The Future of Offshore Wind in Massachusetts
(Hint: there is a future!)
by Josh Craft, ELM Program Director

2015 did not begin promisingly for the future of offshore wind in Massachusetts, as the state’s two largest electric utilities, NSTAR (now Eversource) and National Grid, both terminated their purchase agreements with Cape Wind. The termination of these contracts leaves Cape Wind without a buyer for its power, putting the development of the 480-megawatt wind farm on hold.

But while the future of Cape Wind remains uncertain, ELM remains optimistic about the future of offshore wind in the Commonwealth. Why? First, the size of our offshore wind resources are enormous. As ELM Corporate and Labor Council members Roger Berkowitz of Legal Seafoods and Gerard Dhooge of the New England Maritime Trades Council wrote recently in an op-ed in the Boston Globe (“Charlie Baker should focus on wind,” Jan. 22, 2015), new federal offshore wind areas off the coast of Massachusetts have up to 5,000 megawatts of offshore wind potential, 10 times the size of Cape Wind. In total, new offshore wind areas far offshore and out of sight could provide pollution-free power to 2.4 million homes. Second, it remains an important economic development opportunity for our state. The New Bedford Marine Commerce Terminal, in development, has the potential to support the assembly and construction of offshore wind projects. If we develop offshore wind projects, employment opportunities are significant. The U.S. Department of Energy estimates that there could be up to 43,000 jobs in the U.S. from offshore wind-related industries by 2030.

Despite the Cape Wind setback, members of the legislature are leading the charge to make sure that Massachusetts taps into our offshore wind resources. Representative Patricia Haddad of Somerset has offered an ambitious proposal, H. 2881, a bill that would require our electric utilities to enter into contracts to purchase up to 2,000 megawatts of offshore power by 2030. Representative Antonio Cabral of New Bedford has also re-filed his offshore wind bill, H. 2851, that would provide for a smaller but still significant procurement of offshore wind. While we don’t agree with all the provisions of H. 2881 (especially the provisions on gas pipelines), it offers a promising start to promote offshore wind. Combined with important measures to expand in-region renewable energy, these bills could provide a path forward to investing in our offshore wind resources and achieving our climate change and energy goals in a cost-effective manner.

Governor Baker and our legislative leadership are right now debating which energy resources offer the most value to the Commonwealth. Offshore wind must be among them. Smart investments now will pay off.
ELM Sets Priorities for the 2015–2016 Legislative Session

by Nancy Goodman, Vice President for Policy

Each two-year legislative session presents a fresh opportunity to advance environmental policy goals like ensuring Massachusetts meets its greenhouse gas reduction targets, maximizing energy efficiency and expanding local renewable energy development, preventing sprawl and protecting land, reducing waste and pollution, and funding a transportation system that offers residents viable choices for public transit, walking and biking.

For the 2015-2016 session, in addition to leading budget advocacy for state environmental programs, ELM will focus on advocating for the following innovative pieces of legislation. (For a complete list of bills we are supporting, visit the “Our Work” section of the ELM website at www.environmentalleague.org)

Energy and Climate Change

An Act relative to Home Energy Efficiency (SD633)
A home is the largest purchase many of us will ever make, and its energy efficiency has long-term consequences for our pocketbooks and the climate. This bill would require a free energy audit prior to home sales that lets potential buyers know how energy efficient a home is and assign it a score—similar to the MPG rating on cars or the energy guide label for appliances. Over time, it is our hope that this will empower buyers to choose more energy efficient homes and will move sellers to take steps in advance to get a good rating.

An Act Combating Climate Change (SD285)
Lead Sponsor: Sen. Michael Barrett
When something costs more, we are motivated to use less of it. By putting a price on carbon content, this innovative bill would make it more expensive to use fossil fuels and encourage the transition to cleaner energy sources. To protect the state’s competitiveness and prevent hardship for families, the revenues generated from the fees would be rebated to residents and companies.

An Act to Protect the Natural Resources of the Commonwealth/Public Lands Preservation Act (SD889/HD1080)
Did you know that natural resource lands and open space owned by the state or municipalities are constitutionally protected (Article 97 of the Massachusetts Constitution)? Use of this land for any other purpose requires a 2/3 vote of each branch of the legislature. Unfortunately, despite this apparent high barrier, disposition of these “Article 97” lands happens all too routinely. In aggregate, these dispositions are resulting in significant loss of open space and natural resource lands in Massachusetts. Once the land is gone, it is gone forever. This legislation would require that owners proposing changes in the use of any “Article 97” land provide information to the Secretary of Energy and Environmental Affairs for review early in the process. In most circumstances, land owners must also provide replacement land so that there is no net loss.

An Act to Sustain Community Preservation Revenue (SD670/HD2943)
The Community Preservation Act (CPA) passed in 2001 provides funds, including a state match, to assist communities to protect open space, develop affordable housing, and undertake historic preservation. This remarkably popular and successful policy has now been adopted by 158 municipalities, with matching fund revenues generated by fees collected at the Registries of Deeds. Yet between the increased number of participating communities and the decline in real estate transactions over the past few years, communities are currently getting less than a 20% match, a record low. This bill would adjust fees at the Registries of Deeds by which the state generates matching fund revenues, so that all municipalities will receive at least a 50% match.

Transportation

An Act to Explore Alternative Funding Sources to Ensure Safe and Reliable Transportation (SD691/HD1566)
Much of the revenue we raise to fund our transportation system comes from the gas tax. With cars becoming more fuel efficient and younger adults driving less, this revenue source will diminish in the future, even as we need to raise more money. We need to identify new sources of revenue to maintain our roads and bridges and expand transportation options. This bill would test a new approach to raising revenue by assessing car owners a fee based on the number of miles they drive. The pilot would include at least 1,000 individuals and the program would test the reliability, ease of use, cost, and public acceptance of a user fee program.

An Act Promoting the Planning and Development of Sustainable Communities (SD317)
Sprawling land development has resulted in the loss of natural areas, long commutes and less vibrant city and town centers. This bill would update our state’s outdated zoning laws to encourage balanced development that preserves as much land as possible. These changes will lead to better land-use outcomes – jobs and homes in the right places, less spending on excess infrastructure, and the protection of important natural resources.
Recycling and Waste Management

An Act relative to Recycling (SD229)
Lead Sponsor: Sen. Marc Pacheco

Every year, Massachusetts throws away enough material to fill 74 Fenway Parks. This legislation would help Massachusetts reduce waste by setting a per person cap on trash generation. The cap would be set at 600 lbs. of trash per person by July 1, 2016 and 450 lbs. per person by July 1, 2021. This bill will reduce trash by hundreds of thousands of tons per year, saving cities and towns millions of dollars while increasing recycling, reducing greenhouse gas emissions, and creating green jobs in Massachusetts.

You Can Help

Help us build momentum towards these bills’ passage. Reach out to your representatives to make them aware of the bills, and ask them where they stand. Look for ELM action alerts and take action – if you’re signed up to receive our email notices, we’ll send you alerts at critical points in the legislative session when your voice will have the most impact. For more information, answers to specific questions, or talking points, contact ELM Vice President for Policy Nancy Goodman or Legislative Director Erica Mattison.

How do your state legislators rate on the environment?

Do your state representative and senator share your concern for the environment? Do their actions in office represent you? To help inform concerned voters about how their legislators are voting on the environment, this spring ELM produced a legislative scorecard for the first time, focused on the 2013–2014 legislative session.

Scores are based on both roll call votes on legislation dealing with environmental and energy issues and additional actions by legislators that either demonstrated leadership in advancing environmental goals or conversely, obstructing progress. (For more on the methodology ELM employed in awarding scores, see www.environmentalleague.org/scorecard.)

Check out how your representatives performed and the details of their scores at www.environmentalleague.org/scorecard. If they did well, we encourage you to contact their offices to thank them for their leadership. If they scored poorly, express your disappointment, and let them know how important environmental issues are to you. As a constituent, you have real power to get these issues on their radars. You can let them know you are paying attention and provide them an incentive to keep at it—or do better—going forward.

Did you know?

ELM is the Massachusetts affiliate of the National Wildlife Federation. As the Mass. affiliate, ELM works closely with NWF on state and local conservation efforts and on grassroots efforts on national issues. Jointly, ELM and NWF work to protect Massachusetts wildlife and ensure that our members of Congress are informed about national environmental issues that affect Massachusetts. Currently, we are collaborating to promote carbon-free offshore wind power in Massachusetts.
An Olympic Challenge for the MBTA

by George Bachrach

It's exciting to think of Greater Boston hosting the 2024 Olympic Games. It's exciting to think of hundreds of thousands of athletes, fans and tourists visiting Boston, enjoying our history and city life...filling venues, filling hotels and restaurants... and filling our transportation system. Will it work? Will visitors (and those of us who live here) be able to get to the Olympic venues and get to our jobs? Only if we fix the transportation system...now! How can we get on track?

If we want a 21st century transit system we need both reform and revenue. We must do both maintenance and expansion. We must walk and chew gum at the same time. ELM is working hard to make sure we do.

There is always more efficiency to squeeze from the system, but the MBTA has made meaningful reforms. Management will stop paying for operating expenses on their credit card, and the Carmen’s Union has agreed to reforms on retirement, pensions and healthcare benefits, to lower costs.

When it comes to expansion, who can argue against the huge economic opportunity opened up by extending the MBTA’s Red, Green and Orange lines...or rail lines to Newburyport, Worcester and the South Shore...adding thousands of new jobs to our economy?

Most importantly, now we need new equipment and maintenance. Do you still drive a car from the 1970s? The MBTA does. The Red Line has 74 cars from the Nixon years! The Orange Line has 120 cars from the Carter years. The cars on the Mattapan Line were built in the 1940s! And more than half of the MBTA's commuter rail locomotives date to the 1970s, despite the manufacturer’s recommended lifespan of 25 years. Reform alone can’t fix that.

It would be great if “no new taxes” solved the problem. Please find us a transit analyst that thinks reform alone, without revenue, can fix the T. Plus every day we were shut down due to storms, it cost the economy $265 million in lost wages and productivity. Isn’t that a tax on every business and employee? ELM is working with other transit advocates in the Transportation for Massachusetts coalition to promote the following solutions:

- **Reduce debt!** Twenty percent of the MBTA’s budget pays old debt, mostly from the Big Dig, rather than investing in better service. We’re advocating for the state to remove this debt from the MBTA.
- **Raise revenue!!** When ExxonMobil raises prices at the pump, increasing their profits, we get nothing in return. But when government seeks pennies to fix the MBTA or crumbling roads and bridges, we scream. Why? ELM supports a modest increase in the gas tax.
- **Get creative!** Chicago and Denver have a “U-Pass.” Universities purchase discounted transit passes for all their students. It’s great for the schools and the kids and would add needed revenue for the MBTA. ELM is working with local universities to raise support for a similar system here.

We’re also working to connect our extraordinary parklands with safe pedestrian and bike paths. The links will help our Olympic visitors—and residents—get to where we need to go.

We have strong leaders on Beacon Hill. We need their courage and leadership to fix the MBTA.

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ELM invites you to raise a glass on behalf of the environment! Join us for an old tradition with a new twist: Earth Night 2015. Enjoy drinks, hors d’œuvres and spectacular views of Boston from high above the city at our biggest bash of the year. Bringing friends, allies and the environmental community together, Earth Night will feature music, merriment and ways to make a difference for the Massachusetts environment.

Tickets start at $35 and sponsorships at $500. Space is limited, so reserve your ticket today at [http://earthnight2015.eventbrite.com](http://earthnight2015.eventbrite.com).
Voicing Our Opinion in the Globe

ELM launches monthly ad series to raise critical issues and to offer constructive solutions.

Have you caught ELM’s ‘op-ed’ ads in the Boston Globe? We launched our six-month ‘First Monday’ series in January with the goal of elevating climate, energy and environmental issues at a time when political leaders will be making decisions with long-term implications for our future. Conceived to draw the legislature and Baker administration’s attention and remind them of their responsibility to the community and environment, the ad series provides ELM with a bully pulpit on a monthly basis.

Each ad brings different allies to the table as co-signatories and focuses on different environmental priorities. January’s was co-signed by ELM Board and Corporate Council member Tedd Saunders of the Saunders Hotel Group and ELM Labor Council member John Dumas of IBEW #103. It called for a balanced approach to energy policy that reduces our dependence on imported natural gas and increases opportunities for local clean energy jobs. February’s ad advocated for taking the long view to solving the region’s energy supply and pricing challenges and promoted energy efficiency and local renewable energy. It was co-signed by ELM Corporate Council member Jay Cashman of construction company J.M. Cashman, Inc. and John DeVillars, former Northeast Administrator for the EPA. The March ad’s timely focus was fixing the MBTA through reducing debt, raising revenue, and getting creative and was co-signed by members of our corporate and labor councils, Rick Heller of Legal Seafoods and Mark Erlich of the NE Council of Carpenters.

At press time, the April 6 ad was being finalized—check the ELM website for a copy of it and all our past ads. Also keep your eyes peeled on May 4 and June 8 for the concluding ads in the series. Come summer, we’ll take a pause and evaluate launching a new series in the fall when the legislature is set to reconvene. Send your thoughts and input to ELM President George Bachrach.

MGH Joins ELM Corporate Council

ELM warmly welcomes Massachusetts General Hospital as the newest member of our Corporate Council. You may know MGH as a world leader in health care and medical research, but MGH has also been a leader on environmental issues for years. “We see a clear connection between the health of our patients and a clean environment,” says MGH Director of Environmental Services Bill Banchiere.

In 2010, Partners HealthCare (MGH’s parent company) embarked on a system-wide Strategic Energy Master Plan, with the goal of reducing its energy use by 25% in 5 years. MGH exceeded that goal and has now reduced consumption by 30%. “We are continually looking for opportunities for deeper reductions,” remarks Banchiere. In fact, MGH is currently installing a 640 kilowatt solar panel system on one of its parking garages. ELM looks forward to partnering with MGH over the months and years ahead to protect the health of Massachusetts residents through a clean environment.
ELM Thanks John Cronin for 45 Years of Service…

Milton resident John Cronin recently retired from the ELM Board after 45 years of service. What, you may ask, fosters such a long-term relationship? A joint passion for the environment, shared vision for advocacy, and a focus on policy development that stays current with the times. For John, ELM represents a steadfast partner in all these.

John’s tenure with ELM began in 1970 and overlapped with those who had battled in the organization’s early days on behalf of Massachusetts forests and parks and protected valuable open space from development through legal statute. The unofficial historian of ELM’s board, John later helped ELM fight for regulation of pesticides and other harmful toxins such as mercury. Now, the focus has shifted to critical energy and climate change needs. “The language and understanding of the complexity of the issues have changed over the years,” says John, “In the early years it was nature, then conservation, then environment,” but throughout, the mission has rung true for this Eagle Scout and leader in the Massachusetts environmental movement.

A cofounder of the Milton Conservation Commission and the Friends of the Blue Hills, and active in many area boards, John appreciates ELM’s role as a convener of environmental interests statewide—the political arm of the environmental community. “ELM successfully organizes smaller groups and provides a way for them to speak up.” His vision for ELM’s future is simple: success in advocacy for the environment at the State House.

ELM heartily thanks John for his passion, leadership, and dedication over the years.

…and Welcomes New Board Member Veronica Eady

ELM is honored to welcome Veronica Eady to our Board of Directors. Veronica brings a wealth of experience to her volunteer leadership role at ELM. Currently Vice President and Director of Conservation Law Foundation (CLF) Massachusetts, Veronica also serves as the Director of CLF’s Healthy Communities and Environmental Justice Program.

Veronica moved back to Boston in 2013 after spending nearly five years in Berlin, Germany working as a consultant specializing in environmental justice and human rights. Prior to that, Veronica was Associate General Counsel and Director of Environmental Justice at New York Lawyers for the Public Interest, a non-profit civil rights law firm in New York City. Veronica has deep ties to Massachusetts and its environment, having served as Director of the Environmental Justice and Brownfields Programs for the Massachusetts Executive Office of Environmental Affairs, where she was the principal author of Massachusetts’ Environmental Justice Policy, and before that as the Executive Director of Alternatives for Community and Environment in Roxbury. Veronica has held appointments on several faculties, including Europe-Viadriana University in Germany, Tufts University’s Department of Urban and Environmental Policy and Planning, Fordham Law School, and Stanford Law School. She is the former chair of EPA’s federal advisory committee for environmental justice. “I’ve long admired the work of ELM. With my appointment to the board of directors, I am thrilled to be supporting an organization I love while also deepening my efforts to protect Massachusetts’ environment.”

ELM receives major grants

ELM is grateful to have recently been awarded the following grants, which will further our work to protect the Massachusetts environment:

- **Grantham Foundation for the Protection of the Environment**
  A one-year $120,000 grant to support our Young Environmentalist Program (including a Grantham Fellow and the YEP summer training program) and for general operating support.

- **Harold Grinspoon Foundation**
  A one-year $50,000 grant to support our work promoting the use of home energy audits at the time of sale, to educate buyers and incentivize sellers to improve the energy efficiency of their homes (see “ELM Sets Priorities for 2015–2016 Legislative Session”).

- **V. K. Rasmussen Foundation**
  A $10,000 grant for ELM’s role in the Massachusetts Campaign for a Clean Energy Future, which is working to build support for putting a price on carbon.

- **Walmart Corporation**
  $10,000 to support our Young Environmentalist Program’s partnership with Boston Public Schools (see “Fostering Environmental Activism”).
With financial support from the Walmart Foundation and members like you, ELM’s Young Environmentalist Program (YEP) provides a unique learning experience for high school students in the Boston Public Schools through our school-year program. Skill-building workshops, project-based work, and environment- and policy-related field trips train participants to be effective environmental activists.

This academic year, ELM has partnered with students from Boston Latin and the John O’Bryant School to cultivate a foundation of advocacy, activism, and leadership on local environmental issues. So far, ELM has led two field trips for this year’s participants: a December visit to two LEED-certified buildings—State Street’s One Channel Center and the Artists for Humanity (AFH) EpiCenter building—to learn about sustainable building practices; and in February, a trip to Beacon Hill.

The trip to Beacon Hill included a stop at ELM’s office, where students met with ELM President George Bachrach and discussed ways to raise awareness for environmental issues in their schools. They also talked about what they plan to study in college.

Later, at the State House, students met with Representative Jay Livingstone of the Eighth Suffolk district and Minney Varghese, Legislative Director for Senator Jamie Eldridge of the Middlesex and Worcester district. The trip helped solidify concepts such as stakeholder engagement, the importance of coalitions in advocacy work, and public policy agenda setting. The tour also allowed the students to become more familiar with the state policymaking process and the functions of legislators and legislative staff. The students all agreed their biggest take-away was learning how few bills actually get passed compared to how many are submitted: only 100 or so out of over 5,000!

For the remainder of the school year, YEP participants will be working on projects to improve their school communities by raising awareness about specific environmental issues such as recycling and energy conservation. This spring the students will lead presentations to share their work and what they learned.

Thank you for helping us engage the next generation of environmental leaders! For more information on the Young Environmentalist Program and funding opportunities, contact ELM Legislative Director Erica Mattison.
About ELM

The Environmental League of Massachusetts is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization dedicated to protecting the health of our environment and citizenry by safeguarding the land, water and air of our Commonwealth. ELM is focused on environmental advocacy and strengthening the voice and effectiveness of the environmental community. ELM advocates for strong environmental laws and regulations on a broad range of environmental issues, voices the concerns of citizens, ensures that laws are properly implemented and enforced and educates the public.

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Join ELM in the Fight to Protect Our Environment

ELM is your voice and advocate on Beacon Hill and beyond, working to safeguard Massachusetts’s air, water, land and climate. You know us for our political savvy, our policy know-how, and a creative, collaborative approach that gets results. But we need your financial support to forge ahead. To become a member, renew your gift, or learn more ways you can help, contact us using the envelope inside or via environmentalleague.org or 617-742-2553. Thank you!