



From the Directors

Thanks to you, BEAT provided more free events this year than ever before— from wildlife connectivity trainings to a native plant giveaway, tree walks, Green Drinks, moth night, Biodiversity Day, and more! Our advocacy campaigns gained momentum, including efforts to transition highly polluting peaking power plants into clean energy producers across Massachusetts, stop Project Maple, prevent pesticide and excess nutrient runoff into our rivers, and identify and eliminate sources of industrial air pollution in Pittsfield. Our Environmental Leadership and Education Center's first renovations prioritized accessibility so we

could gather groups for events like this year's riverbank restoration and grassroots action training. The next phase of our capital renovations will make our Center fully fossil fuel-free and home to a range of environmental science exhibits. We were awarded a \$200K facilities grant by the Massachusetts Cultural Council to begin this work once we match their grant. Thank you for being part of our work building climate resilience and environmental justice!



Jane Winn and Brittany Ebeling

No Fracked Gas in Mass

Fighting Climate Disruption

Our campaign to decarbonize the Peak is expanding! Working with our MA Clean Peak Coalition, we're growing the campaign to decarbonize peaker power plants across the state. BEAT brought peaker pollution to the attention of Melissa Lavinson, Executive Director of the state's Office of Energy Transformation. As a result, her office has made peaker decarbonization one of its three core programs. BEAT has been invited to the Peaker Working Group, where we are advocating for clean energy transition solutions that benefit communities most affected by the legacy of fossil fuel pollution.

BEAT has decommissioned two of the three peaking power plants in the Berkshires. This year, we celebrate a significant milestone: the properties where these two heavy polluters once stood have now been cleared. Through our ongoing dialogue with Cogentrix, the owner of these plants, we also helped prompt the decommissioning of a third large peaker in West Springfield. That plant has just cleared a major hurdle on the way to becoming a clean energy producer (with solar and battery storage).



Left: Stacks from Pittsfield Generating, the Berkshires' only remaining peaking power plant, tower over Allendale Elementary School's playground. Above: Signs from BEAT's legislative rally in support of passing a climate bill.



Breathe Easy Berkshires had a great first year of collecting air quality data in Pittsfield. Nine stationary air quality monitors measure Nitrogen Dioxide (NO₂) and Particulate Matter (PM) levels and our Mobile Monitoring Squad take mobile air quality measurements (including Volatile Organic Compounds) to pinpoint potential sources of pollution. Next steps will involve conducting a community health survey to gain an understanding of the local health impacts of air quality.

Stop Fracked Gas Expansion

We continue to fight proposed fossil fuel expansion, including Enbridge's gas pipeline "Project Maple" and multiple smaller expansion projects along the Algonquin line. Read more at StopProjectMaple.org. We are bringing our experience from defeating the huge Northeast Energy Direct fracked gas pipeline to the most affected communities.

Mile-Wide Disruption

A new proposal from the federal Department of Energy for a "National Interest Electric Transmission Corridor" proposes taking through eminent domain and potentially clear-cutting a mile wide corridor across the Berkshires, causing significant environmental and economic disruption.



Helping Wildlife Move

This year, BEAT made significant strides in enhancing wildlife connectivity, which is vital for animals to access food and to breed. Our work was featured on the front page of the Sunday Boston Globe!

We organized a community training and an online information session on surveying culverts and road-stream crossings and conducted multiple field trainings, empowering others to conduct surveys and gather data.

Our stream table at BEAT's Environmental Leadership and Education Center provides hands-on learning experiences for community members, teaching river science and the importance of appropriately sized culverts and bridges.



Protecting Pollinators

Dozens gathered for a showing of Doug Tallamy's "Homegrown National Park" lecture in anticipation of No Mow May. Presenters Jim McGrath and Bruce Winn shared what the City of Pittsfield and Berkshire Community College, respectively, are doing to support pollinators using native plants.



Education & Outreach

Biodiversity Day

We brought scientists, naturalists, and community members of all ages together for the 15th Berkshire Biodiversity Day to identify as many species as possible within twenty-four hours at Berkshire Community College (BCC). The program included guided walks, presentations, and demonstrations led by experts. We had nearly 100 people participate this year, including 18 scientists and 78 attendees. Together, we observed 451 species, including an Eastern Whip-poor-will and an American Snout Butterfly—rarities in Berkshire County!

Thank you to Greylock Federal Credit Union for providing funding which made this event possible.

Empowering Community

Attendees learned practical strategies for making environmental change through community organizing, working with local and state government, and leading campaigns to make lasting impact. An empowered community is the environment's best defense!



Helping You Reduce Waste

Berkshire Zero Waste Initiative (BZWI) continues to help reduce the volume of waste sent to landfills by encouraging first waste reduction, then diversion through composting and recycling. We've done this by leading school groups in litter cleanup and waste audit activities, providing collections of hard-to-recycle materials (including small batteries), and answering the many complex and thoughtful questions that come in about how to responsibly dispose of all kinds of interesting things.

This year, BZWI received a Reduce, Reuse, Repair Microgrant from MassDEP to fund the purchase of a commercial dishwasher for our Environmental Leadership and Education Center. This not only makes it easier to keep BEAT events moving towards zero waste, but will also allow us to loan dishware out to community groups and private parties (up to 100 place settings!) so our entire community will be able to hold events and enjoy good food without the waste of single-use products.

Show Your Support for Local Species

BEAT's critical species shirts are made to order from handmade designs by Programs Director Chelsey. They are printed using direct-to-garment (DTG) and direct-to-film (DTF) methods, which will keep the design from peeling as it ages and goes through washes. Find your favorite illustration and order your own at our Bonfire store, www.bonfire.com/store/thebeatnews.



More Ways to Give

Your generosity enables us to do powerful advocacy on behalf of wildlife and the environment. There are many ways to support our work, including:

- Stock donations (save on capital gains tax)
- Donor-advised funds
- Employer matching funds
- Name BEAT in your will, trust, or retirement plan
- IRA/QCD gifts (save on income tax)
- Cash/check
- Secure online donation

BEAT is a registered 501(c)3 nonprofit (Federal Tax ID: #27-0054356). Donations are tax deductible to the full extent of the law.

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THE BEAT NEWS

Sign up for BEAT's bi-weekly e-newsletter to receive local, regional, and national environmental news, public notices, job postings, and environmental events in our community.

Your support sustains this critical work! BEAT is so grateful to all our community partners and generous donors who share their time, talents, and resources to make these efforts possible.

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