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PRESS RELEASE

Groups demand enforcement of environmental laws against AD Makepeace Company's sand mining in Carver, Wareham and Plymouth

*Claim state and local officials ignored violations for decades, used "agricultural operations" and Borrego Solar projects as a ruse to evade permits and fees, causing destruction of globally rare Pine Barrens forests and endangered species habitat*

Contact: Meg Sheehan, Attorney, Volunteer  
Community Land & Water Coalition/Save the Pine Barrens  
c. 508-259-9154  
[environmentwatchesoutheasternma@gmail.com](mailto:environmentwatchesoutheasternma@gmail.com)  
[www.savethepinebarrens.org](http://www.savethepinebarrens.org)

August 16, 2021 - The campaign to hold AD Makepeace accountable for the deforestation of Pine Barrens forests by [sand mining and solar projects](#) continues. On August 9, a Ten Residents Group delivered notices of intent to sue to the Massachusetts Attorney General, the state Division of Fisheries and Wildlife (MassWildlife) and the Town of Carver. The notices of intent to sue were sent under Mass. General Laws, [Chapter 214, Section 7A](#), which gives residents the power to enforce environmental laws when regulators fail to act. If the state and local officials do not enforce the law within 21 days, the Ten Residents Group can bring a lawsuit in court.

Also, on August 16, Save the Pine Barrens, Inc., a non-profit group, filed a zoning complaint with the Town of Carver [Zoning Board of Appeals](#) (ZBA) requesting a hearing on the failure by the zoning inspector to enforce the laws to stop illegal sand mining by AD Makepeace. In the notices and the zoning complaint, the groups claim state and local regulators have looked the other way for over a decade as [AD Makepeace](#) clear-cut forests, stripped vegetation, and extracted vast volumes of sand that protects drinking water without proper environmental permits or in violation of permits that were issued.

The notice to [MassWildlife](#) Commissioner Ronald Amidon asserts his agency gave AD Makepeace at least eight "Conservation and Management Permits" (CMP) under the state Endangered Species Act (MESA) allowing the company to kill plants and animals for development projects, including land-based industrial solar and commercial sand mining. According to the notice, AD Makepeace failed to comply with permit conditions including requirements for land conservation. Nonetheless, MassWildlife kept [issuing more permits](#) and is considering another for a 70-acre proposed solar project in the Pine Barrens forest in Wareham. Borrego Solar and AD Makepeace have already cleared at least 330 acres of Pine Barrens for nine ground-mounted solar projects. A [statewide rally on July 31, 2021](#), launched a grassroots moratorium campaign to stop this deforestation in Wareham and other towns by the solar industry and landowners like AD Makepeace.

The MassWildlife notice also claims AD Makepeace obtained a 2011 "take" permit to destroy 32-acres of endangered Eastern Box Turtle habitat in Carver under the false pretense of building a cranberry bog and reservoir. The notice to Carver says AD Makepeace used the same ruse of "agriculture" to obtain earth removal permits from the Town. Finally, groups assert that AD Makepeace's repeated claims that sand from solar sites in Carver was for use in the company's cranberry operations are not credible and must be investigated.

"AD Makepeace has been [strip mining the Pine Barrens](#) in Wareham, Carver and Plymouth for over a decade using "agriculture" and "site preparation for ground-mounted solar" as a ruse," said group spokesperson attorney Meg Sheehan. "This is an industrial sand mining operation evading proper oversight. Hundreds of acres of globally rare Pine have been destroyed and our water supply is threatened." AD Makepeace has extracted millions of cubic yards in Wareham with no permits, [6.5 million cubic yards](#) in Plymouth for a promised 120-acre bog that isn't built, and 10 million cubic yards from Carver- sometimes without permits - from nine sites. This ongoing, blatantly illegal activity must stop. This situation has caused massive environmental destruction and it appears Makepeace is rushing ahead to extract as much sand as quickly as possible. This is a shell game. We are in a climate crisis and we have no time for games or the regulators that enable them."

The 166-year-old [AD Makepeace Co. calls itself](#) "North America's largest cranberry grower, the largest private property owner in eastern Massachusetts, and a recognized leader in environmentally responsible real estate development and stewardship." The company is politically connected - Makepeace's CEO and President held a top position at Mass Development and the Mass Turnpike Authority. Kane's wife, [Hannah Kane](#), is a state representative. Executive Mike Hogan is a former director of the state's economic development authority and cabinet secretary for two governors.

"Makepeace is not the quaint, local cranberry grower it pretends to be. It is a politically connected industrial mining company and land developer," said Sheehan. "Unfortunately, it is using its political power to exploit the environment and influence regulators. Our state and local laws provide legal protection for our forests and waterways we intend to ensure they are enforced," Sheehan said.



AD Makepeace's destructive sand-mining in globally rare pine barrens ecosystems

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