

Energize Acton News

May 2026

What is in this issue?

- **Upcoming Events**
- **A Quick Climate Acton - TP!**
- **Town Engages Home Performance Contractor**
- **Our Update Website**
- **A Climate Thought - New England Forests**
- **Book/Website/Recipe of the Month**



Sun., May 3rd, 12:30-2:00pm, NARA Park Boathouse Pavillion – **Coffee with Clean Energy Coaches**, sponsored by the Acton Sustainability Office. Drop by to get your home energy questions answered! More info at sustainability@actonma.gov.

Sun., May 3rd, 2:00-3:00pm, First Parish Concord – **Thoreau's Forests Confront Climate Change**, sponsored by First Parish Environmental Team. Dr. William Moomaw, a lead author of the 2007 Nobel Peace Prize winning climate report, will explore the role of forests and other ecosystems in moderating climate change as well as threats to healthy forests. More info/sign-up [HERE](#).

Mon.-Tues., May 4th-5th, 6:00pm, Acton-Boxborough Regional High School – **Acton Town Meeting** Please consider attending and voting on important town decisions, including 3 warrant articles (6, 7, and 13) related to clean energy and environmental conservation. See the [Town Meeting Booklet](#).

Wed., May 27th, 7pm, zoom – **Biosphere Book Club: Braiding Sweetgrass**, sponsored by EnergizeActon.org. Join us for an introduction to this amazing work, sub-titled “*Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge, and the Teaching of Plants.*” Info/sign-up [HERE](#).

Sat., May 30th, 10am and 1pm, -- **CLEAN ENERGY HOME TOUR #3: A 1793 Acton Farmhouse Goes Energy Efficient**, sponsored by EnergizeActon.org. The homeowners sought to maintain the historic character of the home while achieving energy updates, such as insulation, windows, solar panels, heat pumps, & more. Get honest tips and see what might be a fit for your home. This is a FASCINATING house! Info and registration [HERE](#).



Iconic 1793 Acton Farmhouse Goes Energy Efficient



Insulation



HP Hot Water



Heat Pumps



Solar Panels

CLEAN ENERGY HOME TOUR

Saturday
May 30, 2026
10am & 1pm Tours



Gain insights from a major renovation--what worked well, what worked less well, and what could easily be adopted by other homeowners. Sponsored by EnergizeActon.org.



Join the Acton Sustainability Office for...

COFFEE WITH THE CLEAN ENERGY COACHES

5/3
12:30-2PM

Stop By To Get Your Home
Energy Questions Answered!

NARA BATHHOUSE
PAVILION



Questions?
Contact the Sustainability
Office at 978-929-6515 or
sustainability@actonma.gov

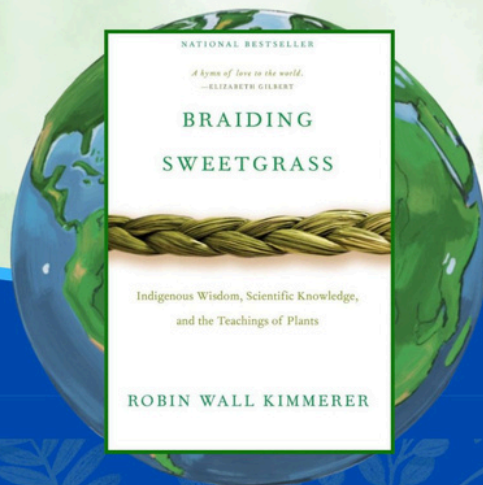


BIOSPHERE BOOK CLUB

for reflections on climate & environment

Wed., May 27, 2026
7:00-8:15pm, Zoom

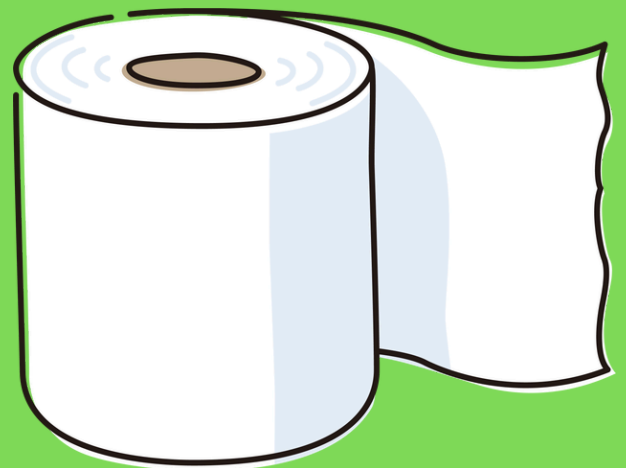
May Title: **Braiding Sweetgrass**



Info/sign-up at
EnergizeActon.org.
All welcome, whether you have
read the book or not.



QUICK CLIMATE ACTION

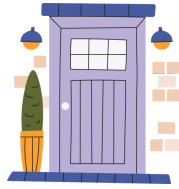


TRY RECYCLED TOILET PAPER

Some of America's favorite toilet paper brands are cutting huge swaths of Canada's boreal forest. A 12/2025 report from the National Resources Defense Council offers easily available 100% recycled post-consumer paper alternatives. Read **HERE**.

Mass Save Home Performance Contractor at Your Door? They are LEGIT!

If Colt Home Services comes to your door, please know that they are the official Home Performance Contractor for Town of Acton under the Sustainability Office's participation in the Mass Save Community First Partnership. This effort is designed to help all residents of Acton receive free enhanced home energy audits and energy efficiency upgrades (insulation/air sealing) at little or no cost. Normal Mass Save incentives apply for a variety of services, which Colt can facilitate. Colt is also an approved TURNKEY vendor, helping eligible households heating with oil, propane, or electric resistance to upgrade to more efficient heating/cooling systems in a streamlined one-vendor approach. Contact the Sustainability Office for more information at sustainability@actonma.gov or call 978-929-6515. And please remember the [Acton Clean Energy Coaches](#) who can advise you along the way!



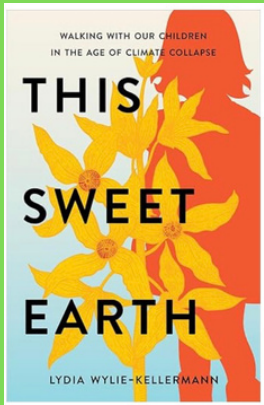
The EnergizeActon.org Website – What's New and Improved?

Our goal is to provide you with curated, reliable, and trustworthy information that helps you to make informed decisions and be successful in your journey to a clean energy future. Check out our new website and please spread the news to people you know who could benefit from using it.

- We now have **Vision and Mission statements**! Let us know what you think and how you can help us achieve them!
- We have updated the information regarding all the 17 different **Actions** you can take to reduce and eliminate activities that contribute to climate change. We made a particular effort to provide information on financial incentives that still exist.
- There is a new **Events calendar tool**. Not only do you have access to EA's upcoming events but also other relevant ones sponsored by Mass Energize and other organizations. You can now search the upcoming events and even automatically add selected ones to your Google Calendar or use iCal Export.
- Current and recent past **Newsletters** are also now available online. Do you want to find that neat article, website link, or recipe you remembered seeing in a past newsletter? Try looking there.
- We now have a **Tools** tab/section where you can calculate your carbon footprint, see how to save money, and review how well Massachusetts reaching its targets.

TESTIMONIALS! We have a favor to ask of you. When you complete a new action, please report it along with your experiences and advice as a **Testimonial**. Your input encourages and helps others as they take action. And though your short comments can remain anonymous, the Energize Acton team can thank you directly for your commitment and hard work. Let's energize one another! Thank you!

Book of the Month



As Mother's Day approaches, consider ***This Sweet Earth: Walking with Our Children in the Age of Climate Collapse***. One reviewer calls it "deeply insightful with exquisite, warm language." It is both a call to action **and** a call to slow down to take time for wonder.

Website of the Month



Mothers Out Front has the tagline "Mothers & others for a livable future." The organization began in MA before going national & still has **numerous local chapters**. The state legislative team is a real force on energy policy & alternatives to fossil fuels.

A CLIMATE THOUGHT - NEW ENGLAND FORESTS

University of Vermont researchers published a study last month noting that more trees are dying from disease and insect infestation than from lumbering. The research, on north-eastern forests from 2009 to 2024, found that deaths from "natural causes" are up 40%. Half of the increased tree loss is due to insects and disease, but the other half of the die-off has no immediately identifiable cause. WBUR quotes one of the writers, Tony D'Amato of UVM, "For a long time, we've assumed 1-2% of the trees in the forest die every year from natural causes. . . [Outside of that], tree harvesting is often the biggest cause we're seeing. But now we're getting into a phase with all these novel stressors, like emerald ash borer, hemlock woolly adelgid, beech leaf disease, extreme precipitation, events like droughts, too much wind and rain, that those are all coming together to generate higher levels of mortality than we're used to here." Southern New England forests have the highest mortality.

A Swiss research study finds that deciduous trees can cope with climate warming to a certain point, but that other stressors, especially drought, can push oak and beech trees beyond the point of regulating their internal temperatures. Inside Climate News reporter Bob Berwyn summarizes that "overheated forests are starting to release more carbon than they absorb. . . Climate shocks don't act in isolation; they can cascade through forest systems and amplify one another, as weaker trees and leaves become more vulnerable to insects and wildfires." Forests can be changed forever, which scientists worry may be happening in Canada. Some northern fires have smoldered underground and reignited over three successive years. Will the woodland ecosystems become permanent grassland?

What can we do as individuals, families, and communities? Gas vehicles and fossil fuel heating/cooling are two major drivers of our warming atmosphere. If we care about forests, it is time to embrace clean energy, from EVs and heat pumps to public policy that incentivizes renewable energy. Trees are miracles standing right next to us! And forests are the lungs of our planet. We are all connected in incredibly beautiful ways. Let our decisions reflect these connections.

RECIPE OF THE MONTH - SPICY OVEN FRIES W/ DIP



This recipe is from the cookbook **VEG**, by Hugh Fearnley-Whitting-stall of English River Cottage fame. There is much YUM in his recipes!

Ingredients

2 lbs potatoes
1/3 cup neutral oil
1 tsp cumin seeds
1 tsp fennel seeds
1 tsp coriander seeds
1 tsp caraway seeds
10 black peppercorns
1 tsp sweet paprika
pinch cayenne
1/4 tsp sea salt

scrape of garlic
pinch cayenne
6 Tbsp heaping plain full-fat yogurt
or vegan yogurt

Please eat these hot out of the oven. So delicious!

Directions - Preheat oven to 400 degrees.

1. Wash unpeeled potatoes and cut into thick batons. Put in saucepan and cover with cold water. Bring to a roiling boil & boil for 1 minute. Drain immediately.
2. Spice Mix - Crush cumin, fennel, coriander, caraway seeds and peppercorns with a mortar & pestle. Combine with paprika, cayenne, and salt.
3. Pour oil in a large, shallow roasting pan & put in the oven to heat for 5 minutes.
4. Set aside on heaping teaspoon of spice mix. Add the rest to the drained potatoes and toss. Carefully take the roasting pan from the oven, add the spiced potatoes and turn to coat in the oil. Roast 35-45 minutes, stirring half way through, until golden and crisp.
5. Meanwhile, for the dip, stir the remaining spice into the yogurt along with the crushed garlic. Transfer to a serving bowl and sprinkle with cayenne.
6. Taste one of the fries and sprinkle with a little more salt if needed. Serve hot with the cool yogurt dip.

