkout in 2008, Whole Foods recently earned an “F” for its plastic policies in a report by the environmental group As You Sow.

“Nothing we use for a few minutes should pollute our rivers and oceans for hundreds of years,” said Kelsey Lamp, Protect Our Oceans campaign director for our national research partner Environment America Research & Policy Center. “Companies that rely on single-use plastic must adopt more sustainable packaging options.”

“Whole Foods should lead the way to a future where we put the planet over plastic.”



State Sen. Ben Allen



State Sen. Mona Das





*Clockwise from top: Our national network called for protections for the Tongass, America's largest national forest; The Great American Outdoors Act will protect national parks, including our very own Boston Harbor Islands.*





# Conservation: Special Places

From Yosemite to the Everglades, the wonders of our great outdoors are irreplaceable. But with great outdoors comes great responsibility. That's why, time and time again, Environment Massachusetts has acted to protect our parks and public lands from harmful development.

## The Tongass, America's largest national forest, moved closer to regaining full protection

JULY 28, 2021: Massive old-growth trees that predate the United States itself may soon be spared from logging in the Tongass, the nation's wildest and largest national forest, spanning most of southeast Alaska.

On July 15, the U.S. Forest Service moved to restore protections for the Tongass, a big step toward declaring logging off-limits in millions of acres of this singular wilderness.

"This is great news for the hundreds of species of wildlife that live in the roadless areas, the ancient trees, and the people who live in and visit the Tongass to hunt, fish and enjoy nature," said our national network's Public Lands Campaign Director Ellen Montgomery.

Protections for the Tongass have been contested since 2001, when Americans submitted more than 1.6 million public comments in favor of the Roadless Rule, designed to protect nearly 60 million acres—including 9 million in the Tongass—of still-wild national forests. Members of our national network submitted nearly half the comments.

## President Biden restored Great American Outdoors Act to protect public lands

FEB. 23, 2021: The greatest conservation victory in a generation has been saved from a last-ditch effort to undermine it.

On Feb. 12, 2021, the Biden administration undid last-minute changes that the Trump administration made to the Land and Water Conservation Fund, which provides crucial investments in parks, public lands and even ballfields all across the country. The changes would have created procedural hurdles to gum up the Great American Outdoors Act, passed in August 2020 to guarantee \$900 million annually for land and water conservation projects.

"We're thrilled to see the new administration fix this problem," said Alex Petersen, conservation advocate with our national network. "Americans love the great outdoors, and there's nothing more American than conserving the natural wonders that surround us all."

Passed with bipartisan support, the Great American Outdoors Act secured billions in funding for the places we cherish and visit with family and friends.



*The Tongass is home to some of the world's last intact old-growth temperate rainforest.*



Clockwise from top: In January 2021, our national network's supporters shared their electric vehicle (EV) stories in a series of EV testimonial videos; Volunteers participated in a Renewable Energy Leadership Summit in 2018; Environment Massachusetts State Director Ben Hellerstein leading a clean energy campaign rally in front of the Massachusetts State House in 2017.



# Global Warming Solutions

The climate crisis is here, now. For years, Environment Massachusetts has advanced concrete ideas for reducing global warming pollution. Last year, with our research partners, we moved forward commitments to cleaner transportation, more efficient appliances, and an increased reliance on renewable electricity.

## By 2035, all new cars sold in Massachusetts set to be zero-emission vehicles

DEC. 30, 2020: You can expect to see a sharp rise in the numbers of clean electric cars on 128, 495 and other Massachusetts highways and roads.

On Dec. 30, Gov. Charlie Baker announced plans to phase out the sale of new gas-powered cars in Massachusetts by 2035. Following California's lead, the Bay State is the second in the nation to commit to phasing out gas-powered cars—a commitment that would drastically curtail Massachusetts' carbon pollution, since transportation accounts for more than 40% of the state's emissions.

“We cannot address climate change without phasing out gas-powered cars, and Massachusetts' plan for all new cars to be electric will drive us in the right direction,” said Environment Massachusetts Research & Policy Center State Director Ben Hellerstein. “We applaud Gov. Baker's actions, but we urge him to keep his foot on the accelerator on the road to comprehensive clean energy.”

Environment Massachusetts Research & Policy Center and our national network have long supported the Clean Car standards that served as the basis for Gov. Baker's announcement.

## Climate bill became law in Massachusetts

MARCH 26, 2021: Last January, only one thing stood between Bay Staters and legislation that would promise a cleaner, greener Massachusetts: the governor's signature.

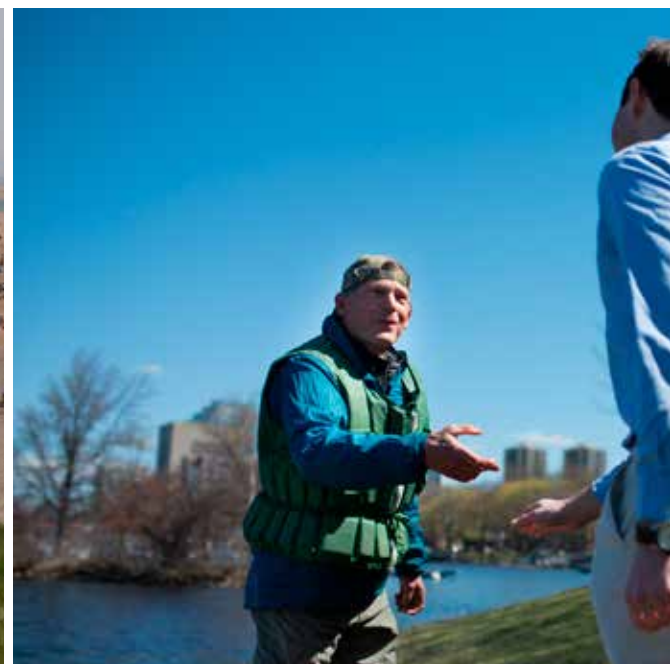
After a series of roadblocks and Gov. Charlie Baker's veto of a climate bill in January, the governor signed a new climate bill into law on March 26. The bill will reduce energy waste from appliances, ensure that at least 40% of our state's electricity comes from renewable energy sources by 2030 and—as Massachusetts has the greatest offshore wind energy potential of every state in the country—expand the Bay State's commitment to offshore wind energy.

“This bill is our first big step on climate action in 2021, but it can't be the last step,” said Environment Massachusetts State Director Ben Hellerstein.

Environment Massachusetts hopes to make 2021 the year our state commits to 100% clean energy.

**We cannot address climate change without phasing out gas-powered cars.**

*Ben Hellerstein, State Director,  
Environment Massachusetts*



*Clockwise from top: Clean Water for America Campaign Director John Rumpler, before giving testimony to Congress on funding needed to replace lead pipes and stop sewage overflows in February 2020; Environment Massachusetts State Director Ben Hellerstein with clean water advocates in 2016.*

# Clean Water & Air

Keeping on the path to cleaner air and water requires constant vigilance—including making sure that we reinstate bedrock environmental protections that we lost under the Trump administration. Below, you'll find a report on our network's efforts to protect Bay Staters from water pollution as well as a blueprint to keeping our waterways safe with clean, green infrastructure.

## Massachusetts passed law to notify residents when sewage leaks into waterways

JAN. 12, 2021: Wouldn't you want to know if a sewer system dumped raw sewage into the rivers and beaches near you? Yeah, we thought so, too.

That's why we applauded when, on Jan. 12, Gov. Charlie Baker signed a bill requiring prompt public notification when combined sewer systems (CSOs) dump raw sewage into rivers and coastal waters. Our advocates promoted the bill throughout the legislative session and at the release of the Environment Massachusetts Research & Policy Center's "Safe for Swimming" report.

"Swimming at the beach is a favorite summertime experience for so many Bay Staters, but clearly we have more work to do to make sure the water at all of our beaches is safe," said State Director Ben Hellerstein.

Environment Massachusetts Research & Policy Center will continue working to hold polluters accountable and keep our waters safe from pollution.

## 'A Path to Cleaner Water': Our research partners showed how repairing infrastructure can help make our waters safe for swimming

DEC. 7, 2020: With billions of gallons of sewage and runoff polluting our nation's waterways and making us sick, something needs to change.

On Dec. 2, our national research partners at Environment America Research & Policy Center published a report on how to fix our outdated water infrastructure. It summarized nearly two dozen case studies on projects that stop pollution—from conventional repairs to "green" infrastructure such as rain gardens.

The report helped educate the public and policymakers as Congress considered major infrastructure investments.

"Investing in water infrastructure works," said John Rumpler, co-author of the report and clean water director with Environment America Research & Policy Center. "We have the tools to stop sewage overflows and make our waterways safe for swimming."

## Member Spotlight:

### Catherine Farrell



None of the work we do would be possible without the support of our members. In this report, we wanted to highlight the story of one of those members, in her own words.

I live in Arlington, Massachusetts, and I enjoy outdoor activities like hiking, running, biking and kayaking. I'm also a political activist. I've worked on environmental issues since the first Earth Day in 1970. I was inspired to go to law school, and my first legal job was as an attorney with the Environmental Protection Agency. I support Environment Massachusetts because I believe the goal of 100% clean energy is a reachable one. Protecting monarch butterflies is also important to me, and I grow milkweed for monarchs in my urban garden. I have grandchildren, a newborn and a 2-year old. I often wonder about what kind of world I'm leaving for them. We need to preserve our planet for future generations.

## Our staff (partial list)

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