

Clean Energy Extension

Status: NIFA REVIEW

Project Director

DWAYNE BREGER

Organization Project Number

Organization

University of Massachusetts

Accession Number

7002098

Start & End Date

10/01/2020

To Project / Program

"Clean Energy Extension"

Primary Critical Issue

Sustainable Energy

Fiscal Year

2023

In 2-3 sentences, briefly describe the issue or problem that your project addresses.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts is committed to goals and milestones to meet net-zero emissions by 2050. The UMass Clean Energy Extension (CEE) was established to serve as an university extension resource for the Commonwealth to help it meet its clean energy and climate goals. CEE fills needs and find opportunities to support this clean energy transition that are not met by government, businesses, or consultants.

Briefly describe in non-technical terms how your major activities helped you achieve, or make significant progress toward, the goals and objectives described in your non-technical summary.

Over this reporting period, CEE held 45 meetings to provide technical assistance and general guidance to non-profits, community organizations, clean energy start-ups, press and media, and others as they consider clean energy projects or need help navigating incentives and next steps. CEE leads applied research and projects in agrivoltaics, pollinator friendly solar, and solar arrays and wildlife. CEE has developed tools to support proactive community solar planning, and models for local solar ownership. CEE supports clean energy workforce development through experiential public service learning for students, and with its on-line 3-course Offshore Wind Professional Graduate Certificate.

Briefly describe how your target audience benefited from your project's activities.

Through its agrivoltaics research (funded by U.S. DOE SETO), CEE contributes to the national research on agrivoltaic impacts on crop productivity and farm viability. CEE has mentored 15 rural towns through its *Community Planning for Solar* Toolkit, provided 11 cities and towns with greenhouse gas inventories and 6 with zero carbon planning, and worked with 13 towns on deep energy assessments and recommendations for their municipal buildings. Our offshore wind certificate has grown to a class size of about 50 registrants and has upskilled a total of 200 working professionals, with great success in industry hiring our students.

Briefly describe how the broader public benefited from your project's activities.

CEE provides a respected and objective source of information and makes itself available for short consultations or presentations to town committees, public service organizations, academic research and extension programs, and others. Over this reporting year, CEE provided 13 presentation in person or virtual.

In 2023, CEE organized and sponsored a 4 session Western Massachusetts Solar Forum for stakeholders and the interested public on issues related to solar and land use. The virtual forum was inclusive, included language translation and sign language. The Forum had 427 registrants and a few dozen speakers across the sessions. The Forum was focused on learning by providing objective, dispassionate information and stakeholder perspectives. A part two of the Forum to focus on tradeoffs and resolutions is being considered for 2024.

Comments (optional)

- CEE held 45 meetings to provide technical assistance and general guidance to non-profits, community organizations, clean energy start-ups, press and media, and others

- CEE has mentored 15 rural towns through its *Community Planning for Solar* Toolkit
- CEE provided 11 cities and towns with greenhouse gas inventories
- CEE assisted 6 towns with zero carbon planning
- CEE worked with 13 towns on deep energy assessments and recommendations for their municipal buildings.
- CEE provided 13 presentation in person or virtual
- CEE offshore wind certificate has grown to a class size of about 50 registrants and has upskilled a total of 200 working professionals
- CEE organized and sponsored a 4 session Western Massachusetts Solar Forum for stakeholders and the interested public on issues related to solar and land use - 427 registrants participated