

EEA Climate Team Quarterly Newsletter



Issue 1, Winter 2024



Welcome to the inaugural Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA) Climate Team Newsletter! Building on the success of the quarterly Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) Program Newsletter, this new version will highlight both climate resilience opportunities for Massachusetts communities as well as updates on various decarbonization efforts happening across the Commonwealth. We hope you will find it informative and welcome your outreach.

EEA Climate Team

The EEA Climate Team, led by Undersecretary Katherine Antos, seeks to stem the state's greenhouse gas emissions and prepare Massachusetts communities to be resilient to the effects of a changing climate. We organize our efforts in three main parts:

Decarbonization: Consisting of sector policy leads and analytic experts, we focus on decarbonization setting and advancing the emissions reductions necessary to meet the Commonwealth's Net Zero requirements.

Climate Adaptation and Resilience: Consisting of Municipal Vulnerability Program managers, the Office of Climate Science, and a policy lead for resilience finance, we focus on adaptation and resilience support agencies, municipalities, and community partners in building resilience to climate change impacts.

Community Engagement & Partnership: Working across both the mitigation and resilience efforts, this small but mighty team develops strong and equitable mechanisms for community input and accountable engagement.

For direct contact information, you can reference our team directory here:

[EEA Climate Team Contact and Staff Directory](#)



Upcoming MVP Webinar Series

Register here: [MVP Winter Webinar Series 2024](#)

The MVP team is excited to host the third MVP Winter Webinar Series virtually via Zoom. If you have any questions about the upcoming series, please contact: Patrick.Forde@mass.gov.

MVP Winter Webinar Series Details:

Webinar #1: February 14th, 2024, 10am-12pm

Topic: Equity in Climate Change Preparedness (MVP 2.0)

[Click here to register for Webinar #1](#)

Webinar #2: February 21st, 2024, 10am-12pm

Topic: Effectively Using ResilientMass Data and Project Tools: Key Tips from the Office of Climate Science
Meeting Information:

[Click here to register for Webinar #2](#)

Webinar #3: February 28th, 2024, 10am-12pm

Topic: Natural and Working Lands: Natural Climate Solutions and Municipal Opportunities

[Click here to register for Webinar #3](#)

Register Now! FY25 MVP Action Grant Pre-Request for Response Webinar

The Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs' (EEA) Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) Program team is anticipating the release of its next Request for Response (RFR) for MVP Action Grants in mid-March 2024. EEA is increasing funding to help communities address inland flooding. To prepare for this release, the MVP team will be hosting two informational sessions to give an overview of the program, review anticipated changes to this round's application, and answer questions.

Below are the two sessions we have planned that will be hosted on Zoom. **In order**

to register, you will need to follow the link to the session you would like to attend. Please only register for one session, as the sessions will review exactly the same content.

- Wednesday, March 6, 2024, 10:00 - 11:00 a.m. – [Register here](#)
- Thursday, March 7, 2024, 10:00 - 11:00 a.m. – [Register here](#)

If you cannot make it to either webinar or you would just like to watch on your own time, we will be posting the recording to our website resilientma.org/mvp in the "Stay Up-to-Date" section after the events.

If you have any questions, please reach out to marissa.robertson2@mass.gov.

Announcements

Healey-Driscoll Administration Releases Inaugural Report from the EEA

The Healey-Driscoll Administration released the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA) **inaugural report** highlighting key milestones and accomplishments by the agency in Governor Maura Healey's first year. This report showcases the outstanding work done by EEA organizations and partners to ensure that Massachusetts climate goals are achieved. The report describes the EEA officials' visits across the state and actions to identify and address climate-related goals, including but not limited to decarbonization, climate resilience, natural resource stewardship, and environmental and energy justice.

Governor Healey's first operating budget elevated EEA to 1 percent of the overall budget, representing a significant investment in agencies tasked with combating climate change and protecting natural resources. The report also summarizes the impact of EEA's grants. In 2023, EEA awarded \$216 million to 1,813 individual grantees through initiatives like the Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Program (MVP), the Affordable Housing Deep Energy Retrofit Grant Program, and the Natural Disaster Recovery Program for Agriculture.



Healey-Driscoll Administration Releases Climate Report Card

The Healey-Driscoll Administration released a **Climate Report Card** to evaluate progress on reducing greenhouse gas emissions and protecting communities from the impacts of climate change. The Report Card was one of 39 recommendations of

Climate Chief Melissa Hoffer's [recent report](#) to the Governor. Given that the state's greenhouse gas inventory takes time to assess, this report card identifies metrics that can be leading indicators of emissions reductions. Such metrics help identify where the state is on track and where it may face challenges. The report card offers assessments of the state's environmental justice, transportation, buildings, power, natural and working lands, and climate resilience efforts. Overall, Massachusetts has made significant progress and is well positioned for 2025, but a strong policy response to existing and emerging challenges will be needed to meet the state's ambitious 2030 targets.

DOER Launches Climate Leader Communities Program

The Department of Energy Resources (DOER) recently announced the launch of the [Climate Leaders Communities Program](#), a new program offered by the Green Communities Division of the Massachusetts Department of Energy Resources (DOER) to further help municipalities meet their climate and greenhouse gas reduction goals.

The new Climate Leader Communities program builds on the highly successful Green Communities Designation and Grant program. The voluntary program encourages municipalities to establish municipal emission reduction goals, create and implement municipal decarbonization roadmaps, promote clean energy initiatives and opportunities to the community, and adopt clean energy and climate-friendly programs, policies, and bylaws.

To become a Climate Leader Community, municipalities must meet certification requirements that include adoption of a zero-emission-first vehicle policy, adoption the Specialized Opt-In Building Code, and a commitment to eliminate the use of on-site fossil fuel in municipal buildings and fleets by 2050. Interested municipalities should contact their [Green Communities Regional Coordinator](#) to learn more.



Healey-Driscoll Administration Announces \$50 Million Investment and Milestones for Forests as Climate Solutions Initiative

As part of its "Forests as Climate Solutions" Initiative, the Healey-Driscoll Administration recently released the [Climate Forestry Committee's report](#) containing recommendations to the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA) regarding enhanced climate-oriented forest management practices for Massachusetts based on the latest climate science. The 12-member Committee of scientific experts emphasized the importance of keeping forests intact by enlarging forest reserves, increasing permanent conservation efforts, and reducing the conversion of forests to other uses. Noting the critical role forests play in mitigating dangerous climate change, the Committee urged the state to sharpen its land management focus on climate change mitigation and adaptation.

[EEA is allocating \\$50 million](#) to helping communities conserve forested land, as well as supporting forest-based businesses and local economies. EEA will invest this funding in forest conservation, including new forest reserves, and incentives that encourage municipal and private landowners to adopt climate-oriented management approaches. This funding will help the state reach its climate goals, as set forth in the Clean Energy and Climate Plan, conserving 40 percent of Massachusetts' natural and working lands by 2050.

Report of the Climate Forestry Committee:
Recommendations for Climate-Oriented
Forest Management Guidelines



Upcoming Dates, Events, & Other Opportunities

*Want to share details of your event or other related climate opportunities in our upcoming newsletters?
Submit to patrick.forde@mass.gov.*

Grant Opportunities

- [Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Planning 2.0](#) (MVP 2.0) is a grant for municipalities to revisit their climate resilience priorities with a focus on equity and translate those priorities into action. Explore this page [linked in title] to learn more about the MVP 2.0 process and access MVP 2.0 resources, including the MVP 2.0 guide, additional process documents, and GEAR.
- The Executive Office of Economic Development (EOED) is pleased to announce the opening of the [FY25 Inland Dredging Pilot Round of the Massachusetts Dredging Program](#). This round offers final design and construction grants to Massachusetts municipalities to support dredging of freshwater lakes, ponds, rivers, streams, and drinking water reservoirs, as well as dredging required for the removal of municipal dams. All Massachusetts municipalities are eligible to apply. Applications are due via online submission no later than March 1, 2024, 11:59 pm.
- [EmPower Massachusetts | MassCEC](#) - EmPower Massachusetts offers multiple stages of investment in communities and community-based organizations so that they can explore, develop, and implement program models or projects that provide access to the benefits of clean energy for previously underserved populations. This MassCEC program crowd-sources new and innovative ideas, then helps put them into action. Application period opens August 10, 2023, and MassCEC will be accepting applications for both grant opportunities through April 3, 2024.
- Upcoming Coastal Resilience Grants - Pre-Application Support Available from CZM - CZM anticipates the release of the Fiscal Year (FY) 2025 Request for Responses (RFR) for the [Coastal Resilience Grant Program](#) in the spring. Coastal Resilience Grants provide funding and technical assistance to coastal communities and eligible nonprofit organizations to reduce risks associated with coastal storms, flooding, erosion, and sea level rise through innovative and transferable local and regional projects. Up until the RFR is released, CZM can discuss project ideas and eligibility for the grants with potential applicants. See the contact information at the bottom of the [Coastal Resilience Grant page](#) to connect with CZM.

- Landscape Partnership Grants - DCS is seeking [Landscape Partnership Grant Program](#) applications for conservation projects that protect 100-500 acres of land through partnerships between local, state, and federal agencies and nonprofit organizations. Grants up to \$1,250,000 will be available this grant round. Potential applicants are strongly encouraged to attend an information session in-person on February 26 at 1:00 p.m. at MassWildlife Field Headquarters in Westborough or virtually on Microsoft Teams on February 28 at 2:00 p.m. Advanced registration is required for both sessions. Please email Vanessa Farny at vanessa.farny@mass.gov to register. Applications are due by April 18 at 3:00 p.m.—see the [application instructions](#) for additional details.
- [Indoor Air Quality in Schools](#) - The Inflation Reduction Act provides funding for grants to “monitor and reduce greenhouse gas emissions and other air pollutants at schools in low-income and disadvantaged communities.” Grantees will assist K-12 schools in low-income, disadvantaged, and Tribal communities in the development and adoption of comprehensive indoor air quality (IAQ) management plans to address air pollution and energy efficiency consistent with EPA’s recommended [best practices](#).

Job Opportunities

- View all openings at the Commonwealth and [apply here](#).
- [Assistant Secretary/Director of Coastal Zone Management](#) at the Office of Coastal Zone Management.
- [Land Use Planning Manager](#) at the EEA.
- [Director of Environmental Justice](#) at the Office of Environmental Justice and Equity within the EEA.
- [Regional Planner IV - Senior Trails & Greenways Planner](#) at the Department of Conservation Resources
- [Environmental Justice Liaison/Program Manager IV](#) at the Department of Energy Resources

Events

- The Office of Climate Innovation and Resilience (OCIR) is hosting a series of community engagement sessions to share updates, engage with community members, and receive feedback on the initial phase of the CPRG process. Meetings will be held virtually, with multiple language translation options.
 - When: February 1, 2024 at 6:00pm or February 2, 2024 at 1:00pm
 - [Please complete this form to RSVP](#). Meeting credentials will be sent out 24 hours before the meeting.
- The Federal Funds and Infrastructure Office (FFIO) is thrilled to announce the launch of the Massachusetts Federal Funds Partnership—an exciting monthly initiative aimed at empowering municipalities and tribes across the Commonwealth to access and leverage federal funding opportunities effectively.
 - More information on future meetings can be found [here](#).
- The Global Warming Solutions Act Implementation Advisory Committee (IAC) is a committee to advise the Administration’s implementation of the Global Warming Solutions Act (GWSA) featuring leaders from sectors and communities across Massachusetts. The next meeting, which is yet to be scheduled, will likely happen in Spring 2024.
 - More information on the IAC can be found [here](#).

Tools & Resources

- [Guides for Equitable and Actionable Resilience \(GEAR\)](#): GEAR provides Massachusetts communities access to data and guidance to assess climate change impacts, as well as actions and case studies for building community resilience. Provide feedback: info.resilientma@mass.gov.
- [Massachusetts Clean Energy and Climate Metrics](#): Public resources that provide key information and performance indicators relevant to Massachusetts’ greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and the Massachusetts Clean Energy and Climate Plans (CECP).
- [Digital Coast](#): The Digital Coast was developed to meet the unique needs of the coastal management community. The website provides not only coastal data, but also the tools, training, and information needed to make these data truly useful. Content comes from many sources, all of which are vetted by NOAA.

[EEA Climate Team](#) | [Website](#)

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