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Rivers Alliance

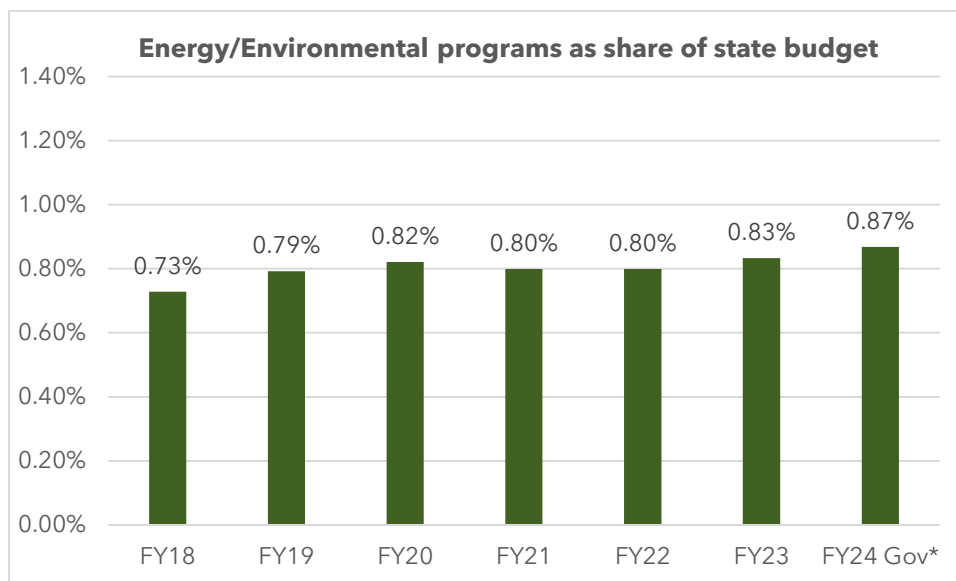


The FY2024 Green Budget

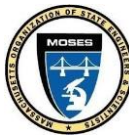
The Green Budget covers the state agencies within the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs and the Clean Water Trust. Currently, 0.83% of the state’s operating budget is spent on energy and environmental programs. Despite recent years of steady, slowly growing investments in these agencies, funding has yet to return to the levels of the early 2000s when adjusting for inflation and staffing losses due to Great Recession cuts and early retirement programs, particularly in the technical science and engineering sectors, have not been fully remediated.

At the same time, the statutory and regulatory roles these agencies play have grown dramatically. The 2021 and 2022 climate laws and 2025/2030 Clean Energy and Climate Plans have significantly increased the role that state agencies play in supporting emissions reduction and climate response efforts. Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, interest in outdoor recreation and use of publicly owned and managed lands exploded and demand for DCR services remains high. The rollout of new drought management regulations, the 2030 Solid Waste Master Plan, and growing awareness of the prevalence and risks of PFAS in our water supplies have increased DEP’s monitoring and oversight responsibilities. And the impacts of climate change have made the habitat conservation and management efforts of the Natural Heritage and Endangered Species program more pressing.

Protecting the Commonwealth’s land, water, air, and wildlife while supporting healthy communities and historically underserved populations, while meeting our climate goals requires state agencies that are well-resourced and well-staffed. The Green Budget Coalition advocates for robust, sustainable state funding for energy and environmental affairs to meet the scope and scale of our climate, conservation, and adaptation challenges.



*FY24 budget calculation does not include first-time line items 2000-0121, 1595-6232, or 2000-0120



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FY24 Green Budget Priorities

The Green Budget Coalition has identified the following programs as key environmental priorities for FY24. These priorities reflect areas of significant need and programs where targeted investments can work to significantly accelerate our progress toward the state's climate and conservation goals.

Support Gov budget (H.1) funding recommendations:

EOEEA Agencies (2000-0100, 2000-0101, 2000-0102):

Implementation of the 2021 Roadmap to Net Zero law and the 2025/2030 Clean Energy and Climate Plans require significant investment in the state agencies responsible for facilitating the state's climate response and clean energy transition. Proposed improvements in H.1 include the establishment of a federal and regional leadership office and hiring of 14 new environmental justice coordinators to execute on equitable coordinated climate action.

- **EEA Admin (2000-0100):** \$18,172,987
- **Climate Adaptation and Preparedness (2000-0101):** \$10,003,414
- **Environmental Justice (2000-0102):** \$8,804,284

DCR State Parks and Rec (2810-0100): \$107,632,351

H.1 proposes a \$22M increase to address ongoing staffing and maintenance shortfalls, persistent underfunding of DCR programs, and implementation of the recommendations of the DCR Special Commission. In particular, the ongoing need to support partnerships to fully meet DCR service goals has been identified.

DPU Administration (2100-0012): \$19,781,167

H.1 proposes a \$1.4M increase to support increased hiring of staff to meet new and ongoing climate and clean energy obligations required of DPU in statute, particularly within the Electric Power Division and to support agency-level environmental justice work.

DEP Administration (2200-0100): \$51,969,763

Massachusetts is experiencing increasing and intersecting threats to its water supply and vulnerable natural resources. This funding will also support hiring over 50 new DEP for critical work including PFAS testing and mitigation, inspection and compliance, and incorporating climate preparedness in permitting.

Increase funding over H.1:

Natural Heritage & Endangered Species (2310-0300): \$1,500,000 (\$500K increase over FY23)

The Coalition recommends a \$500K increase to support increased demand for services as well as the continuing rollout of BioMap3 and increased regional support. H.1 proposed a ~\$300K increase.

Division of Ecological Restoration (2300-0101): \$4,300,000 (level funding with FY23)

DER operates popular and successful restoration programs with over 100 active projects across the Commonwealth and a significant backlog of project applications. H.1 proposes a \$500K cut to this line item which would undermine the multiyear progress made toward increasing the capacity of DER to meet local demand for project support.



Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs FY24 Green Budget Priority

Request

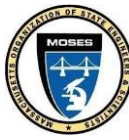
- Fund Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs line items 2000-0100 (Administration), 2000-0101 (Climate Adaptation and Preparedness), and 2000-0102 (Environmental Justice) at H.1 levels.
 - **EEA Admin (2000-0100):** \$18,172,987 (\$1,617,208 increase over FY23)
 - **CAMP (2000-0101):** \$10,003,414 (\$4,578,414 increase over FY23)
 - **Environmental Justice (2000-0102):** \$8,804,284 (\$7,471,270 over FY23)

Overview

- EEA's Executive Office is responsible for coordinating and implementing strategies for climate change adaptation and preparedness including the resiliency of the Commonwealth's transportation, energy and public health infrastructures; built environments; municipal assistance; improved data collection, analysis, and planning; and improved resiliency through the strengthening and revitalization of natural resources.
- Resiliency to climate impacts is central to the continued safety, welfare and economic success of residents and businesses. By the end of the century, data shows that tides will rise 4- to 10.5-feet along the MA coast, nearly 11 degrees increase in average annual temperature, and increased frequency and magnitude of extreme weather like droughts and flooding.
- The Environmental Justice (EJ) line item was created in FY23 to specifically carve out funding for EJ programs and staff which had previously been funded through the EEA Climate line item. Separately funding the EJ office allows for greater transparency and accountability to ensure this work is adequately resourced.
- As of 2022, EJ populations have been identified in 186 communities across Massachusetts. To learn more about EJ populations in your communities you can use [this searchable map](#) or [this list of cities and towns](#).

Examples of Need

- Implementation of the state's 2025, 2030, and [2050 Clean Energy and Climate Plans](#).
- The state's [Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness](#) (MVP) program is a popular and growing program which has awarded \$100 million in planning and action grants related to climate resiliency and preparedness to 341 MA cities and towns. All of the funding for regional MVP coordinators falls under the CAMP line item.
- Establishment of a Federal and Regional Leadership Office to coordinate with regional partners and states on topics such as transmission lines and hydropower.
- Language services for public comment notices and forums, translation of key documents, and direct outreach to EJ populations.
- Additional mapping technology to overlay environmental and public health data to fully capture EJ populations across Massachusetts.
- Continued technical support for cumulative impact analysis work to fully comply with the requirements of the 2021 Net-Zero Roadmap law.



DCR State Parks and Recreation FY24 Green Budget Priority

Request

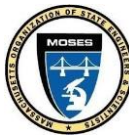
- Fund Department of Conservation and Recreation State Parks and Recreation line item (2810-0100) at the recommended H.1 level of \$107,632,351 (\$22,610,645 increase over FY23).

Overview

- DCR is responsible for the stewardship, management, and safety of our parks, beaches, forests, pools, skating rinks, and campgrounds including:
 - 450,000 acres of land across over 250 properties and nearly 2,000 miles of trails.
 - Habitat for 291 state-listed rare species, including 8 species found only on DCR land.
 - Forests that protect drinking water supplies to support millions of residents.
- DCR's parks support the state's 2021 total of \$10.5 billion in annual recreation spending and over 110,000 jobs.
- State parks serve people of all income levels, offering access to outdoor recreational opportunities, natural treasures and the beauty of Massachusetts.
- According to the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs' (EEA) [COVID-19 Community Mobility Report](#), DCR parks saw an average of 99% increase in traffic across the state during 2020, with increases as high as in some counties.
- Relative to its population, Massachusetts's ranks 50th of 50 states in per-capita local and state spending on parks and recreation according to the 2021 DCR Special Commission. MA spends \$32.65 per 1,000 people compared with the national average of \$56.56.

Examples of Need

- The [2021 DCR Special Commission](#) found broad consensus that DCR is chronically underfunded and overburdened.
- DCR currently has approximately 975 full-time equivalent staff (FTEs), an increase from last year but still below the 2008 level of 1,279.
- While operating expenditures have increased slightly since 2016, inflation adjusted FY20 expenditures were still down nearly \$18 million, or 16 percent, relative to 2009.
- Ensure continued and distributed use with digital marketing and outreach for state parks and programs with clear performance metrics.
- Build needed capacity to develop and manage partnerships with local nonprofit organizations.
- Ongoing monitoring & stewardship for maintaining the habitat integrity for species of concern
- Investments in climate adaptation and preparedness on DCR properties to ensure properties are prepared for impending impacts of flooding, drought, growth of new pests and invasive species, and more.



Department of Public Utilities FY24 Green Budget Priority

Request

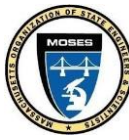
- Fund the Department of Public Utilities administrative line item (2100-0012) at the H.1 recommended level of \$19,781,167 (\$1,415,567 increase over FY23).

Overview

- The Department of Public Utilities oversees investor-owned electric power, natural gas, and water companies in Massachusetts. Its statutory authorization requires the Department to prioritize safety, security, reliability of service, affordability, equity, and reductions in greenhouse gas emissions to meet statewide greenhouse gas emission limits and sublimits in its regulatory processes and decision making.
- Historically, the Green Budget Coalition has not prioritized energy agencies within EOEEA, but with the passage of the 2021 Roadmap to Net Zero Law and the development of the Clean Energy and Climate Plan, the need to ensure that all state agencies with oversight over emissions reduction and climate impacts are adequately resourced to plan, prepare, and protect our vulnerable natural resources is more urgent than ever.
- The administrative line item is funded through rate assessments as provided under M.G.L. chapter 25, section 18, meaning an increase to this line item without a language change will not come from General Fund revenue. The Coalition recommends examining ways to fund DPU's climate-related work without ratepayer impacts in the future.

Examples of Need

- The Electric Power Division within DPU has taken on several new roles in recent years extending beyond reliability, including grid modernization planning, interconnection of renewable energy facilities, managing customer net metering programs, and transmission planning.
- In addition to creating direct new responsibilities for DPU relative to the implementation of the Clean Energy and Climate Plan, the 2021 Roadmap to Net Zero law also directed the Department to consider emissions and equity impacts of docket proposals it reviews necessitating the hiring of more climate- and EJ-focused staff to fully meet its legislative mandate.
- As of [October 2022](#), over 30 communities are currently awaiting approval for municipal aggregation proposals due to delays in the DPU application review process. Many cities and towns have been in the application queue for over a year without a response. This popular and successful program should not be constrained by Department capacity, particularly when affordability of energy is a serious concern.



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Department of Environmental Protection FY24 Green Budget Priority

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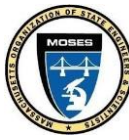
- Fund the Department of Environmental Protection administrative line item (2000-0100) at the H.1 recommended level of \$51,969,763 (\$6,569,763 increase over FY23).

Overview

- MassDEP has a broad set of critical responsibilities for public health and safety, including ensuring clean air and water, watershed planning and permitting, the safe management of toxics, enforcing environmental laws, reducing solid waste, the timely cleanup of hazardous waste sites and spills, and the preservation of wetlands and coastal resources.
- The administrative line item is the primary funding source supporting MassDEP's permit, compliance, and enforcement mission.
- MassDEP currently has around 80% of the FTEs it had in 2009; this dip in staffing levels contributes to significant work backlog. Early retirement programs have hit this department particularly hard and science/engineering staff have seen disproportionate cuts.
- This account funds personnel for statewide planning, monitoring, permit review, compliance inspections, enforcement, and technical assistance for the following environmental programs:
 - Clean Air
 - Solid and Hazardous Waste Management
 - Drinking Water Program
 - Wetlands and Waterways
 - Watershed Planning and Assessment
 - Industrial Wastewater Management

Examples of Need

- Updating Water Management Act permits to reflect critical new drought management regulations and other climate-related best practices.
- Rollout and implementation of the state's Solid Waste Master Plan, including capacity increases to support the statewide mattress disposal ban and stricter thresholds for food waste disposal that went into effect in 2022.
- PFAS mitigation and implementation of key administrative recommendations of the [PFAS Interagency Task Force](#) remain a critical need. 18 new employees to help meet recently promulgated federal PFAS standards through increased testing at landfills and water facilities and develop PFAS air standards.
- H.1 recommends the hiring of 18 field staff to improve MassDEP inspection and compliance evaluation capacity and thoroughly enforce agency rules and regulations
- H.1 recommends the hiring of 16 policy development staff to ensure the permitting and licensing of DEP's water programs adequately addresses climate change, especially for larger and more complex project



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Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program

FY24 Green Budget Priority

Request

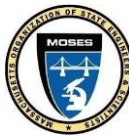
- Increase funding for the Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program within the Division of Fisheries and Wildlife to \$1,500,000 for FY24 (\$475,000 increase over FY23). H.1 funds this program at \$1,308,352.

Overview

- MassWildlife's Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program (NHESP) is responsible for the protection, management, and restoration of the Commonwealth's most imperiled animals and plants and the sensitive communities and habitats on which they depend, including species listed under the Massachusetts Endangered Species Act (MESA).
- 432 native plant and animal species remain listed as endangered, threatened, or of special concern under MESA. In the face of habitat loss, emerging diseases, invasive species, and climate change, NHESP's protection work is more important than ever.
- This line item funds NHESP staff and operations, including:
 - Recovering rare species populations through restoration efforts and active management of habitat.
 - Collecting, managing, and analyzing biological data on rare species and vulnerable natural communities to inform conservation efforts statewide.
 - Conducting regulatory reviews.
 - Providing educational programming, publications, and conservation tools to connect residents with nature and help guide state and partner conservation efforts.
- MassWildlife oversees the BioMap web portal, which delivers the latest scientific data and resources to help state and local governments, land trusts, non-government organizations, and other conservation partners strategically plan projects to conserve wildlife and their habitats.

Examples of Need

- In recent years, the NHESP has consistently run a significant operating deficit. Aside from this line item (which accounts for ~35% of NHESP's budget) and modest MESA regulatory review fees, the NHESP depends heavily on grants and donations from a voluntary state income tax check off to fund its operations.
- Increased funding will enable the program to expand science, mapping, management, and restoration efforts, and ensure that regulatory review processes can happen in a timely manner without delaying development.
- In 2022, MassWildlife and The Nature Conservancy rolled out BioMap3, the latest version of the state's ecological mapping program, combining more than 40 years of rigorously documented rare species and natural community records with cutting-edge climate resilience data and spatial data from the Massachusetts State Wildlife Action Plan. Increased funding for NHESP will support the rollout of BioMap3 and continued integration of the tool into ongoing conservation, responsible development, and energy siting efforts statewide.



Division of Ecological Restoration

FY24 Green Budget Priority

Request

- Fund the Division of Ecological Restoration (2300-0101) within the Department of Fish and Game level with FY23 appropriations.

Overview

- DER has over 140 [active river and wetland projects](#) across the state, including dam removals, wetland restoration, culvert upgrades, urban river revitalization efforts, floodplain and streamflow restoration, and cranberry bog restoration. All DER projects work to restore healthy habitat and help communities adapt to climate change, while also generating significant economic benefits.
- DER staff guide restoration projects through design and permitting, thereby positioning projects for successful implementation through state, federal, and NGO funding programs.
- DER's technical assistance and project leadership is critical to helping communities carry out restoration and adaptation projects identified in Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness plans and to helping state agencies carry out many of the priority actions identified in the 2018 State Hazard Mitigation and Climate Adaptation Plan.
- Each of DER's project managers oversees 5-10 dam removal, culvert replacement, or wetland restoration projects, completing 1-3 projects every year. State investment through DER creates or sustains high-paying jobs in construction and engineering sectors (12.5 jobs per \$1 million spent).
- In 2021 (the most recent [annual data](#) available), DER's work included:
 - Over 70 river and watershed restoration projects
 - 26 communities receiving culvert replacement funding
 - \$6.5 million in additional (federal and outside) funding leveraged for restoration

Examples of Need

- Requests for DER's technical, project management, and funding assistance far exceed DER's resources. There are 3,000 dams and 25,000 culverts and small bridges across the state, many of which are deteriorating and are vulnerable to threats from severe storms and flooding. Aging dams and culverts impact environmental health, public safety, municipal budgets, fish passage, and community resilience to climate change. Communities want to remove dams and upgrade culverts but lack the knowledge, technical skills, and funds to do so.
- In 2021, DER received applications from over 70 communities for culvert grant projects and was only able to provide assistance to 26 communities.
- DER currently begins roughly twice as many new restoration projects as it completes each year. Increased staffing capacity will allow the Division to ensure that project timelines stay on track and backlogs do not accumulate.