

From: [Sarah Pinkowski](#)
To: [SitingBoard Filing \(DPU\)](#)
Subject: Protect our natural resources
Date: Saturday, May 24, 2025 4:12:35 PM

CAUTION: This email originated from a sender outside of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts mail system. Do not click on links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Our small towns in Western MA need protection from these large solar field companies. We are experiencing flooding, damage to natural wetlands and their ecosystem. We are also losing natural resources to provide shade to decrease effects of warmer summers. Please accept my comments below relating to energy regulations and suggested guidelines:

1) "Small" energy projects and all ESS battery systems shall only be allowed on the built or disturbed environment.

2) The following areas shall be excluded from large and small energy generation and transmission projects:

- Article 97 protected open space (note: If Article 97 land is categorized as an ineligible area, an exception for solar canopies - e.g., solar over a DCR beach parking lot- shall be considered.)
- Wetland resource areas (310 CMR 10.04) and with setbacks of 1,000 feet to identified wetlands resources.
- Properties included in the State Register (950 CMR 71.03), except as authorized by regulatory bodies
- BioMap 2 Critical Natural Landscape, Core Habitat, Important Habitat, or Priority Habitat
- Outstanding Resource Waters, wetlands or rivers
- Flood plains or flood prone areas
- On land that provides public drinking water
- On prime farmland (as defined by the state)

3) Ground-mounted solar projects shall not be allowed on newly deforested land, defined as cleared less than 5 years ago.

4) Marginal farmland shall be minimally impacted with no decrease in agricultural productivity.

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

- Biodiversity including plants and animals listed under the Massachusetts Endangered Species Act
- Protected open space
- Native American cultural areas as determined by Massachusetts'

Indigenous people

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

- **Locally generated 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 are deemed a threat to the towns' health safety and welfare, and natural and cultural resource protections, as determined by local boards and commissions.**

**Sincerely yours,
Sarah Pinkowski**



Sent from my iPad