



The BEAT News

Because an informed and engaged public is
the environment's best defense.

July 14, 2021

Hi Friend,

BEAT's new Environmental Leadership & Education Center has been busy! With installing our rain garden and pollinator friendly plants, an Art Build for our weekly Put Peakers in the Past Stand-Out, and general comings and goings, this is how we imagined our Center would be. Please, feel free to stop by! But if you want to be sure one of us will be there, contact us ahead of time, because sometimes we are all off in different directions.

Success! Thank you to all who came and those who spoke at the Pittsfield Board of Health meeting! ([News story here.](#)) The Board voted unanimously to sign on to our health professionals petition as well as agreeing to send a letter to Pittsfield Generating asking them to meet with us to discuss ways to work together to make the transition to clean energy and/or storage.

We are continuing to have Friday 4:30 - 6:00 pm standouts to Put Peakers in the Past. Please join us! Bring your own sign or use one of ours. And [let Rose know](#) if you'd like to help make more signs.

It looks like we are going to have to reschedule our [River Cleanup](#) scheduled for this Saturday due to very high water from all this rain. Stay tuned for a new date!

Thank you for all you do to protect the environment,
Jane, Rose, Jake, and Noah



THIS FRIDAY & EVERY FRIDAY! Speak out for Clean Air! Come join our Put Peakers in the Past Coalition for this stand-out protest to let folks know about Pittsfield Generating's peaker power plant, now filing for renewal of its Air Quality Permit. We're standing out in the streets of Pittsfield to let everyone know that this aging fossil fuel plant is polluting our air and needs to convert to zero emissions. The Mass Department of Environmental Protection needs to deny the Air Quality Permit, and we need folks in our community to demand this when the time for the permit hearing comes.

To everyone who came to last Friday's Peaker Stand-Out — **THANK YOU!!** As the ample honks and waves of support showed, your voice matters, and this issue matters to so many in our community.

We'll be holding Stand-Out Peaker Protests every Friday, 4:30 - 6:00 at the same location, corner of Thorndyke and Dalton Ave. in Pittsfield. Come, and tell your friends and neighbors!

More art builds will be scheduled as well. Details yet to be determined, but we still have a stack of signs to repaint, paints, stencils and some art materials.

More info at tinyurl.com/EndPeak

[Put Peakers in the Past Info Here](#)

We couldn't do our work without you. Click to contribute.

In The News

The Beauty of Beasts (and How to Save Them From Ourselves)

BREANNA DRAXLER | YES! (AUTHOR INTERVIEW)

Environmental conservation today is both romanticized and treated as an emergency. It is a race against the clock in a crisis of extinction and a divine calling from God. It is both squishy in its definitions and incredibly concrete in its data-driven calls to action. It is as easy to enter the field of conservation with a utopian ideal of “saving the world” as it is to fall into hopelessness at the scale of the problem. That’s the finicky needle Michelle Nijhuis is trying to thread with her book *Beloved Beasts* (W. W. Norton & Company, 2021). [READ MORE](#)

Rights for Rivers: Fighting for the Legal Rights of Nature

MICHELLE NIJHUIS | YES!

In October 1971, a few months after international officials gathered in Iran to sign the Ramsar wetlands treaty, Christopher Stone was standing in front of his introductory property law class at the University of Southern California’s law school, trying to hold the attention of his restive students. Observing that the definition of property had changed radically over human history, transforming not only the distribution of power within society but society’s view of itself, he wondered aloud about the effects of a similarly radical redefinition of “rights.” What if legal rights were extended to, say, rivers? Or animals? Or trees? “This little thought experiment,” Stone recalled decades later, “was greeted, quite sincerely, with uproar.” [READ MORE](#)

Sixty years of climate change warnings: the signs that were missed (and ignored)

ALICE BELL | THE GUARDIAN

The effects of ‘weird weather’ were already being felt in the 1960s, but scientists linking fossil fuels with climate change were dismissed as prophets of doom. In August 1974, the CIA produced a study on “climatological research as it pertains to intelligence problems”. The diagnosis was dramatic. It warned of the emergence of a new era of weird weather, leading to political unrest and mass migration (which, in turn, would cause more unrest). The new era the agency imagined wasn’t necessarily one of hotter temperatures; the CIA had heard from scientists warning of global cooling as well as warming. But the direction in which the thermometer was travelling wasn’t their immediate concern; it was the political impact. [READ MORE](#)

Find more climate and energy articles featured in this week's No Fracked Gas in Mass Weekly News Check-In. [Find the news and subscribe here.](#)

‘Peaker’ power plant owner should discuss cleaner operation, Pittsfield health officials say

LARRY PARNASS | THE BERKSHIRE EAGLE

PITTSFIELD — A grassroots fight to curb a Pittsfield power plant’s environmental damage just won a new public ally.

Health officials in Pittsfield will appeal to the company that owns Pittsfield Generating on Merrill Road to discuss ways to shift from use of fossil fuels to lighten the plant’s carbon footprint and environmental harm.

“It’s consistent with our mission,” Brad Gordon, a member of the Board of Health, told his colleagues Wednesday.

The four-member board voted unanimously to write to the plant’s owner, Hull Street Energy, and request that officials explore a transition to green energy to alleviate its contribution to global warming and to lessen local health consequences. [READ MORE](#)

Berkshire Environmental Group Pushing To “Put Peakers In The Past”

JOSH LANDES | WAMC

Tonight, the Pittsfield, Massachusetts Board of Health will hear a petition calling for three Berkshire County power plants to transition to green energy. The Berkshire Environmental Action Team’s No Fracked Gas in Mass initiative is behind the effort. The group says it would reduce the environmental and health impacts from the “peaker” plants that come online during spikes in energy use by customers. They’ve also organized an ongoing Friday afternoon demonstration series against the plants on Dalton Avenue in Pittsfield by one of the peakers located on Merrill Road. WAMC spoke with No Fracked Gas in Mass program director Rose Wessell about the initiative. [READ MORE](#)

Keep up with the fight against fossil fuels at the No Fracked Gas in Mass Newsletter

[SUBSCRIBE HERE](#)

River Otters - Strong Swimmers

REY KATZ | NORTHERN WOODLANDS

One summer day, I was relaxing on the bank of a secluded pond watching mallard ducks forage when a dark shape broke the stillness of the water. It was a North American river otter, swimming with its head and back emerging from the surface, sleek body over 2 feet long, tapered tail trailing behind. It dove beneath the surface without a splash. Seconds later, its round head emerged at the edge of the pond. We stared at each other. [READ MORE](#)

JOBS

We list jobs related to the environment from a variety of organizations.

Email news@thebeatnews.org to submit an open position.

[Property Worker](#) | Mass Audubon | Lenox (posted 6/28)

[Operations Manager](#) | Mass Audubon | Easthampton (posted 6/28)

[Community Engagement Coordinator](#) | Mass Audubon | Springfield (posted 6/28)

[Administrative Assistant](#) | Great Barrington Land Conservancy | Remote (posted 6/26)
[TerraCorps Openings](#) | TerraCorps | New England (posted 6/26)
[Executive Director](#) | Hoosic River Watershed Association (HooRWA) | Williamstown (posted 6/22)
[Deputy Director](#) | Community Action Works | Currently Remote
[Organizing Coordinator](#) | Community Action Works | Currently Remote
[S•M•Art Studio Director](#) | Flying Cloud Institute | Southern Berkshire County
[Youth & Community Engagement Coordinator](#) | Kestrel Land Trust | CT River Valley
[Conservation Commission Positions Open](#) | Town of Adams, MA (posted 5/25)
[Director of Development](#) | Berkshire Agricultural Ventures | Berkshire County (posted 5/18)
[Environmental Analyst III](#) | MassDEP | Springfield (posted 5/4)
[Seasonal Stewardship Crew](#) | Berkshire Natural Resources Council | Pittsfield (posted 5/4)
[Board of Supervisors & Associates - Open Positions](#) | Berkshire Conservation District | Berkshire County (posted 4/19)
[Trails Team Leader](#) | The Trustees | Western MA (posted 4/19)
[Farm Apprentices](#) | Greenagers | Egremont (posted 4/13)
[Market Manager](#) | Pittsfield Farmers Market | Pittsfield (posted 4/7)
[Director & Research Professor](#) | Toxics Use Reduction Institute (TURI) | Lowell (3/23)
[Trail Crew Members](#) | Greenagers | Berkshire County (2/15)

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

We list events from a variety of local and regional organizations and individuals. BEAT events are in **bold**. Berkshire County events are listed north to south by location, out of county events are listed alphabetically by location. [Submit events to news@thebeatnews.org](mailto:news@thebeatnews.org).

WE ARE HAVING TROUBLE WITH OUR CALENDAR! (It is not playing nicely with our updated Word Press on our website.) Here are previous listings as we work to get this issue resolved.

WEDNESDAY, JULY 14

Canoeing Upper & Lower Goose Ponds - Lee

Public presentations on the status of the MEPA regulatory review - Online

The Influence of Municipal Pruning Practices on Urban Forest Health and Storm Resilience - Online

Weekly Advocacy Hour: Campaign Updates - Online

Evening at the Beaver Ponds - Lenox

THURSDAY, JULY 15

FRIDAY, JULY 16

Cutting Invasive Hardy Kiwi - Pittsfield

Public Hearing: MADEP Water Resources Management Program Regulations - Online

Reduce & Reuse Working Group Discussion - Online

Breeding Birds - Online

[Complete Community Calendar](#)

ENVIRONMENTAL MONITOR

June 23, 2021

The Environmental Monitor provides information on projects under review by the Massachusetts Environmental Policy Act (MEPA) office, recent MEPA decisions of the Secretary of Energy & Environmental Affairs, and public notices from environmental agencies.

Berkshire Index

- **Otis** - [Notice of Application for a 401 Water Quality Certificate \(pdf\)](#) - **Tannery Road over the West Branch Farmington River** - posted 6/23/21
- **Pittsfield** - [Notice of Application for a 401 Water Quality Certificate \(pdf\)](#) - **Mill Street over the West Branch of the Housatonic River** - posted 6/23/21
- **Mount Washington** - [Becker Pond Dam Removal](#) - **SEIR** - comments due 6/25/21
- **Williamstown** - [Notice of Intent to Initiate an Aquatic Plant Management Program Pdf](#) - posted 6/9/21

Pioneer Valley Index

- **Hadley** - [Notice of Application for a 401 Water Quality Certificate \(pdf\)](#) - **Reconstruction of Russell Street (Route 9) from Middle Street (Route 47) Intersection to North / South Maple Street Intersection** - issued 6/23/21
- **Chicopee** - [Chicopee Abbey Brook Restoration Project](#) - **ENF** - comments due 6/25/21
- **Hampden** - [Town of Hampden Landfill Solar](#) - **ENF** - comments due 6/15/21
- **Holyoke** - [Connect. Construct. Create: A Plan for the Revitalization of Center City Holyoke](#) - **Notice of Project Change** - comments due 6/15/21
- **Westfield** - [Notice of Submission of a Yearly Operational Plan \(pdf\)](#) - **City of Westfield to use herbicides on city streets' rights of way** - comments due 6/27/21

Statewide Index

- [REVISED \(5/12/21\) Notice of Availability for Comment: DRAFT Massachusetts 2018/2020 Integrated List of Waters \(pdf\)](#) - comments due 6/21/21
- [NOTICE OF GRANT OPPORTUNITY: TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE GRANT PROGRAM STATE FISCAL YEAR \(SFY\) 2022 \(pdf\)](#) - Applications are due electronically by 5:00 P.M. on July 16, 2021
- [Notice of Public Comment Period re: Priority Habitat Map for the 15th Edition Natural Heritage Atlas \(pdf\)](#) - comments due 7/3/21

PUBLIC NOTICES

Public Notices listed here are from a variety of sources, from town conservation commissions and select boards to state and federal agencies. These listings are for Berkshire, Hampshire, Hampden, and Franklin counties. Listings are only posted if they are environmental in nature. You can find all public notices for Massachusetts [here](#).

[BEAT Public Notices PAGE](#)

How are we doing? We'd love your feedback on this newsletter. Send us your thoughts or suggestions by replying to this email. Also, send it to your friends, or tell them to subscribe here. Thanks!





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