

CONSERVATION **MATTERS**

THE JOURNAL OF CONSERVATION LAW FOUNDATION | www.clf.org

NEW ENGLAND FOR PARIS



No 3
FALL
2017



BRINGING PARIS HOME

CLF Escalates Campaign to End Fossil Fuel Use in New England

December of 2015 marked a watershed moment in history. After years of failing to reach consensus on climate action, world leaders approved a plan to cut emissions of the harmful carbon pollution that is damaging the global climate. The Paris Climate Accord was imperfect, to be sure. But it provided long-overdue recognition that no nation is exempt from responsibility for this planetary crisis – nor are they alone in facing its impacts.

We have a remarkable opportunity for New England to show the U.S. and the world what climate leadership looks like.

— Greg Cunningham,
Vice President for Clean Energy
and Climate Change

That recognition did not stick here in the United States, however, where in May, President Trump withdrew the country from the landmark agreement. But rather than lament this shameful abdication of responsibility, says Greg Cunningham, CLF's Vice President for Clean Energy and Climate Change, we should look at this as a "remarkable opportunity for New England to show the U.S. and the world what climate leadership looks like."

Indeed, states, cities, universities, and industry leaders in New England and across the country have already been galvanized to pledge action where the president will not. The governors of Vermont, Massachusetts, Connecticut, and Rhode Island have all joined the U.S. Climate Alliance, a group of states,

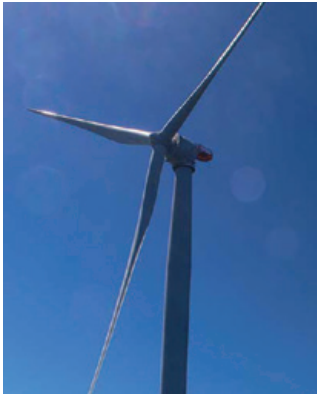
businesses, and others pledging to uphold the goals of the Paris Climate Accord. The question now is, how will they turn pledges on paper into meaningful climate action that finally brings an end to the era of fossil fuels?

WRITING CLIMATE ACTION INTO LAW

Long before President Trump walked away from the Paris Climate Accord, CLF was working to create state laws that are even more ambitious in reducing carbon pollution than the historic agreement. In 2008, the organization helped to write one of the country's strongest climate laws: Massachusetts's Global Warming Solutions Act, which requires deep cuts in greenhouse gas emissions by 2050. When the state failed to enact the law fully, CLF sued, ultimately winning its case in Massachusetts's highest court last year.

As a result of that victory, the Commonwealth in August released groundbreaking regulations that require state-based power plants to lower their climate-damaging emissions each year. The state must also buy more clean energy every year, so that, by 2050, at least 80% of the electricity sold in Massachusetts must be essentially fossil-fuel free.

This is a national first – one that signals the beginning of the end of fossil fuels in Massachusetts. While there is still more work to do in the Commonwealth to address the climate pollution stemming from the transportation sector, CLF is now looking at how to replicate this trailblazing achievement across the region. "Lowering toxic emissions that threaten our health



PHOTOS: [CLOCKWISE FROM TOP]

Massachusetts's last coal plant, Brayton Point Station in Somerset, closed earlier this year, signaling the beginning of the end of coal in the region. Meeting the goals of the Paris Climate Accord will mean increasing local clean energy sources, including solar and wind.

and environment is an urgent imperative," says Cunningham. "That's why CLF is escalating our fight for enforceable action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in every New England state."

BRINGING PARIS HOME

Changing laws, updating policies, and enforcing them is complex enough work in one state, let alone in six. But this is where CLF's unique expertise best comes into play. "Our advocates bring a collective vision and knowledge to the table, whether we are in front of state legislatures, appearing in state and federal courts, or working with our energy and environmental agencies," says Cunningham. "We also have a strong presence in regional and federal venues where we are a constant reminder to our policymakers and regulators of their legal and moral obligations to address climate change today."

While the extent and nature of actions undertaken in each state will vary by necessity, the shared effort to bring the Paris Climate Accord home to New England will take the region to a new level of commitment and leadership in ending the era of fossil fuels for good. ♦

THE STATE OF THE STATES

Massachusetts may have taken a significant step forward on climate action recently, but the record of other New England states is more mixed.

NEW HAMPSHIRE

Governor Sununu is on the record as a climate skeptic. While New Hampshire published a climate action plan in 2009 that lays out ambitious goals to reduce emissions by 2050, the plan lacks legal authority to make it happen.

MAINE

Nearing the end of his final term in office, Governor LePage is also considered a climate skeptic. The State has set a goal to reduce carbon pollution, but no action has been taken to meet it.

VERMONT

Vermont created strong goals for cutting climate-damaging emissions under Governor Shumlin, including to achieve 90 percent of its total energy needs from renewable sources by 2050. Its current governor, Phil Scott, joined the U.S. Climate Alliance and recently formed a Climate Change Commission tasked with

identifying how the state can achieve its renewable energy and greenhouse gas emissions goals. The test now will be to make sure the governor follows through on his commission's recommendations.

CONNECTICUT

Connecticut passed its own Global Warming Solutions Act to cut carbon pollution drastically by 2050, but it lacks a method for enforcing its mandate. What's more, a recent draft of its comprehensive energy strategy doesn't go far enough in promoting the development of renewable energy sources and improving opportunities for clean transportation.

RHODE ISLAND

Governor Raimondo has committed to major investments in renewable energy but continues to support the construction of a massive new natural gas-fired power plant. Now the state that pioneered the nation's first offshore wind farm must decide what it wants its climate legacy to be.

Follow CLF's actions state by state at www.clf.org/newengland4paris



Photo: Anthony Darlington

taking out the trash

THE PROBLEM

Far too many families are being poisoned by contaminants released by landfills and waste incinerators across Massachusetts. All landfills eventually leak toxic chemicals into our air and water, and Massachusetts currently has no plan to address this dangerous problem.

CLF IN ACTION

In January, CLF launched the Zero Waste Project to protect Massachusetts communities from the dangers posed by landfills. CLF is working to raise awareness about the negative health and environmental impacts of trash with the ultimate goal of changing the way Massachusetts – and all of New England – deals with waste. That means moving from the current unsustainable model of burying and burning waste to a “Zero Waste” approach that minimizes the amount of trash sent to the state’s landfills and incinerators.

PROGRESS

CLF celebrated with the people of Southbridge when Casella Waste, owners of the state’s largest landfill, announced in August that it was not only abandoning plans for a massive expansion at the site, but would close the landfill entirely by the end of 2018. The landfill had faced years of fierce opposition from residents in Southbridge and surrounding communities over its air and water pollution. The final straw for Casella Waste came in June when Southbridge residents voted overwhelmingly against the company’s plans to expand the landfill.

NEXT STEPS

CLF is taking action both locally and nationally to hold landfills and waste incinerators accountable for their pollution. In Saugus, CLF has announced a lawsuit against Wheelabrator, Inc., over its failure to monitor and track water quality in the area surrounding the company’s 140-acre ash landfill. The landfill is located within one of the most biologically significant salt marshes north of Boston, yet it has operated for decades without monitoring its impacts on the community or local environment. Given the company’s plans to expand the landfill, CLF is calling for the immediate monitoring of groundwater near the site to determine the extent of contamination there.

At the same time, CLF and its partners are challenging EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt’s decision to suspend long-standing federal rules that limit hazardous and climate-warming emissions from landfills. Methane and other gases released by landfills contribute to smog, aggravate asthma, and can cause permanent lung damage. What’s more, methane is a powerful greenhouse gas proven to contribute to climate change.

Stopping polluters is only one part of the solution, however. Changing the way New Englanders deal with their trash is just as significant. From improved and more accessible recycling programs to regulations that divert food waste from landfills, CLF is pushing to make zero waste a reality across the region. ♦

Stopping polluters is only one part of the solution. Changing the way New Englanders deal with trash is just as significant.

STAY UP TO DATE with our Zero Waste Project at www.clf.org/zerowaste
GET INVOLVED Call your mayor or town manager, and your state legislator to tell them that you support Zero Waste programs

WHY WE GIVE



Jayne Putnam Iafrate & Barbara Stephens

Members, Charles Cabot Society

“The talented attorneys at CLF are successful because they play the long game. When it comes to giving, we play the long game, too, by supporting CLF annually and through our estate

plans. It’s never too early to think about how our legacy, in partnership with CLF, will protect New England’s unparalleled natural resources for generations to come.”

Our donors inspire us to never give up because so much is at stake. Hear more from Jayne and Barbara and other CLF supporters at www.clf.org/whyigive. We hope their words will inspire you to support our efforts.

PROTECTING NEW ENGLAND’S TOMORROW

clf.org/cabotsociety

As a Conservation Law Foundation supporter, you’re already taking an active role in making New England a cleaner and healthier place to live, work, and play today.

But what about tomorrow?

A gift through your will, trust, or retirement or life insurance plan can help protect our region for generations to come and secure your legacy of supporting a thriving New England for all.

When you join CLF’s Charles Cabot Society with a gift through your overall estate and financial plans, you will help ensure a vibrant and healthy future for your children and grandchildren tomorrow. Plus, your gift could receive substantial tax and financial benefits during your lifetime.

We invite you to learn more about how you can make a difference as a member of the Charles Cabot Society by contacting CLF’s Development Office at 617.850.1738 or www.clf.org/cabotsociety

Melissa Paly



Great Bay-Piscataqua Waterkeeper®

Melissa Paly is helping to stitch together a complicated tapestry of people and places working to protect and restore New Hampshire's Great Bay estuary and the Piscataqua River.

1 What draws you to Great Bay and the Piscataqua River?

I've lived in New Hampshire's Seacoast region for years, raised my kids here, and poked around our harbors, salt marshes, and rivers as a sailor and kayaker. Besides this area just being so beautiful, I love the regional history that is written around the water. For hundreds of years, the Seacoast's rivers and bays were what connected one community to another. But with our cars, roads, and bridges, it's easy to forget that it's our waterways that make our region so unique, and such a special place to live, work and play.

2 What are you most excited about in your new role as Waterkeeper?

What is remarkable about the Seacoast region is how many different people and groups are involved in protecting and restoring our waterways. In every community, and around each of the seven rivers that feed the Great Bay-Piscataqua Estuary, are town officials, scientists, state and federal managers, landowners, business leaders, activists, and volunteers who really care about the region's health. It is a privilege to work with so many dedicated, passionate people, to connect more people to each other and to the

places they care about, and to provide vision and leadership so we can really make headway over the coming years.

3 What is the biggest concern you heard from people this past summer?

It's a tough time to be an environmental advocate and activist – the national political climate that we're up against right now is challenging and the forces of climate change are bearing down on us, with all sorts of ecological changes happening right in front of our eyes. For some, this can create feelings of hopelessness, but for many others, it's a catalyst for action. And, while we might not be able to see major progress in environmental protection at a national level right now, we sure can make a difference here in our own backyard.

4 What are the most significant issues impacting the estuary and river today?

Helping communities, businesses, and homeowners reduce stormwater pollution is a huge focus of my work. We need to address sources of stormwater pollution that are hard to control because they come from all over – roads, lawns, streams, septic systems – and get washed into the water with the rain.

The other serious issue we face is the toxic pollution migrating off two Superfund sites in our region: the Coakley Landfill and parts of the former Pease Airforce Base. We're just seeing the tip of the iceberg with a new group of contaminants called PFCs that are now showing up in nearby drinking water wells and streams. My job as Waterkeeper is as much focused on the health of people as it is the health of our ecosystem.

5 What is one thing that people can do to make a difference?

Get involved! So many decisions are being made all the time that impact our waterways, our environment, our health. Show up for public meetings, speak up, write letters, talk to your neighbors, let elected officials know you care about what we do on the land and how it impacts the water we drink and the waterways we love. ♦

STAY UP TO DATE!

Keep up with Melissa's and CLF's work on New Hampshire's Seacoast through the Save the Great Bay-Piscataqua Facebook group at www.clf.org/gbpwaterkeeper



AROUND CLF

MAINE

CLF is challenging regressive new solar rules that punish clean, local, and affordable power generation. This year, the state's Public Utilities Commission gutted rules that make it financially feasible for Mainers to install solar panels. The new rules even assess a charge on solar panel owners for the energy they produce themselves. Local solar power benefits all Mainers, which is why CLF and its partners are taking the Commission to court to stop these new rules and to force the agency to develop rules that are good for Maine's economy and environment.

MASSACHUSETTS

CLF pushed hard for the passage of a 2016 Clean Energy Bill that requires Massachusetts's electric companies to purchase at least 1,600 megawatts of offshore wind – enough to power more than half a million homes – by 2027. Now we are reaping the benefits of that advocacy, as the state's three biggest electric companies recently issued a groundbreaking request for bids for large-scale offshore wind energy.

As the bids come in, CLF will stay engaged to ensure Massachusetts fully seizes this opportunity for healthier air, local jobs, and climate-friendly electricity.

NEW HAMPSHIRE

CLF is raising awareness about the dangers of PFCs, highly persistent toxic chemicals that are contaminating some New Hampshire waterways. Water sampling by CLF's Great Bay-Piscataqua Waterkeeper found PFCs in local brooks near the Coakley landfill, sounding an important alarm for state and federal regulators. Our Waterkeeper also found PFCs in brooks near Pease Tradeport flowing into the Great Bay estuary. CLF has sued the Pease Development Authority for ongoing violations of the Clean Water Act's stormwater program at the Tradeport.

RHODE ISLAND

The Ocean State has taken a historic step with the launch of *Relish Rhody*, a comprehensive food strategy to boost

and sustain markets for locally grown food for the good of communities, the environment, and the economy. The food plan supports CLF's advocacy to create a resilient regional food system that increases food access, creates jobs, and buoys the regional economy.

VERMONT

CLF is actively reviewing the proposed sale of Vermont Yankee to a New York-based decommissioning company. In testimony submitted in August, CLF noted that the proposed plan to transfer ownership of the shuttered plant falls short in several key areas: it keeps the public in the dark about contract details for the sale, lacks sufficient insurance and other financial guarantees to protect the public if something goes wrong, and offers no regulatory oversight to ensure the plan is carried out well. With so much at stake in the clean-up process, CLF will continue to act as a watchdog as the process moves forward.

TAKE ACTION!
Your Voice Matters

Speak up and take action on the issues that matter to you across New England. Sign up for CLF emails so you'll be the first to know when we need your help.
www.clf.org/signup

Other ways to keep up to date:

- CLF's blog: clf.org/blog/
- Twitter: @clf
- Facebook: facebook.com/TheCLF

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THE JOURNAL OF CONSERVATION LAW FOUNDATION | VOLUME XXIV, NO. 3 | FALL 2017 | ISSN 1521-9941

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT



A little more than three years ago, CLF reached a groundbreaking settlement with Footprint Power, a New Jersey-based developer proposing to replace a shuttered coal-fired power plant in Salem, Massachusetts, with a

new natural gas-fired plant. Our settlement allowed the new and efficient gas plant to be built but required it to lower its climate-damaging emissions every year through 2050, by which time the plant must retire.

Even as we hailed this first-of-its-kind agreement, we knew that forcing one power plant to lower and eliminate its emissions was not enough. We needed every power plant in Massachusetts to do the same. Otherwise, the Commonwealth would never achieve the deep cuts in greenhouse gas emissions mandated in its Global Warming Solutions Act.

So we pushed for system-wide change. We successfully sued the Commonwealth for failing to implement fully its landmark climate law by regulating emissions from all power plants and other sectors as well. We then worked with the state to develop those regulations. Last month, those years of work paid off when the state announced new regulations that apply emissions limits like those

we pioneered three years ago to nearly every power plant in the state.

But our work is far from done. We are at a defining moment in the effort to avert the threat of climate catastrophe. President Trump's withdrawal from the Paris Climate Accord has put the United States on the wrong side of history. We here in New England have an opportunity – and obligation – to right this wrong through local action. With renewed urgency, CLF is escalating our work to develop legally binding climate laws, like the one we helped create and enforce here in Massachusetts, in every New England state.

We're calling this campaign *New England for Paris*. We will face many challenges, and victory won't be achieved overnight, but overcoming seemingly impossible odds is what CLF does best. And in this fight, there's too much at stake not to try. Lowering toxic emissions that threaten the health of our people and our planet is an urgent moral imperative. It's time to make it a legal imperative as well.

Sincerely,

Bradley Campbell
President

Bradley Campbell
President

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Printing by: Journeyman Press
Cover Photo: Elfred Tseng via Shutterstock