



Our program report

on the actions you made possible

For a greener Massachusetts



A letter to our supporters

Massachusetts offers those of us lucky enough to live here a suite of natural wonders. Some of these wonders leave us awestruck, like a whale breaching off the coast of Cape Cod or shrouding mists rising up from the Connecticut River to reveal the Holyoke Range on a crystal clear day. Other wonders are small or only there if you give them space to reveal themselves, like the profound silence of old-growth forests groves in the Berkshires or the flash of a firefly in a summer meadow. Massachusetts offers all of us natural wonders, large and small, that sustain and revive us.

Over the past year, Environment Massachusetts staff and supporters advocated to put our commonwealth and our country on a greener, healthier path.

Together, we stood up to protect endangered whales. We advocated for more rooftop solar panels, mobilized supporters to stop plans to log the oldest trees in America's national forests and worked to halt the careless dumping of tiny plastic pellets that are making an oversized contribution to the pollution of our oceans, and much more.

Your action and support make all this work possible. Nature can't thank you, but we certainly do.



Johanna Neumann

On behalf of Environment Massachusetts

Environment Massachusetts is a policy and action group with one mission: to protect and restore the natural world.

But we can't do it without you. Our staff researches the issues, educates the public and advocates tangible results for a greener world. Our members give us the resources to carry out our mission and put grassroots support behind all of our campaigns and programs.

To keep up to date with our work and learn more about our campaigns and progress, you can follow us at the addresses below. We'd also love to hear from you—feel free to email us at info@EnvironmentMassachusetts.org

[EnvironmentMassachusetts.org](https://www.EnvironmentMassachusetts.org)

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10 trillion 'nurdles'



WILDLIFE OVER WASTE

We called for plastic-free waters

As our members know, birds, fish and other wildlife are often harmed and sometimes killed by plastic that has entered our waterways. Some of the most dangerous plastics are also the smallest.

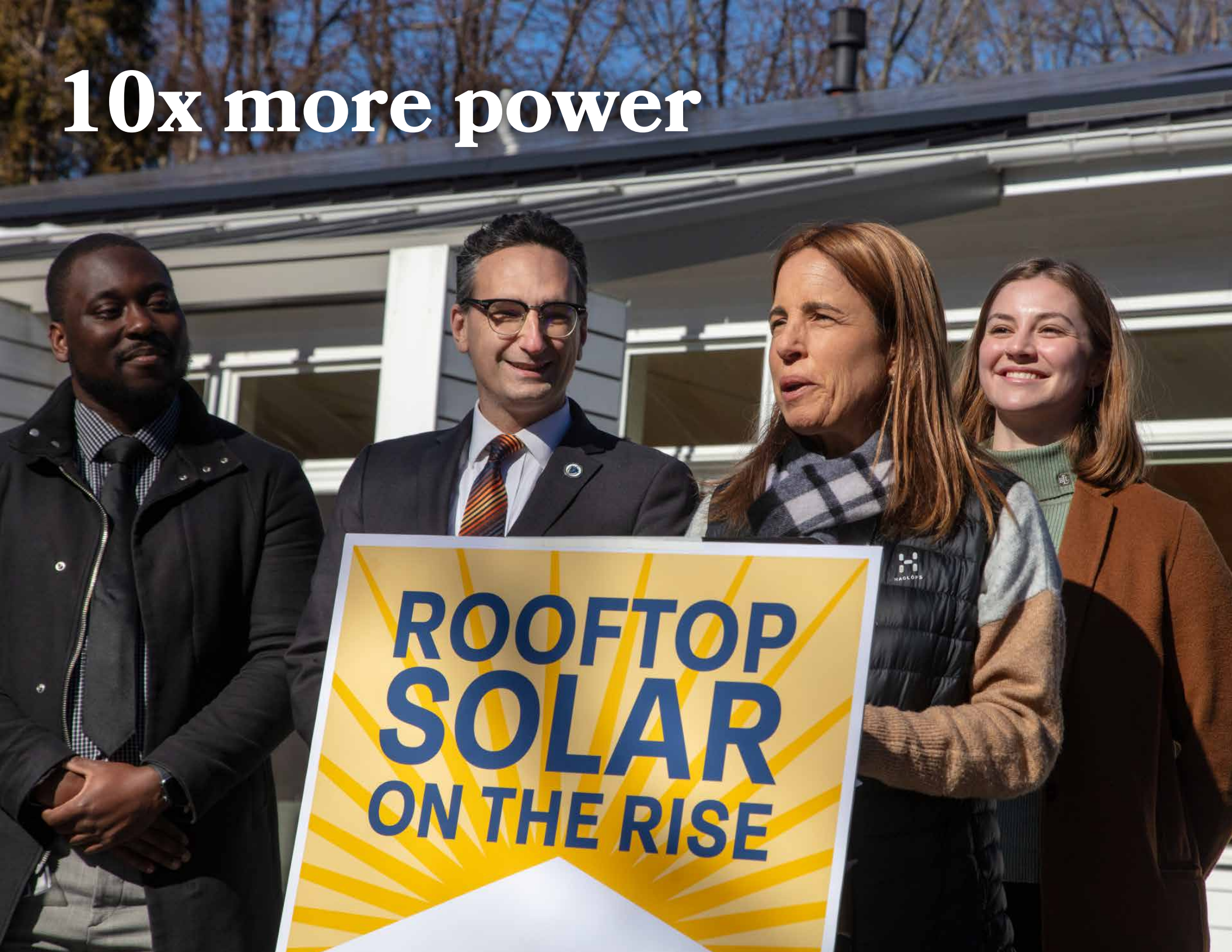
Plastic “nurdles,” which are tiny plastic pellets used in making plastic products, have been spilled or dumped into rivers, streams and other waterways, where they can be eaten by wildlife. About 10 trillion pellets are carried into our oceans each year, making them the second-largest source of marine microplastic by weight.

In December 2023, our Pennsylvania affiliate worked with Three Rivers Waterkeeper to take legal action against Styropek, a plastic manufacturer found discharging nurdles into a tributary to the Ohio River. On April 10, staff gathered in Washington, D.C., to lobby for bipartisan support in Congress for the Plastic Pellet Free Waters Act, which would ban the discharge of tiny plastic nurdles.



(Left) Our efforts around the country exposed the breadth of the microplastic problem. (Above, clockwise from top) Our national staff and allies meet with Sen. Dick Durbin about microplastic pollution; a handful of nurdles; Steve Blackledge, director of our national conservation campaigns, huddles with staff before lobbying members of Congress. Photo credits: (Left) Garrick Schmitt; (above, clockwise from top) Athel Rogers; Brendan Gibbons, Oil & Gas Watch News; Athel Rogers.

10x more power



ROOFTOP
SOLAR
ON THE RISE

RENEWABLE ENERGY

We're accelerating the rise of rooftop solar

Rooftop solar, which produces energy right where it is needed, is growing rapidly. Our partners Environment America Research & Policy Center released a report in February that showed that in 2022, small-scale rooftop solar produced enough energy to power 5.7 million typical American homes, a tenfold increase over the last decade.

Massachusetts ranks fourth in the nation in small-scale solar adoption, but there is more progress to be made. The Bay State only tapped 10.8% of its rooftop solar capacity in 2022.

In the past year, members like you called for expanded solar energy use. In January, we delivered the signatures of more than 11,500 supporters urging FedEx to install solar panels on its warehouses and parking lots by 2035. Our members also called on IKEA and Walmart to tap into their solar potential, now made more possible thanks to the Inflation Reduction Act.

And we urged lawmakers to make permitting for residential rooftop solar systems instantaneous, to make it easier, faster and cheaper for residents to harness solar power on their rooftops.



You can find our Clean Energy Home Toolkit at: EnvironmentMassachusetts.org/cleanenergyhome.

(Left) Environment Massachusetts member Sylvia Kuzman speaks in front of her home with solar panels for our report release. (Above, top to bottom) Johanna Neumann (center), our national clean energy campaigns director, on the solar rooftop of a warehouse; UMass Boston student Ashanti Mclean at an event celebrating the growth of renewable energy; U.S. Rep. Brian Fitzpatrick (center) on a tour of the solar panels at a local church. Photo credits: (Left) Tim O'Connor; (above, top to bottom) Tim O'Connor; staff.

360 Right whales



PROTECT OUR OCEANS

A wave of action for the waters off our shores

From kelp to whales to jellyfish, the North Atlantic hosts vibrant ecosystems, but rising temperatures and human activity threaten their survival.

North Atlantic Right whales, for example, are critically endangered, with only 360 left. Fatal boat strikes and fishing gear entanglements kill them at an unsustainable rate. After talking with our staff at their doorstep, thousands of New Englanders urged President Biden to implement stronger protections for these marine mammals.

Last April, over 150 students from across the region attended the inaugural New England Youth Ocean Summit. Hosted by Environment Massachusetts Research & Policy Center with MASSPIRG Students, the summit united leaders in environmental advocacy, marine research and policy. It featured panels and workshops on saving the Right whale, protecting ocean hotspots like Cashes Ledge and reducing plastic pollution.



(Left) Right whale mother and calf; (above, clockwise from top) participants at the New England Youth Ocean Summit, including Environment America's Protect Our Oceans Campaign Director, Kelsey Lamp (bottom right). Photo credits: (Left) Brian Skerry; (above) Tim O'Connor.



Tim O'Connor

In April 2023, Environment Massachusetts joined 35 environmental, health and business leaders as well as local elected officials across the Commonwealth to urge Gov. Maura Healey to set a target of installing 10 gigawatts of solar capacity—the equivalent of 1 million solar roofs—by 2030.



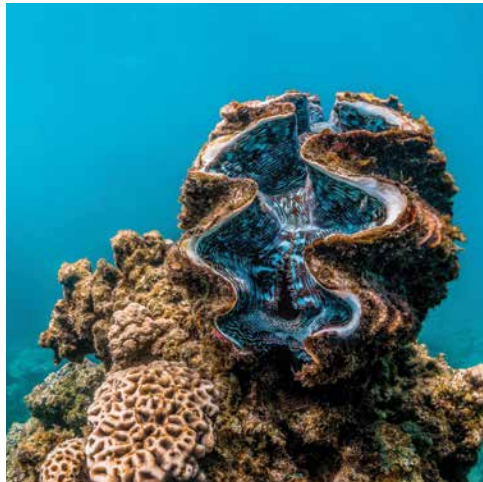
Tony via Adobe Stock

In April, advocates from Environment America traveled to Washington, D.C., to call on 70 congressional offices to support the Recovering America's Wildlife Act and other pro-environment bills. The act would provide \$1 billion each year toward the conservation of bees, trout, bison, whales and other wildlife.



Marc Olivier Le Blanc

From April to July, applications for the Monarch and Pollinator Highway Program opened up for states. This program supports bee-, butterfly- and other pollinator-friendly practices, like reducing mowing and introducing native plants along state and federal highways. We urged Congress to fund the program.



Aaron via Adobe Stock

In June, our partners Environment America Research & Policy Center released a report, “We don’t need deep-sea mining.” Mining for materials such as cobalt and copper would destroy coral ecosystems and spread plumes of disruptive sediment. The report showed how reducing electronic waste could render such mining economically unnecessary.



Cavan-Images via Shutterstock

The Biden administration approved two large offshore wind projects off the coast of Massachusetts, a major milestone for clean energy in our state. Combined, these two projects will produce enough energy to power more than 900,000 homes, which is a huge step toward going renewable in New England.

WILDLIFE OVER WASTE



Oceana

In June, Amazon announced its plans to phase out plastic air pillows in North American shipments by year’s end. This move, along with an 11.6% reduction in single-use plastic from 2021 to 2022, paves the way for other corporations to join the drive to reduce plastic pollution and microplastic proliferation.

OUR LEGACY: A GREENER AMERICA

Together, we have a long legacy of victories for clean air, clean water, clean energy and more—including state and local wins that have provided blueprints for action nationwide.



2006: We help reduce toxics use

Environment Massachusetts wins an expansion of the Toxics Use Reduction Act. By 2019, toxic chemical use in Massachusetts has dropped from 1.2 billion pounds per year in 1990 to 0.7 billion pounds.

2007: Massachusetts joins regional climate pact

Environment Massachusetts helps convince the state to join the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI)—our country's best regional climate program. It cuts power plant pollution while investing in clean energy and saving customers nearly \$400 million on their power bills.

2008: State clean car standards are strengthened

Backed by our advocacy and action, Massachusetts establishes stronger emission standards for automobiles. This helps set the groundwork for stronger federal clean car standards.

2009: We win historic plan to curb global warming pollution

Environment Massachusetts helps pass groundbreaking legislation to reduce global warming pollution, imposing the strongest cap on global warming pollution in the country. We had lobbied and knocked on more than 200,000 doors to build public support.



2010: We stop logging around Quabbin Reservoir

Environment Massachusetts wins a moratorium on logging the forest surrounding and filtering the Quabbin Reservoir—the drinking source water for 2 million Bay Staters. This work helps expand the ban on logging from 40% to 60% of state forests.

2012: We help secure national clean car standards

Environment Massachusetts and our national partners at Environment America play a key role in securing new national clean car standards, equivalent to 54.5 mpg, that will make super-efficient cars the norm by 2025. This win sets automakers

(Left to right) An Environment Massachusetts canvasser building support for our campaigns; Environment Massachusetts' Ben Wright; our staff meet with President Obama at an event celebrating the new fuel efficiency standards. Photo credits: Staff; Kelly Davidson; The White House.



on a path toward improving fuel efficiency across their fleets and even helps usher electric vehicles into the mainstream.

2013: Further action to cap global warming pollution

Environment Massachusetts helps strengthen the regional agreement that caps global warming emissions from power plants and invests in clean energy.

2018: Bay Staters put wildlife over plastic waste

With the support of Environment Massachusetts, 81 cities or towns restrict plastic bags, and 29 limit the use of polystyrene foam, helping to

reduce plastic pollution at the local level.

2020: Conservation gets \$900 million annually

After winning the permanent reauthorization of the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) in 2019, Environment Massachusetts and our national network win full funding of \$900 million annually for the LWCF the following year. It's the nation's most effective conservation and recreation law, putting billions of federal dollars into national and local parks, playgrounds and trails across the country over the last 50 years.



2021: Clean cars zoom ahead

After our continued research and advocacy for cleaner cars, Gov. Charlie Baker announces that Massachusetts will aim to phase out the sale of new gas-powered cars by 2035, joining California as the second state to pledge to go all-electric.

2022: Massachusetts takes major climate action

Environment Massachusetts helps pass a far-reaching climate bill that will help make homes and businesses more energy efficient, put more electric vehicles on the road and ramp up the amount of electricity we get from the sun and wind.

(Left to right) Environment Massachusetts' Ben Wright (second from left) at an event with Gov. Deval Patrick (front center); our staff distribute lawn signs calling on Congress to fully fund the LWCF; Environment Massachusetts' Ben Hellerstein (front, fourth from right) with staff and coalition partners at the State House. Photo credits: Devin Dobbins; Suzanna Navarro Photography; Liam Louis, Elle Vignette Photography.

Our staff

To see a full staff list and learn more about our campaigns, visit us online at EnvironmentMassachusetts.org.

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