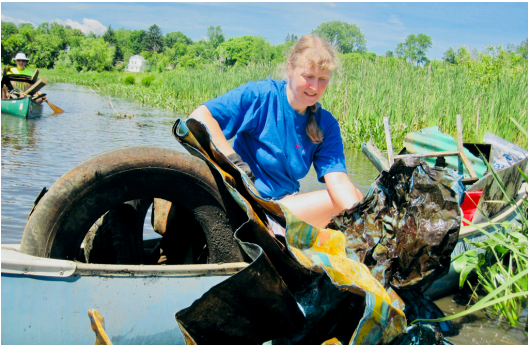


HEALTHY HABITAT FOR ALL

A NOTE FROM OUR DIRECTOR



JANE HAULING TRASH OUT OF THE HOUSATONIC RIVER

What a year. Let me start by saying that no matter our race, gender identity, income, (or species!), everyone deserves fresh air, clean water, and healthy land with enough interconnected habitat to move and meet their daily, seasonal, and dispersal needs. As an organization, we work on multiple levels to make this a reality.

And, BEAT also needs a healthy habitat to do the best work that we can. At the end of 2019, we moved into our spacious new home. We settled into the old chapel on the banks of the Southwest Branch of the Housatonic River, explored the possibilities this new space held, and started making plans.

Then, just as we were getting our rhythm down, COVID-19 arrived. We are very lucky. One of our fabulous board members, Tom Irelan and his son Liam were not able to do their business as usual, house painting, and so they repaired and painted our main meeting room and offices while our staff were working from home. Thank you Tom for such a huge donation! If you haven't seen our new space, please set up a time to visit and learn all about our plans for the future. We envision a neighborhood hub of resources and education for humans, and habitat and protection for critters. We can't wait to see what our community can do with this beautiful, historic property.

As always, thank you for all that you do to protect the environment!

Jake



RENDERING OF OUR FINAL VISION FOR OUR NEW HOME ON CHAPEL STREET



SMARTER BUILDINGS FOR A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

Jake has been spearheading BEAT's efforts in supporting Massachusetts Climate Action Network's (MCAN) effort to improve the building energy efficiency stretch code. BEAT arranged for Pittsfield's representative to read a statement in favor of MCAN's proposed EZ Code at the May 12th Board of Building Regulations and Standards (BBRS) hearing. This testimony showcased Pittsfield's forward-thinking climate leadership, and demonstrated western Massachusetts support for a net-zero energy building code.

The effort grew from BEAT's successful 2019 collaboration with MCAN and Massachusetts Sierra Club to recruit municipal officers from Berkshire County towns and cities to vote on an improved base building code.

STAFF

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Executive Director

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No Fracked Gas in Mass

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Rosemary Wessel
No Fracked Gas in Mass Program
Director

BOARD

Judy Eddy
Tom Irelan
Kristen Laney
Scott McGinnis
Rene Wendell
Bruce Winn

BECAUSE OF YOUR SUPPORT, WE BRING WORLD-CLASS WILDLIFE EDUCATION & EXPERIENCES TO THE BERKSHIRES



In the before times, a packed house at Sue Morse's February 2020 The Mountain Lion Return to the East presentation

This past year BEAT and Sue Morse of Keeping Track packed the Berkshire Community College auditorium with over 500 attendees to a presentation on mountain lions. The following day Sue led tracking workshops that taught participants how to identify common mammal track and sign based on habitat. Our tracking club got out to locales such as Harvey Mountain, Konkapot Brook, and Tamarack Hollow, and also had its first ever "trackers potluck" where people could gather around food to talk wildlife, share their trail cam videos, and brainstorm new places to explore.

ENERGY EFFICIENCY ACCESS & EQUITY in PITTSFIELD

Dueños de casa

Si programas una nueva **Virtual Home Energy Assessment** antes del **30 de septiembre de 2020**, su casa puede calificar para

100% de descuento en aislamiento

Completa la evaluación - Online Home Energy Assessment

masssave.com/OHEA

* Sin costo, sin compromiso. Disponible en Español. Obtenga más información en EEPittsfield.org



RENTERS

IS MONEY TIGHT?

You don't have to own your home to participate in Mass Save. See if you qualify for a no-cost **Energy Savings Kit** and start saving on your utility bills now.

Take the Online Home Energy Assessment
masssave.com/OHEA

*No cost, no obligation. Learn more at EEPittsfield.org



EE Pittsfield social media materials



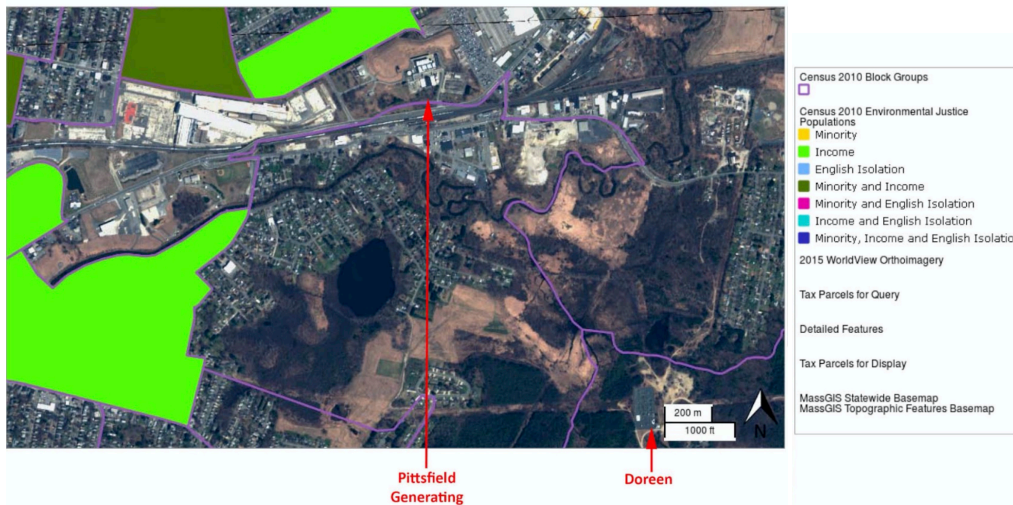
Diagram of potential solar facility acreage available at already disturbed location, rather than use of woods or agricultural land.

This year we continued to promote Energy Efficiency through our EE Pittsfield initiative. Working more closely with the program administrators this year allowed us a closer look at the inner operations our state's energy efficiency programs, sparking ideas for reform and greater accessibility. We look forward to using this deeper knowledge next year to expand outreach even further.

SUSTAINABLE ENERGY POLICY

No Fracked Gas in Mass was deeply involved in commenting on proposed infrastructure projects and regulatory policy changes this year. As state regulatory agencies hammered out details on new policies and renewal of existing programs, we continued to advocate for adherence to our (the Global Warming Solutions Act) and the Attorney General's call for decarbonization by 2050. We also repeatedly stood up for more environmentally responsible siting of new clean energy projects and that any combustible energy source not be allowed in the Renewable Portfolio Standard.

TOGETHER, WE WILL PUT PEAKERS IN THE PAST



“Put Peakers in the Past” is a campaign to shut down the three Berkshire County peaking power plants through grassroots activism. The three plants - Pittsfield Generating, Doreen, and Woodland Road - cost ratepayers tremendous amounts of money to produce no electricity and do nothing most of the time. When these plants do turn on, they emit toxic nitrogen oxides and carbon dioxide into the atmosphere. Two of the plants, Pittsfield

Generating and Doreen, are also located very close to Environmental Justice neighborhoods. No Fracked Gas in Mass will partner with the NAACP - Berkshire Branch and the 350MA - Berkshire Node to run a campaign to shut down these plants and replace them with solar generating and battery storage.

STELLAR INTERN RETURNS AS INSPIRED STAFF WEYESSA (ACE) MCALISTER, IN HIS OWN WORDS

After completing an internship with BEAT summer of 2019, I returned as a program associate and Water Quality Fellow in May. My main duties are surveying and sampling storm water pipes that flow into the Housatonic River throughout Berkshire County. We use ArcGIS mapping tools and laboratory equipment to test for E-coli entering the river. My water quality sampling techniques and laboratory skills have improved significantly, due in large part to working with Berkshire Community College microbiology professors in the lab.

I also assist with social media, river clean up events, canvassing, and online marketing/networking. As a program associate, I have learned and gained a variety of skills that I did not anticipate. I have expanded my knowledge of and love for environmental health, ecosystems, wildlife, and hydrology.

Having seen my outgoing personality, Jane invited me to work on a few socially-distanced events, educating urban residents about the environment and wildlife.

I have met plenty of environmental activists and caring people in the Berkshires. I hope to meet and work with more passionate people who wish to attack the current political, environmental, climate, and racial issues that are interconnected in so many ways.



COLLABORATING TO STEWARD THE LAND

With the Housatonic Valley Association we helped coordinate a socially distanced river cleanup in Pittsfield. With Berkshire Community College and the Hoosic River Watershed Association, BEAT staff monitored water quality and surveyed stormwater infrastructure that could be acting as a conduit for point-source pollution. Staff also found and alerted the City of Pittsfield to a broken sewer pipe that was leaking into the southwest branch. The cracked pipe was patched two days later and subsequent testing has come up clean.

Did you know that our weekly newsletter has environmental local, state, and national news, a jobs board, public notices for regional development, and a community calendar? Subscribe today at THEBEATNEWS.ORG.



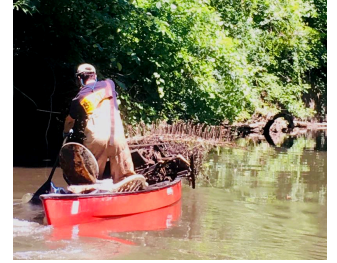
GREEN DRINKS

THE DRINKS AREN'T GREEN,
THE CONVERSATIONS ARE

Each month we gather (virtually since April) to hear a guest speaker and hang out with our friends. Some highlights from 2020 include : Plant Communication, Liverworts, Climate Resilience, Grassroots Advocacy, Community Conversations on Sustainable Development, Wildlife Tracking & Photography, Fossil Fuel Divestment, Climate Change and Wildlife, and Woodland Pools.

THANK YOU, ELIA!

After nine amazing years, Elia Del Molino is moving on to a full-time position with another wonderful organization, Greenagers. We are so sorry that we will no longer have Elia with BEAT all the time, but we partner with him and Greenagers on work like removing invasive hardy kiwi at Burbank Park in Pittsfield. Thank you Elia for helping to guide BEAT from a two-person operation, up to our current eight people in our new, much larger space. We could not have done all this without you! So glad you are only a phone call away.



BERKSHIRE
ZERO-WASTE
INITIATIVE

WITH COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & SUPPORT, WE'RE REDUCING WASTE

Berkshire Zero-Waste Initiative (BZWI) has had a successful second year of programming and projects. We hosted a few in-person zero-waste workshops in January and February, reaching about 60 community members. In March, BZWI moved workshops and presentations online as webinars. The most noteworthy webinar involved a collaboration with RecyclingWorks and Lee Greener Gateway Committee, titled "Food Waste 101: In the Berkshires and Beyond", which attracted local business owners and educated participants on how to implement effective composting practices.

Working with the schools, BZWI assisted Pittsfield High School early in the year as they piloted their composting project prior to schools closing. At Monument Mountain Regional High School in Great Barrington, Mary supported an intern as he educated his peers on the importance of composting and readying them to divert their food scraps during lunch time. Just as their on-site composter arrived, schools closed, but this program is anticipated to begin once students have lunch on campus again.

BZWI also participated in Sustainable Monument 2025. This project aims to analyze how Monument Mountain as a school, and later Berkshire Hills as a District, can become a hub of sustainability with environmentally-literate students. The project involved hundreds of hours of time from over 20 participants, including teachers, students, community members, and school staff. The result of this project is an **in-depth plan, endorsed by the school committee, that is starting to be implemented this school year. Read the plan, 'Sustainable Monument 2025,' on BerkshireZeroWaste.org.**

In late summer, BEAT was awarded an incredible grant for BZWI. These funds will support continuing and expanding BZWI's work, and includes **projects that will motivate local Berkshire restaurants to reduce their waste (called WasteLess Restaurants) as well as a pilot compost pick-up that is scheduled to begin in May of 2021.**

As Berkshire Zero-Waste Initiative continues to grow, you can stay updated by going to our new website, BerkshireZeroWaste.org, or by subscribing to our monthly newsletter. Webinar recordings, educational materials, and many resources are also available on our website. If you, your business, or your local school needs help with waste reduction, please feel free to reach out to Mary at Mary@BerkshireZeroWaste.org. Thank you for supporting BEAT and BZWI!



BEAT is so grateful to all our community partners and generous donors who give their time, talent, and money to make this work possible. Thank you! **THEBEATNEWS.ORG**
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