

From: [Milly Burrows](#)
To: [SitingBoard Filing \(DPU\)](#)
Subject: Public Comment - Proposed Energy Siting Regulations & Guidelines
Date: Tuesday, May 27, 2025 10:11:29 PM

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Dear Siting Board,

Please consider these suggestions regarding proposed energy siting regulations and guidelines being developed by the Energy Facilities Siting Board (EFSB) and Department of Public Utilities (DPU):

1) "Small" energy projects and all Energy Storage System (ESS) battery systems should only be allowed on built or disturbed environment. This is consistent with the recommendations of the Massachusetts Audubon and Harvard Forest report, [Growing Solar, Protecting Nature](#), which analyzed how Massachusetts can meet its solar goals while protecting its most valuable natural and "working" lands.

2) please exclude from large and small energy generation and transmission projects the following areas:

- Article 97 protected open space, including all Department of Conservation and Recreation state parks and reservations, state forests, watershed forests, and all Division of Fisheries and Wildlife state wildlife management areas. If these lands are categorized as ineligible, an exception should be considered for solar canopies, such as solar panels over a public beach parking lot.
- "Wetland resource areas" (under 310 CMR 10.04), including setbacks of 1,000 feet from identified wetlands resources.
- Properties included in the State Register of Historic Places (950 CMR 71.03), except as authorized by regulatory bodies.
- Areas identified as Massachusetts BioMap 2 Critical Natural Landscapes, Core Habitats, Important Habitats, or Priority Habitats.
- Areas classified as Outstanding Resource Waters, wetlands or rivers.
- Flood plains or flood-prone areas.
- Lands that provide public drinking water.
- Prime farmland (as defined by the state).

3) Ground-mounted solar projects should not be allowed on recently deforested land, defined as lands cleared less than 5 years ago. This is consistent with the recommendation of the Healey administration [Carbon Forestry Committee](#), which concluded that keeping forests as forests is important in reducing carbon loss and mitigating climate change.

4) Marginal farmland should be minimally affected, with no decrease in agricultural

productivity.

5) Language should've be included that ensures no negative impacts on:

- Native biodiversity, including native plants and animals listed under the Massachusetts Endangered Species Act.
- Protected open space.
- Native American cultural areas, as determined by the Indigenous people of Massachusetts. These determinations may not be available in written document forms as many were passed from one generation to the next by oral histories.

6) Power of discretion and authority should be provided to the towns that allows for:

- Locally created and enforceable safety standards for battery storage.
- Town-specific capacity and siting goals, with local control of siting.
- Authority for municipalities to reject any proposal for minimization and/or mitigation that is deemed to be a threat to the health, safety, and welfare of town citizens or to the protection of natural and cultural values in the town, as determined by local boards and commissions.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposed regulations and guidelines.

Sincerely,

Milly Burrows

A solid black rectangular box used to redact the signature of Milly Burrows.