

## From the Director

Several years of succession planning came to a head in August of 2025, when BEAT's founding executive director, Jane Winn, retired. Jane's legacy of 22 years of service to the community was marked by awards from the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection, the Nonprofit Center of the Berkshires, Berkshire Regional Planning Commission, and more. Our leadership transition was deliberate and careful, offering me the opportunity to meet so many environmental stewards in the Berkshires and beyond.

It is with gratitude and enthusiasm that our team looks ahead to the organization's next chapter, building on Jane's legacy of environmental advocacy and rising to meet new challenges in light of a changing climate. If we have not yet had the opportunity to meet, I hope you will drop by our Center or attend one of BEAT's many events over the coming year.

With gratitude,  
Brittany



# WATCHDOGGING

## Sludge

Farming communities across the country are dealing with the fallout of contamination of agricultural lands from sewage sludge application, long touted as “fertilizer” despite being replete with toxic PFAS, also known as forever chemicals. BEAT is a member of the National Coalition for Sludge Free Land. We are working with community members in Williamstown to envision a more ecologically sound wastewater supply chain at the Hoosac Water Quality District, and we are collecting oral histories from affected farmers throughout Berkshire County as we uncover public records of sludge application and distribution.

*Below: Drake and Andrew using a mobile air quality monitor near the Cogentrix peaker plant in Pittsfield.*



## Keeping an Ear to the Ground for Pipelines

This year, we saw a strong federal push for large gas transmission pipelines, like Constitution pipeline, directly tapping into the fracking fields of Pennsylvania and bringing it to hubs in New York. We’re keeping watch for further development of pipelines across New England. Contracts for a new Enbridge expansion project have been approved by the Mass Department of Public Utilities. We’re watching for more proposals for expansions through Massachusetts if the Constitution pipeline in Pennsylvania and New York is permitted. The fight for keeping our energy future clean continues!



## Putting Peakers in the Spotlight

BEAT has joined the Peaker Working Group at the new Office of Energy Transformation, studying possible peaker decarbonization pathways to be adopted across the state. We are advocating for Pittsfield Generating, the remaining peaker in Berkshire County, to decarbonize. This summer, we gathered run time data on the plant, including air quality and noise levels in the Allendale neighborhood. We are modeling alternative battery technologies that could replace the old fossil fuel plant.

# EDUCATION & OUTREACH

## Woodlands Partnership

This year, thanks in part to the Woodlands Partnership of Northwest Massachusetts, BEAT expanded its outreach and education efforts to new areas of western Massachusetts. We led a series of tree identification walks across Franklin County and northern Berkshire County, where participants learned how to recognize both native and non-native species and explored the many factors that affect the health of our northeastern forests. We also organized a Land Protection & Estate Planning Workshop, inviting hundreds of land-owners from Berkshire and Franklin Counties to learn how they can protect their land for future generations. To further celebrate our region's forests, we created a 2026 Tree of the Month Calendar, featuring hand-illustrated paintings of native tree species by Chelsey Simmons, BEAT's Stewardship Program Director.



Above: Chelsey leading a tree identification walk in Conway, MA.



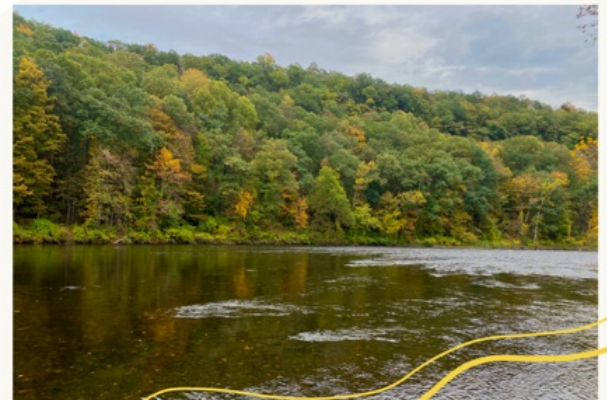
Above and Right: Bird banding demonstration and a guided butterfly walk at the 16th Berkshire Biodiversity Day

## Biodiversity Day

We brought together nearly 150 people this year for the 16th Berkshire Biodiversity Day at the Greylock Glen Outdoor Center in Adams, MA. Community members of all ages, along with scientists and environmental educators, joined together for a 24-hour bioblitz to identify as many species as possible — and to celebrate the incredible biodiversity in our own backyards! Highlights from the event included guided naturalist walks, a demonstration on preserving plants for botanical collections, a presentation on bat surveying techniques, and more. Together, we recorded 389 species, including one that's listed as a Species of Special Concern under the Massachusetts Endangered Species Act. Thank you to Greylock Federal Credit Union for providing funding, which helped make this meaningful community event possible!

## Stop Stocking!

Every year, the Division of Fisheries and Wildlife (MassWildlife) raises and deposits hundreds of thousands of non-native fish in our state's waterways. This practice incurs harm to macroinvertebrates, contributes to nutrient loading, and uses resources at polluting hatcheries that could be alternatively dedicated to habitat restoration or educational outreach. Governor Healey recently introduced a Biodiversity Mandate, drawing MassWildlife's practice of fish stocking into sharp contrast with the state's ecological goals. BEAT is engaging with communities across the state who steward bodies of water to make a simple appeal to MassWildlife's leadership: stop stocking!



## STEWARDSHIP



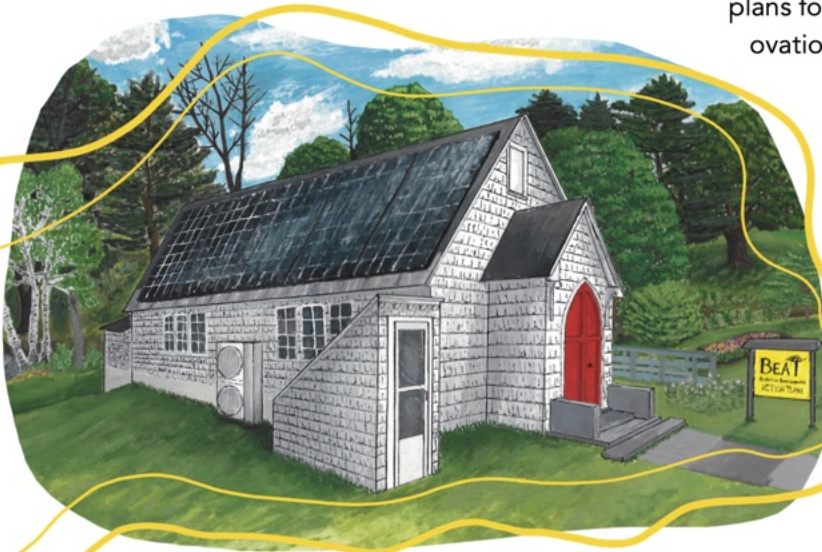
## Lending Library

BEAT's lending library continues to grow! Our dishware and utensils are available for loan by organizations for community events, as well as community members for private parties, and are washed upon return in our commercial dishwasher. This year, our dishes and utensils replaced the use of over 550 disposable items! We are also pleased to share a brand new stream table, which travels to schools, conservation commissions, and public works departments to demonstrate the geographic features of rivers and the impacts of infrastructure on our waterways. Stay tuned for future updates on our expanding tool and science equipment library, as well as our collection of natural history and sustainability books.

## Visit BEAT!

Have you paid a visit to BEAT's Environmental Leadership and Education Center? Our facility has undergone a first round of renovations to make the ground floor accessible, and we are planning a second phase of renovations to transform the former chapel into our fossil fuel-free exhibit hall. Whether you're interested in connecting with our work, dropping off batteries and other hard-to-recycle materials, or learning more about our

plans for the next round of renovations, please stop by! Our center is open Monday through Thursday from 10 am–3 pm and by appointment.



## 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.

## STAFF

**Brittany Ebeling**  
Executive Director

**Rosemary Wessel**  
No Fracked Gas in Mass  
Program Director

**Chelsey Simmons**  
Stewardship  
Program Director

**Andrew Ferrara**  
Breathe Easy  
Berkshires and  
Berkshire Zero Waste  
Initiative Manager

**Drake Reed**  
Breathe Easy  
Berkshires  
Program Manager

## BOARD

**Elia Del Molino**  
**Logan Malik**  
**Scott McGinnis**  
**Karen Pelto**  
**Bruce Winn**  
**Terri Stiffler**  
**Jane Winn**

## THE BEAT NEWS

Sign up for BEAT's bi-weekly e-newsletter to receive local, regional, and national environmental news, 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.

[thebeatnews.org](http://thebeatnews.org) | 20 Chapel St. Pittsfield, MA | (413) 464-9402 | [team@thebeatnews.org](mailto:team@thebeatnews.org)