



MASSACHUSETTS FOREST ALLIANCE

249 Lakeside Avenue, Marlborough Massachusetts 01752-4503
www.MassForestAlliance.org | (617) 455 - 9918 | info@MassForestAlliance.org

January 5, 2026

Peter Church
Department of Conservation and Recreation
10 Park Plaza, Suite 6620
Boston, MA 02116

Mr. Church:

Thank you for your public outreach on 2025 forest management projects, including various public meetings around the state and the opportunity to submit comments. As always, we appreciate DCR's openness, transparency, and willingness to gather public feedback about its projects.

We're grateful to see DCR resume forest management projects after what has been effectively a three-year moratorium. We believe the projects outlined demonstrate sound silvicultural science and will have positive impacts on forest health and resilience and wildlife habitat. These projects will also help the state meet its ambitious climate change goals.

Many of the projects involve removing dying monoculture plantations. These plantations are typically of red pine, which has been ravaged by the red pine scale (an invasive insect), and Norway spruce, a non-native species. Removing these dying plantations allows the native mixed-species forest regenerating underneath to be released for rapid growth.

From a climate change perspective, removing dying plantation offers a carbon benefit. These dying plantations are almost certainly carbon sources – emitting *more* carbon into the atmosphere than they are sequestering. Leaving them to die over the next decade or two extends the time before a transition to a younger regrowing native forest that has high carbon sequestration rates – sequestering much more carbon than is being released. Research has also shown that a diverse, multi-aged, multi-species forest sequesters *more* carbon than a monoculture plantation.

Additionally, removing the plantations instead of letting them die over time allows for the use of at least some of the wood in long-lived durable wood products, keeping their carbon out of the atmosphere for decades longer than simply letting the tree die. Red pines can be made into long-lasting telephone poles, for example.

Finally, removing the plantations protects public users of DCR state forests and parks at a cost-effective price. DCR will typically *earn* money for a timber sale of a dying plantation rather than have to pay tens or even

Advocating for a Strong, Sustainable Forest Bioeconomy

Board of Directors

Dicken Crane
President
Windsor, MA

Charles Thompson
Vice President
Pelham, MA

James Dammann
Treasurer
Hillsboro, NH

Fred Heyes
Secretary
Orange, MA

Ken Conkey
At-Large
Belchertown, MA

Shane Bajnoci
North Amherst, MA

Phil Benjamin
South Easton, MA

Kate Lindroos Conlin
Buckland, MA

Evan Dell'Olio
Ludlow, MA

William Hull
Pomfret Center, CT

Jon Parrott
Chesterfield, MA

Chris Pirner
Hubbardston, MA

Peter Rayton
Northampton, MA

Jaime Wagner
Amherst, MA

Christopher Egan
Executive Director

hundreds of thousands of dollars to tree service companies to remove dangerous dying trees one-by-one.

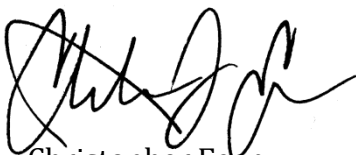
Some of the work being done is located in forest with the designation of Parkland. In the case of Willard Brook State Forest, our understanding is that this project came about as a result of requests from park staff to management foresters, concerned that the dying plantation represented a danger to visitors. For Chicopee State Park, the goal is to reduce fire risk while restoring barrens habitat for wildlife. These are admirable goals that should have wide public support.

It's difficult to imagine why there would be any public opposition to these projects. Not only are they well-considered from a silvicultural perspective, but they comply with the Climate Forestry Committee's suggestions related to climate-smart forest management, including the removal of dying monocultural plantations in an ecological restoration approach that will result in improved carbon sequestration and long-term forest resilience.

We congratulate the management foresters that clearly spent a great deal of time planning these projects. We urge DCR to move forward in a timely manner with these projects as outlined in the proposals, and our timber harvester members stand by to bring these projects to completion.

Thank you again for your commitment to listening to public feedback as you plan forestry projects for these properties, and for allowing us to share our thoughts.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Chris Egan', written in a cursive style.

Christopher Egan
Executive Director