

SMART public comment

Ashlee Kirkwood <ashleek214@gmail.com>

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To: SMART, DOER (ENE) <doer.smart@mass.gov>

Cc: mark.montigny@masenate.gov <mark.montigny@masenate.gov>; william.straus@mahouse.gov <william.straus@mahouse.gov>

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To whom it may concern,

With regards to the Solar Massachusetts Renewable Target (SMART) regulation, I personally believe forests and natural lands still need further protection from solar development by encouraging the development of solar on rooftops, parking canopies, highway cloverleaves, and other similar disturbed areas. I urge you to update the regulation such that we can avoid, or at least significantly reduce, the number of forests and farmland that are being converted to large-scale ground-mounted solar arrays, to better align this program with other state climate and land conservation programs and goals.

In the past five years, I have personally witnessed large swaths of forested areas be clear cut to make room for ground-mounted solar arrays, which is not only devastating to observe but is known to have a negative impact on native animal populations. As a scientist myself, as well as the Vice President of the Fairhaven-Acushnet Land Preservation Trust, we must do more to preserve natural areas, as there are plenty of already developed areas that would benefit from solar installations.

Thank you for your consideration,

Ashlee Kirkwood
Mattapoisett, MA