



Nature for Massachusetts

Massachusetts is facing the triple-threat from climate change, the loss of biodiversity, and the fact that the benefits of nature are not accessible to all of our residents. Massachusetts lacks a significant statewide funding mechanism for nature conservation, and existing state-level programs are underfunded and oversubscribed. As a result, Massachusetts lacks sustainable and reliable resources to meet the Commonwealth's goals of 1) protecting, managing, and restoring nature in order to reach net zero by 2050 and 2) protecting 30% of the state by 2030 and 40% by 2050.

An Act Providing Nature for All (H.901 / S.597)

Filed by Representatives Blais and Montañó and Senator Feeney

An Act Providing Nature for All would create a permanent Nature for All Fund for the purposes of acquisition, restoration or improvement of nature to create parks and trails; protect forests, farms, wildlife habitat, and water resources; and advance climate resiliency and environmental justice goals. By setting aside just a portion of the revenue generated from the sporting goods sales tax, we would be able to dedicate as much as \$100 million every year for the Nature for All Fund without any increase in taxes. With it, we could:

- Create and improve parks, greenspace, trails, and outdoor recreation access, especially in environmental justice communities
- Conserve and restore land to protect clean drinking water and the quality of streams, rivers, lakes, and coasts
- Conserve land for climate resilience and restore the function and health of inland, wetland, and coastal ecosystems to advance biodiversity, climate adaptation, and resiliency
- Conserve forests and farms to store carbon, preserve biodiversity, and achieve the Commonwealth's natural and working land goals
- Conserve important land parcels to provide connectivity between open spaces and habitats.
- Conserve and restore lands of Indigenous cultural significance and restore access for Indigenous people
- Provide on-going stewardship and management of these resources

Feasibility Study

In 2023, with funding from the Doris Duke Foundation and pro bono legal assistance from Ropes & Gray, the Trust for Public Land's Conservation Finance experts analyzed funding mechanisms for nature conservation in other states to better understand what options might be feasible in Massachusetts. With the expectation that a fund could raise as much as \$100 million per year for statewide natural resource protection, the feasibility study evaluated ten options. Based on the analysis, the Coalition has determined that using the existing sales tax on sporting goods provides the most promising source of conservation funding. Importantly, this source does not impact residents with an increase in taxes and would have only a modest impact on state finances via the redirection of a general fund source.

Nature for Massachusetts Coalition

Nature for Massachusetts is a large and diverse coalition of environmental, conservation, and community organizations that seek to create a dedicated, annual revenue stream to conserve land, water, urban greenspace, and outdoor recreation access in Massachusetts.

American Farmland Trust	Mass Audubon
Appalachian Mountain Club	Massachusetts Land Trust Coalition
Arborway Coalition	Mass Parks for All
Authentic Caribbean Foundation	Massachusetts Rivers Alliance
Backcountry Hunters & Anglers	Massachusetts Society of Municipal Conservation Professionals
Bemis	Mattapan Food and Fitness Coalition
Boston Food Forest Coalition	Mystic River Watershed Association
Boston Harbor Now	Native Land Conservancy
Brookline Greenspace Alliance	Neponset River Watershed Association
Charles River Conservancy	No Loose Braids
Charles River Watershed Association	Northeast Organic Farmers Association (NOFA/Mass)
Connecticut River Conservancy	OARS
Conservation Law Foundation	Regional Environmental Council (REC)
Emerald Necklace Conservancy	Speak for the Trees Boston
Environmental League of Massachusetts	Sports Stop
Essex County Greenbelt Association	Surfrider Foundation
Friends of the Blue Hills	The Compact of Cape Cod Conservation Trusts
Garrison - Trotter Neighborhood Association	The Food Project
Greater Boston Trout Unlimited	The Nature Conservancy
Greater Mattapan Neighborhood Council	The Olmsted Way
GreenRoots	The Trustees
Groundwork Lawrence	Tree Eastie
Kestrel Land Trust	Trust for Public Land
Land/Water Associates	Urban Farming Institute
MA Association of Conservation Commissions	Waypoint Adventure

For more information about Nature for Massachusetts, please email natureformassachusetts@gmail.com.