



219 MAIN STREET SUITE E  
POST OFFICE BOX 718 • WAREHAM, MA 02571  
1-508-295-0211  
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July 12, 2020

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Mrs. Sandra Slavin - Chairman  
Conservation Commission  
Town of Wareham  
54 Marion Road  
Wareham, MA 02571

Dear Mrs. Slavin,

The Wareham Land Trust Board of Directors raise our voice in opposition to the blatant disregard for the environmental impact that the three proposed solar projects (140 & 150 Tihonet Rd and 27 Charge Pond Rd.) present to the Town of Wareham. Together these three projects will clear cut 187 acres of mixed pine forest.

The particular forests in these projects have potential vernal pools, wetlands and streams within and near these enormous arrays (from +/- 30,000 - 52,000 solar modules). These forests provide habitat for plants and animals. They provide recreation (hunting & hiking) for humans. They also provide flood control by absorbing rainfall. Trees are the greatest natural resource for carbon storage. As one tries to reduce one's carbon footprint, trees both sequester (through photosynthesis) and store carbon thereby reducing the effects of climate change. In exchange for removing carbon dioxide from the atmosphere, trees release oxygen - essential to life. The average oak-pine forest in the northeast stores 82 metric tons of carbon/acre!

Forests can last hundreds of years, while most solar projects are planned for only 20 years. While we all agree alternative energy sources are needed, they must be sited with minimal or no impact to the environment. Otherwise, there is no "net gain" - there is permanent loss. All three projects state under "Project Narrative 2.4.2 Article 15: Site Plan Review" Part 2: Proposed Mitigation "Mitigation is not proposed, as the overall anticipated impacts of this renewable energy project are minimal. The Project will provide benefits of its own." To whom? Fact is, there is no way to mitigate clear cutting hundreds of acres of trees.

The Board would urge the Conservation Commission to take into consideration the long-term environmental consequences of this forest destruction as you debate this project. We oppose these projects as proposed and urge their relocation to previously disturbed lands.

Sincerely,

Kathleen M. Pappalardo  
President

