

Commissioner Doug Rice
MA Department of Conservation and Recreation
251 Causeway Street
9th Floor
Boston, MA 02114

Oct. 16, 2022

Dear Commissioner Rice,

The individuals and groups listed below are writing to encourage you to partner DCR with the Massachusetts state legislature's efforts to mitigate and reverse climate change. As the Special Commission Report on DCR stated, your agency is in a unique position as the manager of the largest acreage of forested lands in the Commonwealth. You can bring DCR into a leadership role by not merely accepting the scientific evidence of the need to stop deforestation and to advance proforestation but also by reallocating labor and funds to support forest-based climate mitigation. Such an effort would also align with the direction in the EEA's Decarbonization Roadmap Study which clearly identified the critical role of forests in the effort to attain net-zero by 2050.

The above raises serious concerns regarding the DCR policy and practice of logging on state-owned lands under the control of DCR. The main justification that is given for the logging of our mature trees in State-owned forests is that DCR wants to showcase good stewardship and timber cutting practices, but we think this is a dated policy and that in light of the climate emergency, DCR should instead be a champion of [Proforestation](#). As Commissioner, you have the power to change this pro-logging policy and adopt a proforestation policy, turning DCR forest management from a climate damaging activity to a climate positive one.

The leading MA gubernatorial candidate, and likely next Governor, has released a strong forest protection and [climate plan](#) including instituting a moratorium on logging of state-owned lands as part of addressing natural solutions to the Climate Crisis. Thus, the suspension or elimination of the DCR public lands logging program may only be a matter of time. Public opinion is not supportive of this outdated DCR policy. As the new Commissioner, you can take preemptive action and change DCR's commercial logging policies now, before the next administration forces this change upon DCR.

The Management Forestry Program (commercial logging of state-owned lands) is not in alignment with [DCR's core mission](#)- "To protect, promote and enhance our common wealth of natural, cultural and recreational resources for the well-being of all." According to the recent [Special Commission Report](#), DCR occupies a unique position among all state agencies to leverage the power of intact forests to help draw-down atmospheric CO₂ while protecting critical wildlife habitat. As such, we hope that you can be the leader we need at this point in history, and will take steps to change the direction of the agency in regards to protecting intact forests for their climate mitigation potential.

We urge you to take steps to redirect the entire Management Forestry budget towards proforestation and Urban Reforestation, expanding existing programs such as the Greening the Gateway Cities effort at DCR. This budget redirection would likely provide about \$2-3 million of

annual funding, and the existing staff could easily be transferred over to support the effort, retaining the current employees while letting them use their skills for something climate positive. The Legislature would see this effort as heroic, as DCR would be providing the funding for something that the Legislature is attempting to accomplish, as exemplified by Senator Creem's Municipal Reforestation bill ([S.504/H.905](#)). Using existing funding to develop the Municipal Reforestation program, housed at DCR, would garner widespread support from the public.

The existing urban reforestation efforts at DCR have resulted in the planting of approximately 36,000 small trees over the past 10 years, an amazing accomplishment. Meanwhile, the Management Forestry Program has actively attempted to cut down about 1 million mature trees over the same period, while actually cutting down more than 250,000 mature trees. Considering that it takes more than 450 small trees to equal the carbon removal ability of one mature tree, this is essentially equivalent to a 3,125:1 ratio of carbon/climate disparity between mature trees that DCR has cut down versus trees that DCR has helped to plant. This on-going effort by DCR to cut down mature forests, which is based on an outdated policy direction, seems to be completely counterproductive in regards to addressing the climate mitigation needs of the Commonwealth.

We look forward to hearing back from you regarding how you intend to update this outmoded logging policy and bring DCR's forest management into alignment with the new forest protection direction required by the Next Generation Climate Roadmap legislation. We would greatly appreciate the opportunity to discuss this policy change directly with you, at your earliest convenience.

Sincerely,

The undersigned 10 organizations and 82 individuals

(This letter was initiated by ORMA/Trees-As-A-Public-Good Network)

Groups: Our Revolution Massachusetts - Climate Crisis Working Group
 Elders Climate Action - Massachusetts Chapter
 Massachusetts Forest Watch
 Franklin County CPR Climate Crisis Task Force
 ORMA Trees-As-A-Public-Good Network
 The Enviro Show, Florence, MA
 Mass Forest Rescue, Greenfield, MA
 Greenfield Tree Committee, Greenfield, MA
 Arborway Coalition, Jamaica Plain, MA
 A Beautiful Future, Westhampton, MA

Individuals: Nancy Maynes, Amesbury, MA
 Jeff Clark, Amherst, MA
 Laura Rojo MacLeod, Amherst, MA
 María MacLeod, Amherst, MA
 Robin L Bergman, Arlington, MA
 Anne McHugh, Boston, MA

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|------------------------|-------------------|
| Celeste Walker, | Boston, MA |
| Dawn Edell, | Brookline, MA |
| Maiyim Baron, | Brookline, MA |
| Marilyn Ray Smith, | Brookline, MA |
| Seth Evans, | Brookline, MA |
| Catherine LeBlanc, | Cambridge, MA |
| Howard Shrobe, | Cambridge, MA |
| Penny J. Novack, | Charlemont, MA |
| Tom Amiro, | Chelmsford, MA |
| CJ Lammers, | Chesterfield, MA |
| R. Tippens, | Colrain, MA |
| David Greenberg, | Colrain, MA |
| Garret Whitney, | Concord, MA |
| Mary White, | Concord, MA |
| Donald L. Walker, Jr., | Conway MA |
| Aalana R Feaster, | Dorchester, MA |
| Mark Blatchley, | Erving, MA |
| Ralph S. Baker, | Fitchburg, MA |
| Darcy K. Sweeney, | Florence, MA |
| Don Ogden, | Florence, MA |
| Edward Ward, | Florence, MA |
| Susan Miller-King, | Florence, MA |
| Seth Wilpan, | Florence, MA |
| Alden Booth, | Gill, MA |
| Dorothy McIver, | Greenfield, MA |
| Maria Danielson, | Greenfield MA |
| Marion Griswold, | Greenfield MA |
| Mary Chicoine, | Greenfield MA |
| Alyssa Robb, | Greenfield, Ma |
| Bekka Eowind, | Greenfield, MA |
| Bonny Grant, | Greenfield, MA |
| Dianna W Rorabacher, | Greenfield, MA |
| Dodi Melnicoff, | Greenfield, MA |
| Edie Heinemann, | Greenfield, MA |
| Glen Ayers, | Greenfield, MA |
| Ilene Stahl, | Greenfield, MA |
| Kate Stillings, | Greenfield, MA |
| Katherine Golub, | Greenfield, MA |
| Kurt Schelle, | Greenfield, MA |
| Louise Amyot, | Greenfield, MA |
| Lynn Waldron, | Greenfield, MA |
| Madeline Miller, | Greenfield, MA |
| Mary Westervelt, | Greenfield, MA |
| Matt Perry, | Greenfield, MA |
| Rachel Gordon, | Greenfield, MA |
| Richard Andrew Brown, | Greenfield, MA |
| Susan C Worgaftik, | Greenfield, MA |
| Barbara Abraham, | Leominster, MA |
| Michael Dover, | Leverett, MA |
| Denise Sadigur, | Lowell, MA |
| Laurel Facey, | Millers Falls, MA |

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|-----------------------|---------------------|
| Melissa Brown, | Newton, MA |
| Pat Irwin, | Newton, MA |
| Dale LaBonte, | Northampton MA |
| Chris Matera, | Northampton MA |
| Jodi Rodar, | Pelham, MA |
| Rema Loeb, | Plainfield, MA |
| Maliea Kai Slocum, | Plymouth, MA |
| David Arfa, | Shelburne Falls, MA |
| Celinda Ezzell, | Shutesbury, MA |
| Gail R Fleischaker, | Shutesbury, MA |
| Michael DeChiara, | Shutesbury, MA |
| Lee Dawn Daniel, | Southampton, MA |
| Helaina Balcanoff, | Turners Falls, MA |
| Eugenie Johnston, | Watertown, MA |
| Libby Shaw, | Watertown, MA |
| J. Michael Gilbreath, | Wayland, MA |
| Marjorie Lee, | Wayland, MA |
| Gloria Kegeles, | Wendell, MA |
| Lisa Hoag, | Wendell, MA |
| William Facey, | Wendell, MA |
| Kate O'Connor, | Westhampton, MA |
| Frederick Spence, | Westhampton, MA |
| Barbara Fullerton, | Weston, MA |
| Mike Kurland, | Williamsburg, MA |
| Miriam Kurland, | Williamsburg, MA |

cc. Attorney General Maura Healey
 Senator William N. Brownsberger, [Second Suffolk and Middlesex](#)
 Senator Cynthia Stone Creem, First Middlesex and Norfolk;
 Representative Lori A. Ehrlich, 8th Essex;
(including all additional cosponsors of S.504/H.905)
 Representative Jack Patrick Lewis, 7th Middlesex;
 Senator Joseph A. Boncore, First Suffolk and Middlesex;
 Senator Jason M. Lewis, Fifth Middlesex;
 Representative Erika Uytterhoeven, 27th Middlesex;
 Senator Diana DiZoglio, First Essex;
 Senator Joanne M. Comerford, Hampshire, Franklin and Worcester;
 Senator Sonia Chang-Diaz, Second Suffolk;
 Representative Nika C. Elugardo, 15th Suffolk;
 Senator Lydia Edwards, First Suffolk and Middlesex;
 Representative Steven C. Owens, 29th Middlesex;
 Representative Christina A. Minicucci, 14th Essex;
 Representative Michelle L. Ciccolo, 15th Middlesex;
 Representative David M. Rogers, 24th Middlesex;

Representative Jon Santiago 9th Suffolk;
Representative Kay Khan, 11th Middlesex;
Representative Natalie M. Higgins, 4th Worcester;
Representative Sean Garballey, 23rd Middlesex
Senator Danillo A. Sena, 37th Middlesex;
Representative Tommy Vitolo, 15th Norfolk;
Representative Adrian C. Madaro, 1st Suffolk;
Representative Jacob R. Oliveira, 7th Hampden;