



Your Summer Report

To log or let grow: The fate of our oldest forests hangs in the balance

By Ellen Montgomery, director of our national public lands campaigns

Just because a forest is on federal land doesn't mean it is protected from logging. In fact, logging and selling of wood is built into the missions of two federal agencies, the U.S. Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). That means logging is a persistent threat to many forests and trees that should be protected.

Some old forests are being logged right now. The Forest Service and BLM have approved numerous logging projects across hundreds of thousands of acres that target mature and old-growth trees, which store vast amounts of carbon and provide havens for a diverse array of wild plants and animals.

But thanks to hundreds of thousands of people who are speaking up for the trees—including Environment Massachusetts members like you—we've urged the Biden administration to establish protections for these mature and old-growth trees and forests.

Progress on safeguards

In December, the U.S. Forest Service proposed the first nationwide plan to improve safeguards for old-growth forests. The proposal came after more than 500,000 comments submitted last summer urged swift and durable action to protect mature and old-growth forests.

The draft proposal sets ambitious goals for managing and expanding old growth in national forests, but contains major gaps. Notably, it carves out the Tongass National Forest—our largest



Last summer, staff delivered more than 500,000 comments urging the U.S. Forest Service to protect old-growth forests.

old growth national forest—from protection. The proposal also leaves open the option to sell old-growth trees to timber mills that have been logged as part of ecological projects. And it does not offer protections for mature trees and forests, which if not logged, will eventually become old-growth. Our national forests, especially in the eastern United States, have little old-growth remaining.

During a public comment period that closed in early February, thousands of supporters like you asked for stronger provisions that eliminate commercial logging of old-growth trees.

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Thanks
for making it
all possible

Rooftop solar is on the rise in Massachusetts

Massachusetts has no fossil fuel reserves, so we pay for polluting energy from hundreds of miles away. Yet we could harvest clean, renewable energy from the comfort of our homes.

A growing number of state residents are doing just that. Environment Massachusetts' recent "Rooftop Solar is on the Rise" report

After more than 500,000 comments from Americans and members like you called for stronger standards against soot pollution, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) finalized a rule aimed at curbing soot pollution, a major contributor to respiratory illnesses, heart issues and cancer. The new guidelines are estimated to prevent 4,500 premature deaths and 800,000 instances of asthma symptoms annually.

"Air pollution used to be the price we had to pay to heat our homes, commute or produce goods by burning coal, oil and gas," said Lisa Frank, executive director of Environment America Research & Policy Center's Washington Office.

"Thankfully, in the rapidly accelerating renewable energy era, that's no longer the case. These soot standards will save lives, clear our skies and alleviate the burden of asthma and other illnesses. That's something all Americans should celebrate."

A bee-killing pesticide coated on a seed is still a pesticide

Environment Massachusetts and our national network are calling on the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and states to close a loophole that contributes to bee die-offs.

More than 150 million acres of America's croplands are planted with seeds treated with bee-killing neonicotinoids, or neonics. But, for too long and for reasons that no longer make sense (if they ever did), the EPA doesn't regulate pesticides that are coated onto seeds, and states adhere to this same troubling rubric.

Several states have stepped in, working to close the loophole within their borders, including California and New York. The latter passed a new law to restrict pesticide-coated seeds.

Additionally, in December, our supporters and partners teamed up to submit more than 37,000 comments to the EPA, echoing our call to action.

Thanks to the support of members like you, we'll keep up the buzz for restricting these harmful pesticides to save the bees.

shows small-scale solar energy—most of which is installed on rooftops—is growing rapidly.

In Massachusetts, solar generation rose from 192 gigawatt hours per year in 2012 to 3,419 gigawatt hours per year in 2022. Rooftop solar is not only a cleaner source of energy, but its cost has steadily plummeted nationwide and is even cheaper than fossil fuels in some areas. Our report shows that while we've come a long way, there's far to go to fully take advantage of what small-scale solar energy has to offer. Legislation is being considered in Massachusetts to speed up the transition in the state to get to more clean, renewable energy.

"Given both our untapped potential for solar and the overwhelming need to reduce fossil fuels, we cannot afford delay in deploying every tool in the toolbox to generate more clean, renewable energy sources like solar," said Johanna Neumann, acting director of Environment Massachusetts.

EPA rule means less soot in the air we breathe

Thousands of people die each year from illnesses related to soot exposure, one of the deadliest forms of air pollution. Now, those statistics should be changing for the better.

Get more updates on our work online at <https://environmentmassachusetts.org>.

Tim O'Connor



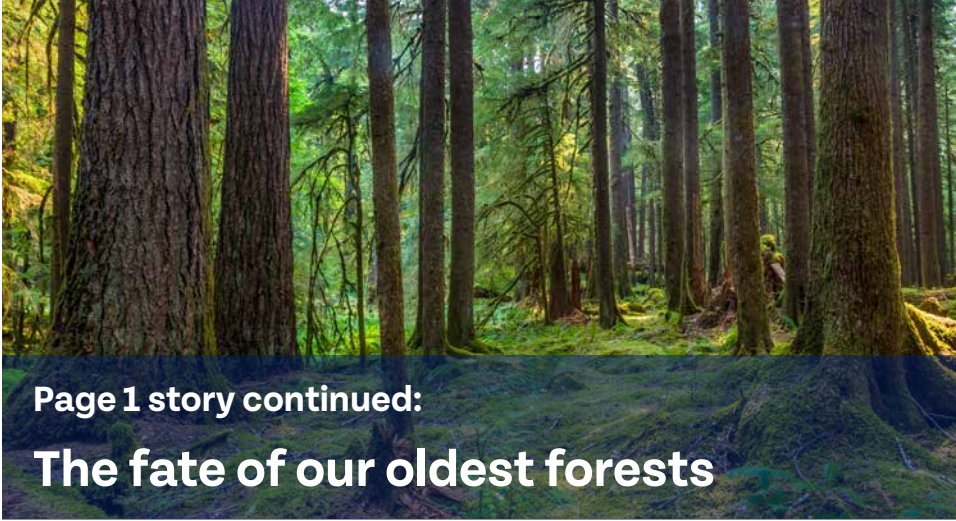
Environment Massachusetts member Sylvia Kuzman speaks in front of her home with solar panels for the release of our "Rooftop Solar is on the Rise" report



Toward a greener future

Support our work to build a cleaner, greener, healthier future by including a gift to Environment Massachusetts or Environment Massachusetts Research & Policy Center in your will, trust or retirement accounts.

For more information call 1-800-841-7299 or send an email to: PlannedGiving@EnvironmentMassachusetts.org



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The fate of our oldest forests

Tens of thousands of people and more than 170 organizations called on the U.S. Forest Service to strengthen its proposal to conserve old growth trees and forests on federal land.

Standing together for the trees

We've urged Congress to oppose the Manchin-Barrasso bill, which calls for deliberately chopping down our mature forests as a way to "improve forest health"—an obviously terrible and short-sighted idea.

Once our mature forests are gone, they'll take decades to grow back. That's more than 80 years of an intricate ecosystem destroyed in the blink of an eye. That's decades we don't have to keep huge amounts of climate-warming carbon from being released into the atmosphere.

We need our forests to stay standing for generations to come, but the Manchin-Barrasso bill threatens to level towering giants and destroy many of our nation's mature trees.

Thankfully, supporters and members of Environment Massachusetts and our national network took more than 32,000 actions opposing this bill.

All of our old-growth and mature forests deserve protection

Seventy-six percent of the forests managed by the U.S. Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management don't have strong protections from logging.

We can't afford to cut down our oldest forests. They shelter wildlife and they shelter us from the worst impacts of climate change by absorbing carbon from our atmosphere.

Thanks to your support, we're working to save our forests by raising the voices of forest defenders everywhere and urging the Biden administration to enact the strongest protections possible to keep them off the chopping block.

With your support, we'll keep advocating for the strongest protections possible for our old-growth and mature forests.



Staff

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Johanna directs strategy and staff for Environment America's energy campaigns at the local, state and national level. In her prior positions, she led the campaign to ban smoking in all Maryland workplaces, helped stop the construction of a new nuclear reactor on the shores of the Chesapeake Bay and helped build the support necessary to pass the EmPOWER Maryland Act, which set a goal of reducing the state's per capita electricity use by 15%. She also currently serves on the board of Community Action Works. Johanna lives in Amherst, Massachusetts, with her family, where she enjoys growing dahlias, biking and the occasional game of goaltimate.



Environment Massachusetts and The Public Interest Network are celebrating 50 years of action for a change.

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Your 2024 Summer Report

Our mission:

We all want clean air, clean water and open spaces. But it takes independent research and tough-minded advocacy to win concrete results for our environment, especially when powerful interests stand in the way of environmental progress.

That's the idea behind Environment Massachusetts, Inc., a project of Environment America, Inc. We focus on protecting Massachusetts' air, water and open space. We speak out and take action at the local, state and national levels to improve the quality of our environment and our lives.

To save these whales, ships must slow down

Speeding in a school zone puts kids at risk. When cargo ships speed through our coastal waters while right whales are in town, they put at risk the Atlantic's most endangered large whale.

With only around 350 Right whales left on the planet, large ships are required to slow their speeds down to 10 knots in specified areas to ensure Right whales aren't hit. Unfortunately, a recent Oceana analysis

found that of the ships they tracked, 84% of them sped in these slow zones.

That's why Environment America Research & Policy Center is urging the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and the Coast Guard to do more to ensure ships adhere to the speed limit and extend these regulations to all boats, not just large vessels.

"We know how to keep Right whales and their babies safe from boat strikes: We can slow boats down," said Kelsey Lamp, director of our Protect Our Oceans Campaign.

"We need to make sure all boats are going slow for whales. A recent NOAA proposal would work towards this goal, but it's not yet final."

Ships slowing down is one way to help protect the endangered Right whale.