

# The BEAT News!

"because an informed and engaged public is the environment's best defense"

September 22, 2021

Hi Friend ,

This week there is important news to read up on about two local biomass energy bills that would remove state incentives for facilities that burn wood products to generate power and eliminate subsidies in MA for biomass. Also, do you wonder how coastal wetlands conservation can help mitigate climate change impacts? Mass Audubon launches a Coastal Resilience Program, read more in this week's newsletter.

This week is packed with events, outstanding speakers and guided hikes. Take a look at our [community calendar](#) below.

*Sincerely,*  
Sarit - Education & Outreach Coordinator

## In The News



### Mass Audubon Coastal Resilience Program to Support Beaches, Salt Marshes, Coastal Islands

Michael P. O'Connor | Mass Audubon

As rising sea levels and stronger storms present increasing threats to the state's shorelines, Mass Audubon is developing a new Coastal Resilience Program (CRP) to sustain beaches, salt marshes, coastal islands, and other vulnerable habitats in the face of climate change. This work also is critical to protecting marsh and shorebirds, which are experiencing some of the highest rates of population loss of any suite of bird species in the world. Coastal waterbirds have experienced a 40 percent decrease in population since 1970, for example. Protecting such resilient lands is a priority goal of Mass Audubon's new five-year [Action Agenda](#), and the CRP's objective is to restore, protect, and manage at least 2,500 acres of critical coastal ecosystems. The statewide conservation organization currently stewards vulnerable habitats on nearly two dozen coastal wildlife sanctuaries from the North Shore to the South Coast, including Nantucket and Martha's Vineyard. Much of this land is salt marsh, which helps buffer sea level rise and storm surge. These coastal wetlands also store substantial amounts of carbon, which is important to mitigate climate change impacts. [Read More](#)

### Hiker encounters large rattlesnake while in the Blue Hills

Steve Annear | The Boston Globe

In an interview Wednesday, Bender identified the reptile as a timber rattlesnake, one of two types of venomous snakes in Massachusetts. They are endangered and considered “extremely rare,” according to the [state Division of Marine Fisheries and Wildlife](#). “It’s a very unique species that we are striving very hard to protect,” he said. Mike Jones, herpetologist for MassWildlife, agreed the reptile “looks like a timber rattlesnake.” Blue Hills Reservation, which spans five communities including Milton, Boston, and Quincy, is among a few locations statewide that timber rattlesnakes call home. They’re known as pit vipers and are usually between 3 and 5 feet long, according to MassWildlife.

[Read More](#)

## New bill would eliminate subsidies for biomass energy

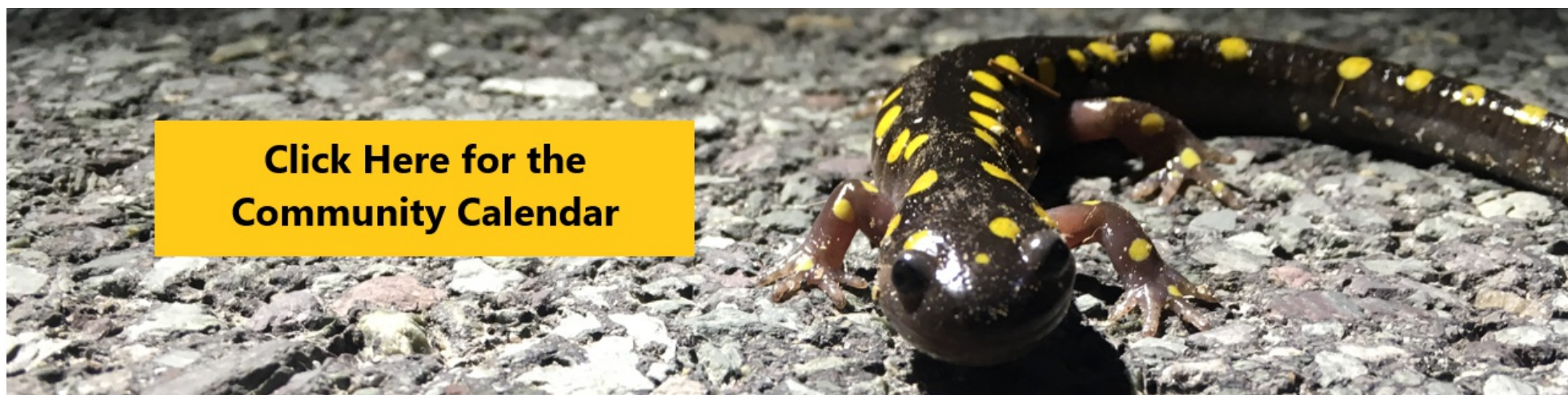
The State House News Service | Worcester Business Journal

With regulations ready to take effect that effectively close about 90 percent of the state's land area to new wood-burning power generation facilities, Springfield-area lawmakers on Monday pushed for legislation that would more permanently eliminate state clean energy program subsidies for biomass anywhere in the Bay State. Sens. Eric Lesser and Adam Gomez, and Rep. Orlando Ramos, each of whom represent parts of the western Mass. city known as the asthma capital of the United States, were joined by Boston Rep. Jay Livingstone in calling for the Joint Committee on Telecommunications, Utilities and Energy to issue favorable reports on bills (H 3333/S 2197) that would remove state incentives for facilities that burn wood products to generate power. "The purpose of these two bills, and they are identical, is to remove woody biomass as an eligible fuel source in Massachusetts' renewable energy portfolio standard, RPS, and the alternative energy portfolio standard, the APS standard," Lesser, an opponent of a controversial wood-burning power plant proposed in East Springfield, said. "I want to be clear ... H 3333 and S 2197 do not outright ban biomass. What they do is they eliminate the subsidy for biomass, and I feel strongly that Massachusetts ratepayers should not be subsidizing what is an inherently dirty fuel." [Read More](#)

**The fight against fossil fuels is here!**

**SUBSCRIBE HERE for the No Fracked Gas in Mass newsletter**

*More articles on climate and energy in the [Weekly News Check-In](#)*



**Click Here for the  
Community Calendar**

Every Saturday and Sunday (now till October 3rd)

**The 19th Annual HOUSATONIC HERITAGE WALKS - The Berkshires and Litchfield County**

THURSDAY September 23 - A Night of Vivek Shandas - 2 events

**6PM: MCLA Annual Vadnais Environmental Issues Lecture - Online**

**7PM: Youth Voices in Climate Change, with Varshini Prakash, moderated by WBUR's Miriam Wasser - Online**

FRIDAY September 24

**Mass Audubon - Free Birding at Canoe Meadows - Pittsfield**

September 24 - 26

**25th Annual Source to Sea Cleanup - Along the Connecticut River**

SATURDAY September 25

**Greet the Seasons: Fall Equinox Hike - South Egremont**

MONDAY September 27

**Creating a Zero Waste Kitchen with the Founders of Food Waste Feast - Online**

[See Calendar for more!](#)



[BEAT is Hiring: Water Quality Associate Position](#)

## Environmental Monitor

September 15, 2021, 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:

- [Savoy - FHMS Broadband Antenna Array on Borden Mountain](#) - ENF - comments due 9/14/21

**We couldn't do our work without you.  
Thank you for helping protect the environment!  
~Support our programs & our future today~**

## 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](#)



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