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## SEEAL TO LAUNCH SOUTHCOAST ENERGY CHALLENGE

The Southeastern Environmental Education Alliance (SEEAL) is launching a “Southcoast Energy Challenge,” to engage and mobilize all Southcoast citizens to work toward reducing greenhouse gas emissions. The goal of the project will be regional reduction of over 100 million pounds of CO<sub>2</sub>, and the weatherization of more than 10,000 homes, within the first year. So far, SEEAL partners who are leading the Challenge include; Marion Institute, University of Massachusetts Dartmouth Office for Campus and Community Sustainability, Southeastern Regional Planning and Economic Development (SRPEDD), and Southeastern Massachusetts Agricultural Partnership (SEMAP).

SEEAL is a program of the Community Foundation of Southeastern Massachusetts.

The project, modeled after successful initiatives in Washington D.C. and Minnesota, will promote individual action as well as regional synergy. The anchor and portal for the project will be a well designed, user friendly website, where individuals and groups can pledge to reduce carbon emissions. It will keep a running tally of and report the total reduction for individuals, teams, and the region as a whole. It will promote friendly competition among towns, schools, churches, and other community organizations. By using SEEAL’s partners’ combined and pre-existing grassroots networks and community connections, the Challenge will engage and mobilize people from all backgrounds, toward one common goal.

The website will not only provide tools for measuring individual and regional carbon reduction, but will also provide resources--visitors can learn more about their total footprint, where to go to find important products and information, and trained contractors.

The first order of business for SEEAL is to survey the region and collect information on all existing towns, schools, churches, businesses, and other groups, such as non-profits and service agencies, within the 27 towns of Southeastern Mass. SEEAL, and lots of volunteers we hope, will then engage the greenest leaders and establishments in the area to help lead the charge. SEEAL is currently developing the website, detailing an outreach plan, and raising funds to help make the Challenge successful.

Southcoast Massachusetts is deeply connected to the land and sea with a diverse group of stakeholders living in both urban and rural areas. SEEAL partners recognize that climate change is the greatest overarching threat to our communities in this region. One way the Challenge will promote to tackle climate change, is through increasing energy efficiency in our homes, schools, work places, businesses, and churches. Promoting energy efficiency in buildings meets the triple bottom line of sustainability: it saves money, creates jobs, and reduces our negative impact on the environment.

If you would like to learn more about SEEAL or the Southcoast Energy Challenge, please visit [www.seael.org](http://www.seael.org), or contact SEEAL Coordinator, Jennifer Marshall, [jmarshall@seael.org](mailto:jmarshall@seael.org), 508-493-4343.

About SEEAL:

Under the auspices of the Community Foundation of Southeastern Massachusetts, the Southeastern Environmental Education Alliance (SEEAL) is a non-profit network of over 40 partner organizations governed by a 23 member Board of Directors, who collaborate to mobilize community resources and increase capacity for environmental education programs and activities. For over a decade, SEEAL has acted as an umbrella organization, applying for and providing over \$1.5 million in grants to local non-profits and organizations that provide environmental education, outreach, and mitigation, in Southeastern Massachusetts.

About the Community Foundation:

Since 1995, area residents have been turning to the Community Foundation to make their philanthropic giving as effective as possible. CFSEMA is a public charity serving thousands of people who share a common concern - improving the quality of life in Southeastern Massachusetts.

While the Foundation's primary grantmaking focus is on the SouthCoast communities of Greater New Bedford, Greater Fall River, and Southern Plymouth County, CFSEMA is a regional foundation serving 41 cities and towns. Over the past five years, the Community Foundation has distributed more than \$8 million in grants and program support from 127 funds to humanitarian, educational and cultural organizations in the region. To learn more about the Foundation, visit [www.cfsema.org](http://www.cfsema.org).