

**SAVE THE DATE! - UUFANJ FALL ISSUES
 CONFERENCE 10/19/2024 - See [p. 11](#)**

<https://www.uufaithaction.org/blog>

UU Seventh Principle: Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part. Environmental Justice (EJ): Addressing disproportionate and adverse human health or environmental effects in communities of low-income residents or persons of color.

EJTF ACTIVITIES

• Victory in Egg Harbor

On August 14, 2024, Atlantic Shores Offshore Wind sought approval from the Egg Harbor Township (EHT) Committee to add 2 lots totaling 4 acres to the existing Cardiff Center redevelopment area. If approved, Atlantic Shores will then be able to propose a more detailed plan for an electrical substation. Its purpose would be to connect Atlantic Shores Offshore Wind projects to the grid and customers. **Michael Skelly of the UU**

FaithAction NJ Environmental Justice Task Force joined dozens of clean energy coalition partners, union workers, and community members to give testimony in the packed hearing room, expressing his enthusiasm for the zoning change, saying "This is a significant step towards a cleaner, healthier future for the community and NJ." The EHT Committee unanimously passed the resolution! **Michael Skelly** had

also provided testimony in favor of a related piece of the project in Atlantic City, which would divert 1.8 acres of Green Acres parkland for Atlantic Shores Offshore Wind to run electric cables. The Atlantic City Council approved that also. These are key approvals in the long public process to review all aspects of the project, and ultimately generate enough electricity for 1 million homes. Also see the two related articles on [p. 16](#).



Photos by Michael Skelly

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"ReThink Disposable"/"Skip the Stuff"

UUFANJ/EJTF strongly supports an expansion of NJ's single-use-plastic carryout bag ban to also cover single-use cutlery and condiments, and we have signed onto a letter prepared by Clean Water Action, in support of the bill S3195 (with suggested amendments) that would prohibit these items unless requested by individual customers. Clean Water Action's "Skip the Stuff" campaign has had great success working with NJ municipalities to pass local "Skip the Stuff" ordinances (see the article here: <https://cleanwater.org/releases/skip-stuff-jersey-city-introduces-and-eatontown-town-council-passes-new-ordinance-reduce>). In addition, the "ReThink Disposable" program of Clean Water Action and Clean Water Fund works with local governments, businesses and institutions, and consumers of single use food packaging, to provide reusable place settings, dishwashers, and other assistance to soup kitchens, emergency relief facilities, schools, and other nonprofits that provide meals. Additional information and a link to donate to this effort are available here: <https://cleanwater.org/nj-donate-rethink-disposable>. A video of one of their success stories in NJ, with Interfaith Neighbors Meals on Wheels, is available here: <https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fi/1m5rt5dtxflbslmw7hykk/v3--INTERFAITH-and-RETHINK.mp4>.



**New Jersey Needs to
“Skip the Stuff”
When Getting Take-Out**

CLEAN WATER ACTION
PEOPLE • ACTION • JUSTICE

The Problem:

- It is estimated that **40 billion individual single-use plastic utensils** are discarded every year in the United States.¹
- Plastic never decomposes but instead gets smaller and smaller as it breaks into microplastics.
- Plastic has recently been found making its way to our bloodstream and then into **breast milk** and the heart.² According to the **National Institute of Health**, manufacturing, transportation, use and decomposition of plastic is harmful to our health. It has been linked to numerous cancers, insulin resistance, decreased sex hormones and other negative consequences for our reproductive system.³
- Most plastic utensils are unused** and an unnecessary cost burden to restaurants.⁴ Since 2014, online food ordering has increased **300%** faster than dine-in, furthering the plastic pollution problem.⁵
- The **World Economic Forum** estimated that in 2019 the production and incineration of plastic was equivalent to 189 coal-fired power plants. By 2050, it will rise to the equivalent of 615 coal plants' worth and will account for 20% of all oil consumption.⁶
- Plastic cutlery is **too small to be recycled** as it can jam recycling machinery. It is also too lightweight and too contaminated by food to be recycled.⁷
- Some single-use plastic cutlery will have their end of life in **landfills or incinerators**, furthering the negative health effects for those who live near the disposal sites.⁸ The rest is littered in our streets and waterways.

FUTURE EVENTS - Virtual, In-person, and Hybrid

[EJTF members - also watch for email announcements of events with short lead times!]

SEPTEMBER 2024 (with hyperlinks to details on the following pages)						
<i>Sun.</i>	<i>Mon.</i>	<i>Tues.</i>	<i>Wed.</i>	<i>Thurs.</i>	<i>Fri.</i>	<i>Sat.</i>
1	2	3 "The Chevron Deference Overturned" - 11:00 a.m.	4	5 NJDEP Food Waste Recycling Proposed Rules - Public Hearing - 9:00 a.m. DRBC 3Q Business Meeting - 10:30 a.m. NJDEP REAL Proposed Rules Public Hearing - 6:00 p.m.	6 "Electrify Your Life Workshop - HEAT PUMPS!" - 1:00 p.m.	7 UU Climate Justice Revival Facilitation Training - 3:00 p.m. & 6:00 p.m.
8	9	10 BOEM Public Meeting on Central Atlantic 2 Offshore Wind Call for Information - 9:00 a.m.	11 BOEM Public Meeting on Central Atlantic 2 Offshore Wind Call for Information - 9:00 a.m. DRBC Advisory Committee on Climate Change - 1:00 p.m. UU Climate Justice Revival Facilitation Training - 7:00 p.m. 10th CEEJH EJ Symposium: "Environmental Justice Past, Present, and Future"	12 NJ Community Forestry Council - 10:00 a.m. Microplastics Removal Pilot Project Grand Opening - 10:00 a.m. "New Jersey at a Crossroads: Squeaky Clean Energy or Fossil Fueled Disasters" - 7:00 p.m. NJDEP REAL Proposed Rules Public Hearing - 2:00 p.m. "Exploring the Policy Landscape of Carbon Dioxide Removal" - 3:00 p.m. LWVNJ Training - "Crafting Testimony & Public Comments" - 6:00 p.m. 10th CEEJH EJ Symposium: "Environmental Justice Past, Present, and Future"	13 Film Screening and Author Talk: "Here's the Story: The Green Amendment" - 2:00 p.m. Comments Due: NJSADC Proposed Soil Disturbance Rules - Revised 10th CEEJH EJ Symposium: "Environmental Justice Past, Present, and Future"	14 "Observing Nature: Inward and Outward" (NJSOC) - 9:30 a.m. 10th CEEJH EJ Symposium: "Environmental Justice Past, Present, and Future"

Calendar continues on p. 4

Calendar continued from p. 3

15	16	17 EPA National EJ Community Engagement Call - 2:00 p.m. Cape May County EJ DEP Community Engagement Session - 6:00 p.m.	18 Pinelands Commission Climate Committee Meeting - 9:30 a.m.	19 NJDEP REAL Proposed Rules Public Hearing - 10:00 a.m.	20 Alliance for NJ Environmental Education (ANJEE) Autumn Outdoor Conference: "Building Bridges" - 8:30 a.m.	21 Tribute to Advocate Carol Gay 2:00 p.m.
22 UU Climate Justice Revival Run-through - 3:00 p.m.	23	24 "Getting to the Truth on Climate: Misinformation, Disinformation & Greenwashing" - 7:00 p.m.	25 Option Green: "Honeybees: A Powerful Pollinator" - 7:00 p.m.	26 The 12th Annual Delaware River Watershed Forum - 7:30 a.m. "Funding Opportunities for Nonprofits, Municipalities, and Communities" - 3:00 p.m. BOEM Public Meeting on Central Atlantic 2 Offshore Wind Call for Information - 5:00 p.m.	27 The 12th Annual Delaware River Watershed Forum - 8:00 a.m. ANJEC 51st Environmental Congress - 9:00 a.m.	28 "Orange, NJ: Community Listening Session" - 10:00 a.m.
29 UU Climate Justice Revival	30 "Rally for a Squeaky Clean Energy Future" - 9:00 a.m.	<u>SAVE THE DATE! - UUFANJ Issues Conference 10/19/2024</u>				

FUTURE EVENTS

"The Chevron Deference Overturned"
9/3/2024, 11:00 a.m. - Virtual

In this webinar, presented by the Eastern Environmental Law Center (EELC), expert attorneys will discuss and answer questions on the impact of the recent U.S. Supreme Court case that ended the Chevron deference. The importance of this change as it relates to environmental law and protection in NJ will be covered, along with history of the Chevron deference and a summary of the Supreme Court ruling's impact and limits. Additional information and registration are available here:
https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_ji6vMWoJQzq75A1K9ACKjQ.

NJDEP Food Waste Recycling Proposed Rules - Public Hearing
9/5/2024, 9:00 a.m. - Virtual

The NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) is proposing new rules entitled "Food Waste Recycling" to implement the 2020 Food Waste Recycling Law's requirements governing the source separation and recycling of food waste by certain businesses identified as large food waste generators. According to the DEP, "the proposed rules prescribe recordkeeping and reporting requirements for both authorized food waste recycling facilities and large food waste generators. Authorized food waste recycling facilities will also be subject to provisions covering

economic benefit for municipalities. The proposed rules include waiver provisions for source separation and recycling and enforcement provisions." A public hearing concerning the proposal will be conducted virtually via the DEP's video conferencing software on 9/5/2024 at 9:00 a.m. Links to the proposed rules, as well as information to join the public hearing and to register to provide oral comments, are available here: <https://dep.nj.gov/rules/notice-of-rule-proposals/20240805a/>. Also see the article on [p. 13](#) about NJ's receipt of a national award for its Food Waste Reduction Plan.

**Delaware River Basin Commission (DRBC)
Third Quarter 2024 Business Meeting
9/5/2024, 10:30 a.m. - via Zoom**

The Delaware River Basin Commission (DRBC) will hold its third-quarter business meeting on Thursday, 9/5/2024. The business meeting is open to the public and will be held virtually via Zoom Webinar. Additional information, including a link to the agenda, registration to attend via Zoom and provide comments, and a link to the livestream via YouTube will be available here: <https://www.nj.gov/drbc/meetings/upcoming/>.

**NJDEP Resilient Environments and
Landscapes (REAL) Proposed Rules
Public Hearings**

**9/5/2024, 6:00 p.m. - In-person
Toms River, NJ
9/12/2024, 2:00 p.m. - Virtual
9/19/2024, 10:00 a.m. - Virtual**

The NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) has issued its long-awaited proposed rules implementing the "Resilient Environments and Landscapes" (REAL) reforms under the "NJ Protecting Against Climate Threats" (NJ PACT) initiative begun in 2020. See the articles in the box on [p. 17](#). **Written comments are due by 11/3/2024.** Additional information and a link to the proposed rule are available here: <https://dep.nj.gov/njreal/>. Information about attending the meetings in person or online, and about providing oral testimony or written comments, is available here: <https://dep.nj.gov/njreal/hearings/>.

**"Electrify Your Life Workshop – HEAT
PUMPS!" - Webinar
9/6/2024, 1:00 p.m. - 2:30 p.m.**

The Elders Climate Action Electrify Your Life series is designed for elders who want to know how to plan and implement home electrification options. "Your questions about electrification and ways to help pay for it will be answered. For this session [rescheduled from August] we will focus on all things heat pump related. Please join us in a zoom meeting as renowned home electrification expert Sean Armstrong of Redwood Energy describes selection from many alternatives, in any climate, of electric heat pumps for heating and cooling your home. In addition, Sean will demonstrate how heat pumps are free of greenhouse gas emissions, and how they are also available to heat your water and even clean and dry your clothes. Presentation followed by hands-on small break out groups for personal planning." Additional information and the link to register (**suggested donation: \$10**) are available here:

https://www.eldersclimateaction.org/event/electrify_august/.

**Delaware River Basin Commission (DRBC)
Advisory Committee on Climate Change
Meeting - via Zoom
9/11/2024, 1:00 p.m. - 3:15 p.m.**

For the Delaware River Basin Commission (DRBC) Advisory Committee on Climate Change meeting, additional information, including the agenda and Zoom registration, is available here: <https://www.nj.gov/drbc/meetings/advisory/>.

**BOEM Public Meetings on Central Atlantic 2
Offshore Wind Call for Information
Various Dates - Virtual and In-person
(See below)**

"The federal Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) today [8/21/2024] announced that it will publish a Call for Information and Nominations (Call) for a second regional offshore wind energy sale in the Central Atlantic (Central Atlantic 2). This Call invites public feedback on possible commercial wind energy development in areas off the coasts of New Jersey, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, and North Carolina. Today's announcement kicks off the process for a second potential auction in the Central Atlantic and provides an important avenue to solicit information as we identify potential areas that may be suitable for future offshore wind energy leasing." Also see the article and map on [p. 17](#).

Public meetings are as follows:

- **Task Force Meetings – Virtual** (via Zoom)
9/10/2024, 9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.
9/11/2024, 9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.
There will be an opportunity for verbal feedback
- **Meeting in Atlantic City, NJ - In-person**
9/26/2024, 5:00 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.
No oral comment period, but written comments can be submitted.
- **Zoom Meeting - Virtual**
Date: October 2, 2024
Time: 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. ET

BOEM will accept nominations and comments through 11:59 p.m. on 10/21/2024. Additional information and links to public meeting registrations are available here: <https://www.boem.gov/renewable-energy/state-activities/central-atlantic>.

**NJ Community Forestry Council
9/12/2024, 10:00 a.m. - Hybrid
Jackson, NJ - In-person & Online**

"The NJ Community Forestry Council (Council) to the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) is comprised of members appointed by the State Forester, with expertise or interest in trees, forestry, or tree or forest management, maintenance, or care. The Council

advises the State Forester, the Division of Parks and Forestry and the DEP.... in promoting, supporting and advancing healthy, safe and sustainable urban and community forests in New Jersey." The meeting agenda will deal with implementing the New Jersey Shade Tree and Community Forestry Assistance Act, the No Net Loss Reforestation Act, and issues concerning urban and community forestry and the forest and tree resources. Additional information, including the agenda for the meeting, will be available here: <https://www.nj.gov/dep/parksandforests/forest/urbanandcommunity/njcommunityforestrycouncil.html>.

**10th CEEJH Environmental Justice
Symposium: "Environmental Justice Past,
Present, and Future"
9/11/2024 - 9/14/2024 - Hybrid
All days available virtually
9/12, 9/13, and 9/14 also In-person
College Park, MD**

Community Engagement Environmental Justice & Health (CEEJH) is presenting its 10th Environmental Justice Symposium, "Environmental Justice Past, Present, and Future." "Environmental Justice is an ever-changing field with exciting new developments and challenges each year. This year at the 10th Environmental Justice Symposium we will remember how far the field has come and honor those who have worked to bring it to this point. We will learn about the work being done all over the world to support communities' environmental justice. And we will recognize the challenges the future will bring and support those who are working to bring solutions to fruition.... The Symposium is free; food and beverages will be provided." This year's keynote speakers include: Dr. Beverly Wright - Executive Director, Deep South Center for Environmental Justice; Rev. Lennox Yearwood - CEO, Hip-Hop Caucus; Vernice Miller-Travis - Executive Vice President, Metropolitan Group; and Mustafa Ali - Executive Vice President, National Wildlife Foundation. Additional information and registration links are available here: https://whova.com/portal/registration/envir_202409/.

**Microplastics Removal Pilot Project
Grand Opening
9/12/2024, 10:00 a.m. (rain date 9/13)
Atlantic City, NJ - In-person**

"PolyGone Systems is pleased to announce the Grand Opening of the Microplastic Removal Pilot Project and the Educational Pavilion at the Atlantic County Utilities Authority (ACUA)!The event will showcase PolyGone Systems' industrial-scale microplastic removal pilot project within the Atlantic County Utilities Authority's Wastewater Treatment Facility. Alongside the pilot deployment, PolyGone will unveil the Microplastic Educational Pavilion, an on-site exhibition for public visitors and students to learn about microplastic pollution and PolyGone's environmental mission. Keynote speakers from the NOAA Sea Grant Office will be featured at the Grand Opening. Additional information and the link to RSVP are available here:

<https://polygonesystems.com/news/acuagrandopen-acuagrandopen-bm4p3-l3x73-m5h6m-tende-9r5ax>.

**"New Jersey at a Crossroads: Squeaky Clean Energy or Fossil Fueled Disasters"
9/12/2024, 7:00 p.m. - 8:15 p.m. - Virtual**

"Join Empower NJ [a coalition of which **UUFANJ is a member**] and allies on Thursday, September 12 at 7 PM for a critical discussion on the major climate & energy policies currently being considered by our legislators, and how we are organizing this fall to win a just transition off fossil fuels. Last year, EmpowerNJ partnered with leading environmental justice groups and climate allies to organize heavily around two pending bills positioned to make or break New Jersey's clean energy future.... we were able to stop the dirty gas RNG [renewable natural gas] bill and strengthen the Clean Energy Standard bill, critically important legislative wins for our future. This year, we've seen a slew of additional bills introduced that present new threats and new opportunities to our movement for a clean energy future." Additional information and registration are available here:

<https://actionnetwork.org/events/new-jersey-at-a-crossroads-squeaky-clean-energy-or-fossil-fueled-disasters/>.

**"Exploring the Policy Landscape of Carbon Dioxide Removal" - Webinar
9/12/2024, 3:00 p.m. - 4:30 p.m.**

"The Environmental and Energy Study Institute (EESI) and the World Resources Institute (WRI) invite you to a briefing about effective policy-making for carbon dioxide removal (CDR). CDR - the practice of removing and storing carbon dioxide from the atmosphere and ocean - comes in many forms, including direct air capture, soil carbon sequestration, ocean CDR, and forest restoration..... expanded policy development is needed to bring them to the scale needed to meet national climate goals.... panelists from NGOs, academia, and the private sector will explore existing policies supporting different stages of CDR development, the level of CDR we expect to need, the potential for CDR in the United States, policy options to enable scaling to that level, and private sector perspectives on the policy landscape." Additional information and the link to RSVP are available here:

<https://www.eesi.org/briefings/view/091224cdr>.

**LWVNJ Training - "Crafting Testimony & Public Comments" - via Zoom
9/12/2024, 6:00 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.**

The League of Women Voters of New Jersey (LWVNJ) (of which **EJTF member Nancy Griffeth** is co-chair of the Natural Resources Committee) has been presenting a public series of virtual activist training sessions designed to equip participants "with the knowledge and skills needed to carry out dynamic organizing strategies that can effectively influence public policy and the state of democracy in New Jersey." Descriptions of all upcoming sessions are available here:

<https://www.lwvnj.org/training>. The 9/2024 session will address how "In a healthy democracy, members of the public actively participate in local, statewide, and national government. Make your voice heard by providing testimony on issues that are important to you - whether at the NJ State level before the legislature or state departments, or locally in your community - your voice matters. Join us for a training on crafting testimony and public comments and learn best practices for lifting up your own story and connecting with stakeholders." Registration is available here: <https://tinyurl.com/bdenw5v3>.

Film Screening and Author Talk: "Here's the Story: The Green Amendment"
9/13/2024, 2:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.
Monroe, NJ - In-person

"Join Waterspirit and For the Generations as Monroe Township Public Library hosts an afternoon viewing of "Here's the Story: The Green Amendment" followed by a discussion of "The Green Amendment: The People's Fight for a Clean, Safe, and Healthy Environment," with author and Delaware Riverkeeper, Maya van Rossum. Van Rossum is the founder of Green Amendments For the Generations, a grassroots non-profit inspiring constitutional recognition and protection of environmental rights in every state and ultimately at the federal level. This program will be held in person." Registration is required and is available here: <https://tinyurl.com/2bwhmxd3>.

NJSADC Proposed Soil Disturbance Rules - Revised
Comments Due 9/13/2024

The New Jersey State Agriculture Development Committee (SADC) under the NJ Department of Agriculture (NJDA) has proposed new rules "defining what activities on preserved farmland constitute soil disturbance, establishing a soil disturbance limitation on preserved farms, allowing for waivers of the soil disturbance limit under certain conditions, providing preserved farm landowners written notice of and an opportunity to be heard on mapped soil disturbances, and promulgating technical standards for certain agricultural practices for compliance with the soil disturbance limitation." Substantial comments were received during the initial comment period, and the SADC is now proposing substantial changes to the previously-proposed rules. Additional information, including the comments received, the proposed revised rules, and instructions for commenting on them (**comments are due 9/13/2024**), is available here: <https://tinyurl.com/2cy9v3kj>.

"Observing Nature: Inward and Outward" - NJ School of Conservation (NJSOC) Program
9/14/2024, 9:30 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.
Sandyston, NJ - In-person

"Free yourself from your mental gerbil wheel and experience the peace and focus that come from simply being present! The peaceful forest environment of the School of Conservation is the perfect place to accomplish this! In 'Observing Nature: Inward and Outward,' you'll learn how to still your mind, open your heart, open your eyes, and open your higher senses to take in what is going on within and around you at all times. The practical skills you learn to strengthen your own powers of observation will help make it easier to navigate the world and its unexpected surprises in order to succeed at reaching your goals. This program is designed for ages 12* to adult (*children under 18 must be accompanied by an adult), and no prior experience is required – just a love of nature and learning. Instructor-led activities will include simple, yet powerful, mindfulness techniques, deep relaxation instruction, nature observation walks (some silent), private journaling, and cell phone nature photography. This popular program is now in its third year and is led by Peter Del Vecchio, using his training and life experiences as both a keen observer of the natural world and yogic mindfulness guide." Additional information, including registration link (**\$99.00**), is available here: <https://njsoc.org/event/observing-nature-inward-and-outward-3/>.

EPA National Environmental Justice Community Engagement Call
9/17/2024, 2:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m. - Virtual

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) invites Environmental Justice (EJ) advocates to participate in its National EJ Community Engagement calls. "The purpose of these calls is to inform communities about EPA's environmental justice work and enhance opportunities to maintain an open dialogue with environmental justice advocates. As environmental justice continues to be integrated into EPA programs and policies, the Agency hopes that relaunching these calls will help reaffirm EPA's continued commitment to work with community groups and

the public to strengthen local environmental and human health outcomes." Additional information will be available here: <https://tinyurl.com/5a986sf6> and registration is available here: <https://tinyurl.com/p6ys5yb7>.

Cape May County EJ DEP Community Engagement Session - Hybrid
9/17/2024, 6:00 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.
Location TBA - In-person & on Zoom

The NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) is inviting Cape May County residents to attend a community engagement session regarding Environmental Justice, with officials from DEP and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Region 2. This community engagement session will provide residents, community groups, and other members of the public with a chance to discuss environmental justice issues in Cape May County, and is one of a series being conducted by DEP in communities across NJ. The meeting will be in-person and also on Zoom; additional information will be available here: <https://dep.nj.gov/event/cape-may-environmental-justice-community-engagement-session-20240917/>.

Pinelands Commission Climate Committee Meeting
9/18/2024, 9:30 a.m.
Location is forthcoming

Additional information on location, agenda, and other details will be available here: <https://www.nj.gov/pinelands/>.

"Rally for a Squeaky Clean Energy Future"
9/30/2024, 9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.
Trenton, NJ - In-person

"Join Empower NJ [a coalition of which **UUFANJ is a member**] in Trenton on Thursday, September 19 at 9 AM to rally for a squeaky clean energy future! Last year, EmpowerNJ partnered with leading environmental justice groups and climate allies to organize heavily around two bills that were positioned to make or break New Jersey's clean energy future.... This year, we've seen a slew of new bills introduced to address our state's climate & energy policy, presenting new threats

and new opportunities to our movement. The legislature is set to take action on some of these bills this Fall, which is why we're headed to the State House to make it clear to the politicians in Trenton what kind of legislation we need in order to move off of fossil fuels and towards a squeaky clean energy future." Additional information and registration are available here: <https://actionnetwork.org/events/rally-for-new-jerseys-climate-future/>

Alliance for New Jersey Environmental Education (ANJEE) - 8th Annual Autumn Outdoor Conference: "Building Bridges"
9/20/2024, 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
Sandyston, NJ - In-person

The Alliance for NJ Environmental Education (ANJEE) is presenting an all-day Autumn Outdoor Conference for formal and non-formal educators at The NJ School of Conservation (NJSOC). There will be four workshop strands: "Education for a Changing Climate"; "Connecting with Nature"; "Research and EE"; and "Field Explorations." Additional information, including the agenda, descriptions of workshops, and the link to register (**ANJEE Member Attendee - \$75; Non-Member Attendee - \$100**) is available here: <https://anjee.org/schedule--workshop-sessions.html>.

"Getting to the Truth on Climate: Misinformation, Disinformation & Greenwashing" - Webinar
9/24/2024, 7:00 p.m. - 8:15 p.m.
& "Climate Action Now" App Action Party
8:00 p.m. - 8:15 p.m.

This webinar, "Getting to the Truth on Climate: Misinformation, Disinformation & Greenwashing" with Margaret Marion Orr, is sponsored by Elders Climate Action. After the webinar, there will be a 15-minute Action Party on the Climate Action Now app, which "gives individuals the ability to take planet-saving actions from their phone in seconds." Additional information, including the registration link and a QR code to set up the Climate Action Now app in advance, is available here: https://www.eldersclimateaction.org/event/nc_sept2024/.

PRESENTS

RADICAL CAROLS

A TRIBUTE TO CAROL GAY



IUC President Carol Gay speaking truth to the Governor.

Saturday, September 21, 2024 @ 2 p.m.

Reformed Church of Highland Park
19 South 2nd Ave., Highland Park, NJ 08904

Join the Solidarity Singers, Larry Cohen, Hetty Rosenstein and others in thanking Carol Gay for her lifetime of service to Labor, Peace, and Human Rights.

Don't miss out on this special event honoring Carol and raising funds for the IUC. Go to <https://radicalcaroltribute.com/tickets/> to join us.

For further information please contact Bennet Zurofsky, bzurofsky@zurofskiylaw.com.

Tribute to Advocate Carol Gay
9/21/2024, 2:00 p.m.
Highland Park, NJ - In-person

Carol Gay, long-time President of the NJ State Industrial Union Council (IUC), member of the Solidarity Singers who boost morale at protests, and member of the Unitarian Universalist Ocean County Congregation (UUOCC), is being honored for her lifetime of service to Labor, Peace, and Human Rights. Tickets are available here: <https://radicalcaroltribute.com/tickets/>

Option Green: "Honeybees: A Powerful Pollinator" - Hybrid
9/25/2024, 7:00 p.m. - 8:15 p.m.

This webinar, part of the "Option Green" series sponsored by the East Brunswick Public Library and co-sponsored by the East Brunswick Friends of the Environmental Commission, will be presented by Angela Juffey, Secretary of the Central Jersey Beekeepers Association (CJBA). In this webinar, "...learn about honeybees, the history of beekeeping, why to keep bees, their behavior and

more! Attendees will get to interact with beekeeping equipment and tools. The CJBA is a branch of the New Jersey Beekeepers Association. Part of their mission is to educate the general public about the benefits and importance of beekeeping." Additional information and the link to register are available here:

<https://ilove.ebpl.org/adults-kids-teens/events/tween/option-green-honeybees-powerful-pollinator-hybrid/2024-09-25-230000>.

"Funding Opportunities for Nonprofits, Municipalities, and Communities" - Webinar
9/26/2024, 3:00 p.m. - 4:30 p.m.

"The Environmental and Energy Study Institute (EESI) invites you to a briefing to explore Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) and Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) funding dedicated to nonprofit organizations and municipalities. For example, the introduction of 'direct pay' is allowing tax-exempt entities to access the benefits of federal tax credits for the first time. Meanwhile, the Department of Energy and the Environmental Protection Agency are hard at work rolling out new programs specifically tailored to these entities. The IRA and IIJA are opening new doors for nonprofits and local governments working to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to a changing climate." Additional information and the link to RSVP are available here:

<https://www.eesi.org/briefings/view/092624ira>.

The 12th Annual Delaware River Watershed Forum
9/26/2024, 7:30 a.m. - 10:00 p.m. & 9/27/2024, 8:00 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.
Bethlehem, PA - In-person

"The Delaware River Watershed Forum serves as a fun and meaningful opportunity for Coalition members, legislators, watershed advocates, environmental and community organizations, agencies, foundations and charitable trusts, constituents and residents, businesses, and students to convene and collaborate on protecting the Delaware River Watershed. Together, this working conference provides a platform to brainstorm solutions, identify gaps, improve skills,

and build relationships to advance our shared goals." Additional information and the link to register (**two-day pricing: \$300; single-day pricing is \$150 for either day**) are available here: <https://www.delriverwatershed.org/2024-forum>.

"Orange, NJ: Community Listening Session" - In-person
9/28/2024, 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
Orange, NJ

Join the NJ Environmental Justice Alliance (NJEJA) "for a community listening session and waste audit. This event is an opportunity to address waste-related concerns and take collective action to improve our local environment." Additional information will be available here: <https://njeja.org/events/>.

UU Climate Justice Revival
"Reimagine Together - From an Extractive Age to a New Era" Facilitation Trainings - Various dates in 9/2024 - Online
Revival Run-through: 9/22/2024 - Online
Revival date 9/29/2024 - In-person at multiple congregations, including Beacon, Princeton, Ocean County, Montclair, Cherry Hill, and Central Unitarian.

The UU Climate Justice Revival is a project of the UU Climate Justice Coalition and Friends with financial support from Revival Sponsors. "On September 28-29, congregations will host UU Climate Justice Revivals to collectively reimagine a spirit-filled and liberatory future. Through conversations, worship, and advocacy, congregations will work together to realize climate justice and collective liberation in our communities. Congregations will receive everything they need to host a revival in their communities, including discussion guides and materials for all ages, training, worship resources, and advocacy actions designed to transform our communities through climate justice. Sign up to host a UU Climate Justice Revival in your congregation today!" Additional information including a map of participating congregations and the link to register a congregation are available here: <https://www.uuclimatejustice.org>. Links to register for the facilitation trainings and the Revival run-through, as well as recordings of

previous information sessions and facilitation trainings are available here: <https://www.uuclimatejustice.org/events>.

Facilitation Trainings (2 Hours):
Saturday, 9/7/2024, 3:00 p.m.
Saturday, 9/7/2024, 6:00 p.m.
Wednesday, 9/11/2024, 7:00 p.m.

Revival Run-through:
Sunday, 9/22/2024, 3:00 p.m.

ANJEC 51st Environmental Congress
9/27/2024, 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
Mt. Laurel, NJ - In-person

"ANJEC's [Association of NJ Environmental Commissions] 51st annual Environmental Congress will be an in-person educational conference with a selection of workshops and inspirational speakers. Workshop topics will include a variety of environmental conservation topics to include: Mastering Municipal Ordinances, MS4 & Stormwater, Waste Reduction, Water Quality Protection, Renewable Energy, Invasive Species Control, Reviewing Zoning, Environmental Policy Updates, Citizen Science Spotlight, Urban Greenways, and more. Join featured speaker NJDEP Commissioner Shawn LaTourette and keynote speaker NJ State Climatologist David Robinson and hear how New Jersey is positioning itself to weather climate change." Additional information and the link to register are available here: <https://anjec.org/environmental-congress-2/>.

OCT

SAVE THE DATE!

19

Hosted by
UU CONGREGATION
AT MONTCLAIR

UU FaithAction NJ
FALL ISSUES
CONFERENCE

VIDEOS OF PAST EVENTS

"Has It Always Been This Hot in NJ?" - Video of Webinar

The NJ Interagency Council on Climate Resilience asked: "Has it Always Been This Hot in NJ?" The Council held a webinar with a panel of climate and weather experts who discussed how and why NJ's temperatures have changed over time and what we can expect moving forward. Included were the impacts of this warming trend, the differences between weather and climate, the Urban Heat Island effect and the impact to NJ's overall warming and how to stay informed. The video is available here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kCQDhEdd0w4&t=5s>.

2024 Congressional Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency EXPO and Policy Forum - Videos of Sessions

The Environmental and Energy Study Institute (EESI) and the House and Senate Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency (REEE) Caucus held its 27th Annual Congressional Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency EXPO and Policy Forum (EXPO 2024). Speakers showcased technologies and solutions that reduce carbon emissions, save households money, improve the economy, build resilience, and protect our security interests."

Panel topics included:

- Energy Efficiency;
- Energy Modernization;
- National Security and Resilience;
- Renewable Energy;
- Rural Communities;
- Sustainable Transportation; and
- Workforce.

The videos are available here:

<https://www.eesi.org/briefings/view/expo2024>.

Hydrogen 101 - Video of Webinar

This webinar, sponsored by the Delaware Riverkeeper Network, dealt with "clearing up some of the myths and mystery surrounding hydrogen and its purported usefulness as an energy source" and provided an update on the proposed MACH2 Hydrogen Hub. "A lack of public engagement and

transparency about MACH2 has been vigorously protested in the region." The video is available here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BFNOrxYbOmo>.

Hydrogen Economics - Video of Webinar

This webinar, sponsored by the Delaware Riverkeeper Network, "[dove] into the economics of hydrogen and the hydrogen hub investments being supported by our tax dollars. Two of the nation's most knowledgeable hydrogen economy analysts: David Schlissel, Director of Resource Planning Analysis at the Institute for Energy Economics and Financial Analysis (IEEFA) and Anika Juhn, Energy Data Analyst at IEEFA [were] featured.... [plus] the lowdown on the future of a "hydrogen economy" and its implications for communities and the climate.... [and also took a] look at the proposed federal government's hydrogen tax credit program '45V'." In addition, a brief update was provided on the proposed MACH2 Hydrogen Hub planned for Delaware, Southeastern Pennsylvania, and South/Central New Jersey. The video is available here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=THCNaMDXq8U>.

Nuclear Powered Hydrogen - Video of Webinar

In this webinar, sponsored by the Delaware Riverkeeper Network, "two nuclear experts, Dr. Desmond Kahn, and Dr. Arjun Makhijani, walk[ed] us through the ramifications of the use of nuclear energy for hydrogen production, a required energy source planned for the MACH2 Hydrogen Hub. [They] also provide[d] a brief update on the proposed MACH2 Hydrogen Hub planned for Delaware, Southeastern Pennsylvania, and South/Central New Jersey. The video is available here:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gAafujsox_8.

Social Perceptions of the Environmental Effects of Offshore Wind Energy Development - Video of Webinar

The U.S. Offshore Wind Synthesis of Environmental Effects Research (SEER) effort, led by the National Renewable Energy Laboratory

(NREL) and Pacific Northwest National Laboratory (PNNL) with support from the U.S. Department of Energy's Wind Energy Technologies Office, presented this webinar, "Social Perceptions of the Environmental Effects of Offshore Wind Energy Development." The panelists discussed how perceptions of offshore wind's environmental effects shape public opinion and community engagement, and how to best communicate environmental information to the public. The video is available here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N23zaNuwakY&t=2918s>.

NEWS RELATED TO EJTF ISSUES [covering 7/26/2024 – 8/25/2024]

ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

New Jersey DEP Updates Its Environmental Justice 'Stressors' Map

"As part of the adoption of its Environmental Justice regulations, the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) committed to update data within the Environmental Justice Mapping, Assessment, and Protection (EJMAP) tool twice annually on a set schedule to ensure accuracy and transparency; January and July 31st of each year. Accordingly, NJDEP updated the EJMAP tool with new stressor data effective 7/31/24." Any permit application submitted on or after that date must use the new stressor data layer for analysis. The list of updated stressors is available here: <https://dep.nj.gov/wp-content/uploads/ej/njdep-ej-map-update-notice-july-24.pdf>.

The NJDEP Office of Environmental Justice's EJ Directory is Here!

The NJ Department of Environmental Protection's (DEP) Environmental Justice Directory "is a public database comprising community-based organizations, advocates, and concerned residents with interest in environmental justice. It aims to facilitate robust engagement and collaboration between environmental justice stakeholders and state and local government and companies involved in environmental justice initiatives across

New Jersey. Joining the EJ Directory is free." The directory and a link to a form to join are available here: <https://dep.nj.gov/ej/ej-directory/>.

ELECTRIC VEHICLES & VEHICLE EMISSION REDUCTION



Atlantic Highlands OKs Purchase Of Six EV Charging Stations

The Atlantic Highlands Mayor and Council unanimously approved the purchase of six electric vehicle (EV) charging stations, which had been in the planning process for over two years. Funding was provided by grants from the NJ Board of Public Utilities (BPU) and the NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP). The first chargers will be located at the Seastreak ferry terminal location.

<https://themonmouthjournaleastern.com/atlantic-highlands-oks-purchase-of-six-ev-charging-stations-p16469-73.htm>

LAND MANAGEMENT/ AGRICULTURE/FOOD

Murphy Administration's Work to Reduce Food Waste Honored by National Conference of State Legislatures

The NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) has received the National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL) 2024 Notable Document Award, in the area of "Environmental Issues," for its Food Waste Reduction Plan (available here: https://www.nj.gov/dep/dshw/food-waste/food_waste_reduction_plan.pdf). According to the DEP's press release, the Plan includes a

"comprehensive and ongoing set of actions to reduce food waste in New Jersey" and was commended by the NCSL as being "innovative in providing substantive information on contemporary issues of interest to legislatures." The group's judging panel further noted the plan could serve as a model for other state legislatures seeking to reduce food waste.

https://www.nj.gov/dep/newsrel/2024/24_0034.htm

How a Developer's Massive Route 70 Building Project in Cherry Hill Will Restore the Environment

This article describes how a developer of two hotels and a restaurant complex worked with the NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) for four years before receiving approval of a plan that meets expanded environmental rules that resulted from DEP's designating the adjacent Cooper River tributary as a Category 1 waterway. Under the approved plan, the riparian zone and stream on the north end of the property will account for more than 25% of the total property size.

<https://tinyurl.com/5xyyvx83>

FOSSIL FUEL INFRASTRUCTURE

Environmental Groups, Rate Advocates Win Challenge To FERC's Flawed Pipeline Approval

In 2023, a coalition of environmental organizations, backed by eight state Attorneys General and the NJ Ratepayer Advocate, appealed the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission's (FERC) approval of a Williams Co. subsidiary's Regional Energy Access Expansion (REAE) project, which was planned to expand natural gas compressor stations in Branchburg and Old Bridge and build a new natural gas compressor station in West Deptford, plus 36.1 miles of pipeline in PA. Multiple arguments against FERC's approval of the project were given, including the agency's ignoring NJ's findings that the project is not needed and that it would interfere with NJ's climate change goals by potentially being responsible for nearly half of NJ's greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by 2050. The D.C. Circuit Court of Appeals considered the case, and have vacated FERC's order

approving the project and remanded it to FERC, which is a major victory for environmentalists (the Court decision is available here:

<https://earthjustice.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/2024.07.30-opinion.pdf>).

The court relied on the NJ study related to the need for the project rather than finding that agreements with local distribution companies were adequate to establish need, which has been the case in the past. This potentially sets a new standard for how FERC must evaluate project necessity. Also significant was the Court's ruling that FERC failed to adequately consider GHG emissions. Williams Co. has pledged to find a way to make the Regional Energy Access Expansion project a reality, and could appeal the decision to the U.S. Supreme Court. See

<https://earthjustice.org/press/2024/environmental-groups-rate-advocates-win-challenge-to-fercs-flawed-pipeline-approval/>. Also see the 1-minute news video, available here:

<https://www.njspotlightnews.org/video/federal-court-blocks-controversial-pipeline-expansion/>

Compressor Station Ruling Reversed

As previously reported in this newsletter (October 2023, page 16, available here:

<https://www.uufaithaction.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/Environmental-Justice-Task-Force-Newsletter-October-2023-FINAL.pdf>), members

of the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Sussex County (UUFSC) Social Action Team, including **EJTF member Christine Dunbar** have been active with the coalition fighting the Tennessee Gas Pipeline (TGP) Company's compressor expansion in North Jersey for a number of years. Their efforts had resulted in the compressor expansion being blocked by the NJ Superior Court Appellate Division judges, who invalidated an exemption to Highlands Preservation Area regulations that had been granted by the NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP). However, TGP appealed that decision and the NJ Supreme Court has reversed it, and sent the case back to the Appellate Court to reconsider, based on utilizing the exemption that DEP had originally approved (the Supreme Court decision is available here:

<https://www.mccarter.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/08/In-the-Matter-of-Proposed-Construction-of-Compressor-Station-CS327-Office-Building-and-Appurtenant.pdf>). The lower court is

tasked with determining whether the compressor station is consistent with the Highlands Act's goals and purposes, considering "the fact that Compressor Station 327 is being built upon already disturbed lands that are unsuitable for vegetation and wildlife."

<https://www.westmilfordmessenger.com/news/local-news/compressor-station-ruling-reversed-YK3581908>

RENEWABLE RESOURCES (other than Offshore Wind)

How Solar-Friendly Is Your State? We Scored Them All

As part of CNET's "CNET Zero" series "that chronicles the impact of climate change and explores what's being done about the problem," CNET graded each U.S. state on how solar-friendly its residential solar policies are. NJ got an A (the only state to do so); however, the grade appears to reference the previous SREC benefits ("over \$200") rather than the Successor Solar Incentive Program (SUSI) that went into effect in 2021 and provides \$90 for net metered residential solar.

<https://www.cnet.com/home/energy-and-utilities/how-solar-friendly-is-your-state-we-scored-them-all/>

Prominent Rooftop Solar Installer SunPower Files Bankruptcy

Named by Forbes as having the Best Overall Score among its ranking of solar panel installation companies in NJ in 2024, SunPower has filed for bankruptcy. As reported in EnviroPolitics, "The bankruptcy filing comes as the company plans to sell its Blue Raven Solar and new homes businesses, along with its non-installing dealer network, to Complete Solaria for \$45 million, pending court approval. SunPower is aiming for court approval by mid-September and intends to sell its remaining assets through the bankruptcy process. The residential solar sector has faced challenges due to high interest rates, which have dampened demand and left companies with excess inventory. However, SunPower's troubles are further compounded by allegations of misconduct."

<https://enviropolitics.com/prominent-rooftop-solar-installer-sunpower-files-bankruptcy/>

New 'Forever Chemical' Rules to Hit Renewable Energy Industry

This Bloomberg Law article describes the ways the recently-enacted federal laws related to PFAS "forever chemicals" may impact the renewable energy industry. Impacts may be related to the land where projects are sited, the materials used in renewable energy components, and potential reporting requirements.

<https://news.bloomberglaw.com/us-law-week/new-forever-chemical-rules-to-hit-renewable-energy-industry>

DOE Announces \$41 Million for Technologies to Expand the Use of Renewable Power

The Newark, NJ company "CarbonBridge" is one of the selectees for consideration to receive an award from the \$41 million the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) is making available for development of Renewables-to-Liquids (RtL) technology. From the DOE press release: they have selected "14 projects to develop technologies, Renewables-to-Liquids (RtL), for harnessing renewable energy sources like wind and solar to produce liquids for sustainable fuels or chemicals that can be transported and stored as easily as carbon-intensive liquids like gasoline or oil. Renewable energy resources are often not co-located with the current U.S. power grid, and by enabling the transportation of sustainable fuels the selected projects can reduce interconnection barriers while helping cut emissions from hard to decarbonize industrial sectors." The CarbonBridge project (website available here: <https://carbonbridge.io>) is the only bio-based entity selected, and utilizes "harnessing biological systems to convert methane into methanol at low temperatures and pressures... The process uses methanotrophic bacteria to convert methane into methanol."

<https://www.energy.gov/articles/doe-announces-41-million-technologies-expand-use-renewable-power>

OFFSHORE WIND



Atlantic City Council Passes Diversion of Parkland for Cables From Offshore Wind Farm

The Atlantic City Council approved diverting 1.8 acres of Green Acres parkland for Atlantic Shores Offshore Wind to run electric cables under the parkland from its planned offshore wind farm to NJ's electric grid. Testimony in favor of the project was provided by **EJTF member Michael Skelly on behalf of UUFANJ** (see [p. 1](#)). The city plans to add about 40 acres of marshland to the Green Acres program to make up for the diversion. According to the NJ League of Conservation Voters (NJLCV) Executive Director Ed Potosnak, "We applaud the Atlantic City Council for approving a Green Acres diversion for offshore wind development. The decision is one more step in our effort to ensure New Jersey achieves its clean energy goals. Local officials have confidence in offshore wind development and are working to make sure Atlantic City residents will live in a safer, healthier environment for generations to come. The council heard from members of the public as well as the detailed plans of offshore wind developers, and reached the best possible conclusion for the future of their community." <https://energycentral.com/news/council-approves-wind-farm-cable-plan-atlantic-city-council-passes-diversion-parkland-cables>

Egg Harbor Township Committee Votes to Add Atlantic Shores-Owned Land to Redevelopment Area

As a first step in a process to potentially enable Atlantic Shores Offshore Wind to build a substation in Egg Harbor Township (EHT), the EHT Committee voted to include two parcels of land owned by Atlantic Shores in a redevelopment area. The Committee heard from project opponents and proponents, like **EJTF member Michael Skelly** (see [p. 1](#)), who is quoted in the

article as saying "This is a way we can help reduce illness here in our own backyard"). Actual plans for building a substation would have to be submitted to the Planning Board for approval, and that process would be public.

<https://energycentral.com/news/eh-t-adds-wind-site-cardiff-rehab-plan-egg-harbor-township-committee-votes-add-atlantic-shores>

New Jersey and Ørsted Offshore Wind Are Officially Kaput

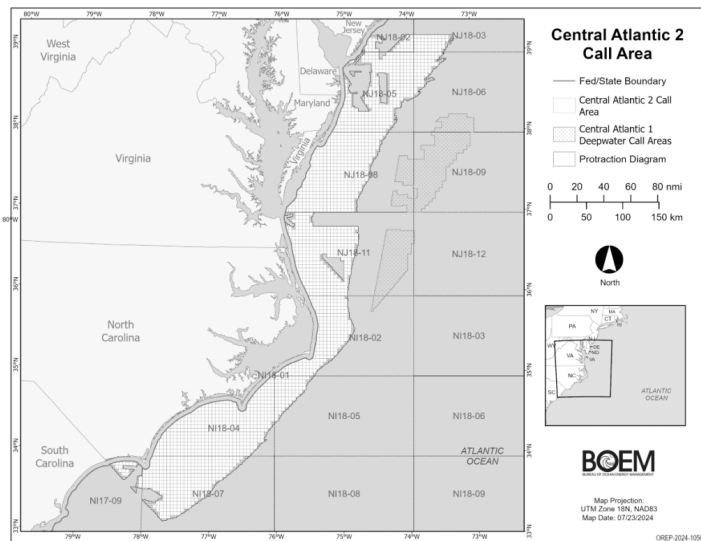
According to EnviroPolitics, on 8/17/2024 the NJ Board of Utilities (BPU) vacated two approval decisions related to Ørsted's Ocean Wind 1 and Ocean Wind 2 projects, that it had cancelled in 2023. The BPU vacated a 2019 decision approving Ocean Wind 1 to build close to 100 wind turbines off South Jersey beaches. The Board also vacated approvals granted for rights-of-way for the proposed power lines to pass under Ocean City and across Upper Township.

<https://enviropolitics.com/new-jersey-and-orsted-offshore-wind-are-officially-kaput/>

Van Drew Uses Forum to Slam NJ Offshore Wind Projects

This 1-1/2-minute news video describes the third public forum on offshore wind sponsored by U.S. Congressmen Jeff Van Drew and Chris Smith. Congressman Van Drew emphasized the potential number of wind turbines, the cost that he states will be borne by taxpayers, and what he characterized as decimation of the fishing industry.

<https://www.njspotlightnews.org/video/van-drew-uses-forum-to-slam-nj-offshore-wind-projects/>



Feds Start the Process for Next Round of Offshore Wind Projects

To further the Biden-Harris administration's goal of deploying 30 gigawatts of offshore wind energy by 2030, and to support the offshore wind energy goals of Atlantic coast states, the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) has published a "Call for Information and Nominations" for a second regional offshore wind energy sale in the Central Atlantic (Central Atlantic 2 - see map above). The Central Atlantic 2 Call Area consists of 13,476,805 acres off New Jersey, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, and North Carolina Coasts. This kicks off the process for a second potential auction in the Central Atlantic, providing BOEM with information for identifying potential areas that may be suitable. Publication of the announcement begins a **60-day comment period, ending on 10/21/2024**. (Additional information is available here: <https://www.boem.gov/renewable-energy/state-activities/central-atlantic>.) After the public comment period closes, BOEM will review and analyze commercial nominations and public comments submitted, as well as information from Tribal consultations and the Central Atlantic Intergovernmental Renewable Energy Task Force. BOEM will then identify draft wind energy areas (WEAs) and conduct environmental reviews of them, in consultation with the appropriate federal agencies, Tribes, state and local governments, and key stakeholders. After completing its environmental reviews and consultations, BOEM may propose a competitive lease sale for areas within the WEAs. Also see Public Hearings on [p. 6](https://enviropolitics.com/feds-start-the-process-for-next-round-of-offshore-wind-projects/).

NJDEP RESILIENT ENVIRONMENTS AND LANDSCAPES (REAL) PROPOSED RULES

In 2020, the NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) began a regulatory reform effort called NJ PACT (NJ Protecting Against Climate Threats) "to help reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) and other climate pollutant emissions while making New Jersey's natural and built environments more resilient to the impacts of climate change..." Part of that initiative was the suite of reforms termed "Resilient Environments and Landscapes" (REAL). Now, DEP has published a rule proposal that would implement these reforms and, according to DEP, "make NJ the first state to initiate a comprehensive update of land resource protection regulations to address the current and future impacts of a changing climate." The 1044-page proposed rule includes limits on coastal development, creating a new designation called the "Inundation Risk Zone," and expanding the scope of existing tidal flood hazard areas. It would require developers to raise new structures by 5 feet in flood-prone areas, and it would reclassify flood-prone areas based on 5 feet of sea-level rise by 2100. Additional information and a link to the proposed rule are available here: <https://dep.nj.gov/njreal/>.

A joint hearing of the NJ Senate and Assembly environment committees was held, in which proponents and opponents gave testimony; a 4-minute news video is available here: <https://www.njspotlightnews.org/video/proposed-dep-rules-spark-debate-on-development-resiliency/>.

Environmentalists gathered in Asbury Park to show support for the proposed rule; a 4-minute video is available here: <https://www.njspotlightnews.org/video/dep-proposes-new-land-use-rules-for-jersey-shore/>.

Also see the public hearings to be held on the proposed REAL rules, on [p. 5](#) in the "Future Events" section.

It should be noted that the proposed REAL rules do NOT prohibit any development, or rebuilding of storm-damaged properties - see "NJDEP REAL Myths and Facts" here: <https://dep.nj.gov/njreal/facts/>.

CLIMATE CHANGE

GENERAL

NJBPU Announces Funding to Support Creation and Implementation of Community Energy Plans

The NJ Board of Public Utilities (BPU) has announced awards in the third year of the Community Energy Plan Grant (CEPG) Program and the first year of the Community Energy Plan Implementation (CEPI) Program. According to the BPU press release, "together, the CEPG and CEPI programs empower local communities to create and implement community energy plans that align with the State's Energy Master Plan." Under the CEPG Program, municipalities receive \$10,000 each, with those designated as overburdened municipalities (OBMs) receiving \$25,000. (A description of the program, including how OBMs are determined, along with a list of the awardees, is available here: <https://tinyurl.com/r8czmjxn>. A video of a presentation about the program given at the August BPU Energy Efficiency Stakeholder meeting, is available here, starting at minute 28:25: <https://tinyurl.com/5b4xzp78>.) Under the CEPG Program, ninety-two municipalities received a total of \$1,145,000. Under the CEPI Program, municipalities can receive up to \$250,000, with at least forty percent awarded to OBMs; sixteen municipalities were awarded a total of \$3,414,180 for eighteen projects.

<https://www.nj.gov/bpu/newsroom/2024/approved/20240814.html>

NJ Gets \$72M to Build Flood-Resilient Projects

This 3-minute news video describes the \$72 million grant the NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) has received to fund climate resilience projects across NJ's 16 coastal counties. These Inflation Reduction Act funds were awarded as part of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) Climate Resilience Regional Challenge competition, and NJ received the third-highest amount of funding. The grant will be implemented by DEP's Office of Climate

Resilience, as part of its "Building a Climate Ready NJ" initiative, targeted to advance resilience planning, project design, construction, and education across the state's coastal counties, representing 432 municipalities, 47% of which are identified as overburdened and disadvantaged communities (details are available here: <https://dep.nj.gov/climateready/>). Also see the two articles below.

<https://www.njspotlightnews.org/video/nj-gets-72m-to-build-flood-resilient-projects/>



NJ Towns, Cities Battle Increasing Bouts of Heavy Flooding

This 4-1/2-minute news video describes the changes in rainfall patterns that are occurring in NJ, which is getting what used to be considered as 50-to-100-year storms on a frequent basis. The infrastructure cannot handle the increases, and new techniques are being implemented.

<https://www.njspotlightnews.org/video/nj-towns-cities-battle-increasing-bouts-of-heavy-flooding/>

Flood Control Projects in 3 NJ Cities Get Federal Funding Boost

As part of the \$72 million in federal climate resilience funding that NJ recently received (see the article in the [previous column](#)), the Rutgers Cooperative Extension Water Resources Program will lead the design and construction of neighborhood-scale "green infrastructure" projects to improve stormwater management in Newark, Paterson, and Perth Amboy. This article focuses on Paterson, describing its green infrastructure projects ranging from porous pavement to rain gardens, with a comprehensive description and photo of the latter. Paterson will receive \$9.5

million, with approximately \$7 million to be invested in constructing physical infrastructure, including rain gardens, permeable pavement systems, and other innovative water management solutions, with the remaining funds to be dedicated to educational programs that train residents to build and maintain these projects. <https://www.njspotlightnews.org/2024/08/flood-control-projects-in-3-nj-cities-get-federal-funding-boost/>

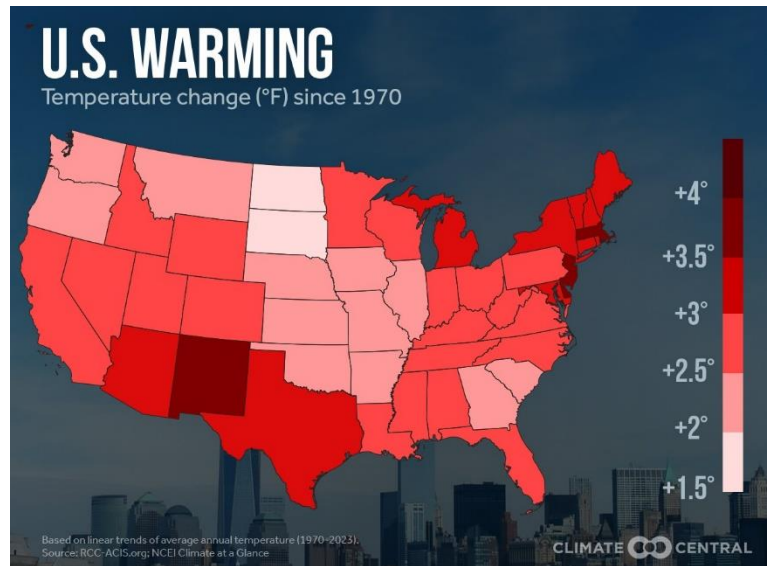
New Analysis [and Map] Pinpoints Critical Infrastructure Threatened by Rising Seas in Hundreds of Coastal Communities

The Union of Concerned Scientists (UCS) has issued a report, "Looming Deadlines for Coastal Resilience" (available here: <https://www.ucsusa.org/resources/looming-deadlines-coastal-resilience>), and an interactive map (available here: <https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/6ca511bc6cd14ce8a4a6e18b769fb802>) delineating projected sea level rise and essential buildings and services that it threatens. The report also shows how disruptive flooding disproportionately affects disadvantaged communities, with NJ identified as the state with the second-highest inundated assets in those communities - after Louisiana, which ranks first. <https://blog.ucsusa.org/kristy-dahl/critical-infrastructure-threatened-by-rising-seas-in-hundreds-of-coastal-communities/>

HEAT-RELATED

NJ Sets Records as Climate Change Heats Up

This 4-minute news video showcases a NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) virtual panel held with climatologists and meteorologists to discuss extreme heat and why NJ is one of the fastest-warming states (see map in [next column](#)). <https://www.njspotlightnews.org/video/nj-sets-records-as-climate-change-heats-up/>



3.5 = Increase in NJ's Average Annual Temperature Since 1970

As shown on the map above (from the non-profit research group Climate Central in Princeton; additional information available here: <https://www.climatecentral.org/climate-matters/earth-day-fastest-warming-cities>), NJ is one of the fastest-warming states in the U.S., with a 3.5 degree annual temperature increase since 1970. <https://www.njspotlightnews.org/2024/08/nj-climate-change-fastest-warming/>

Rising Heat Leads to Greater Health Risks. Who's Most Vulnerable?

This article, which includes a 5-minute news video, describes the dangers of rising heat, focusing on impacts in NJ and describing the signs of overheating and heat stroke, and highlighting the vulnerability of infants, children, and the elderly. A bill (S2422/A3521) that would require employers to establish a plan to address heat, and require some mitigating factors, has been reported out of the Labor Committees in both the NJ Senate and Assembly and is now in the Appropriations Committee of each respective House. <https://www.njspotlightnews.org/2024/07/rising-heat-leads-more-health-risks-elderly-among-most-vulnerable/>

Summer Heat Worsens Gun Violence, Study Finds

A study conducted by Boston University's Research on Innovations for Safety and Equity Lab and the University of Washington's Firearm Injury and Policy Program (available here:

<https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jamanetworkopen/fullarticle/2799635>) analyzed temperature and gun violence data in 100 U.S. cities during a six-year period, and identified nearly 7% of shootings as being related to abnormally warmer weather. The study found that unusually warm weather contributed to 11% of Jersey City's 426 shootings, 10% of Newark's 896 shootings, 9% of Paterson's 502 shootings, and 8% of Trenton's 527 shootings.

<https://newjerseymonitor.com/2024/08/05/summer-heat-worsens-gun-violence-study-finds/>

FOREST HEALTH

Biden-Harris Administration Announces \$190M Grant Opportunity for Payment Programs That Help Private Forest Landowners Address Climate Change

Funded by the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA), the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Forest Service is making available \$190 million "to help private forest landowners adapt to and mitigate the impacts of climate change and retain working forestlands.... Of the total, \$140 million is available to support state-endorsed cost-share programs for landowners. Cost-share payments lower the financial barriers for landowners to adapt to climate change by making forests more resilient to changing climate conditions, and to store more carbon on the landscape. Additionally, \$50 million is available to programs that issue payments directly to landowners to adopt practices that increase carbon sequestration and storage of their forests.... Among other things, payments to landowners also provide financial incentive to maintain their land as forests rather than convert it to other uses. Eligible applicants include state forestry agencies or their equivalents and nonprofit organizations."

<https://www.usda.gov/media/press-releases/2024/07/25/biden-harris-administration-announces-190m-grant-opportunity>

LEAD REDUCTION IN HOUSEHOLDS

DCA Awards \$6.7 Million in NRTC Lead-Based Paint Hazard Funding

Nonprofit groups in Camden, Essex, Middlesex, Salem, and Union counties received a total of \$6.7 million in funding for lead paint projects provided by the NJ Department of Community Affairs (DCA). The Neighborhood Revitalization Tax Credit (NRTC) program funds, originally provided in federal American Rescue Plan COVID-relief funds earmarked for lead-paint projects, is focused on lead paint remediation and abatement for households at or below 80 percent of area median income that live in single family to four-family housing units built before 1978. The funding is going to community organizations that participate in DCA's NRTC program and have an approved NRTC neighborhood plan. Also see the article below.

<https://www.nj.gov/dca/news/news/2024/approved/20240716.shtml>

Paterson Getting \$2M More for Dangerous Lead Paint Removal

The Lead-Free NJ community hub organization "Paterson Alliance" has received a \$2M grant from the NJ Department of Community Affairs (DCA) Lead Remediation and Abatement Program (LRAP). The grant will allow the Paterson Alliance to do lead paint remediation in 90 homes at a cost of about \$11,666 apiece and lead abatement in 10 homes at a cost of about \$25,000 each. Another Paterson group, the NJ Community Development Corporation (NJCDC) received \$1.98 million from the DCA, as one of seven groups statewide sharing \$6.77 million in federal COVID-relief funds earmarked for the lead-paint projects (see the article above). The Paterson group plans to spend \$250,000 for lead paint abatement in 10 homes and \$1.22 million for lead paint remediation in 94 others. Funds will also provide relocation money for families while the work is going on inside their homes.

<https://www.leadfreenj.org/2024/07/30/paterson-getting-2m-more-for-dangerous-lead-paint-removal/>

POLLUTION

Wildfire Smoke Makes for Dangerous Air Pollution

Rutgers University has published a study (available here: <https://tinyurl.com/ctp9epm3>) that found that smoke from the wildfires burning in Canada in 7/2023 generated air pollution in the NJ/NYC area that was particularly harmful to health due to the size and chemical composition of the particles. This article describes that study, including its examination of the pollutants and modeling done of the health impacts of breathing the air containing them.

<https://www.njspotlightnews.org/2024/08/rutgers-researchers-say-2023-canadian-wildfire-pollution-especially-dangerous-new-jersey-new-york/>

Protesters Travel to NJ, Challenge Formosa Plastics Over Pollution Claims

This 4-minute news video shows a rally held by environmental justice leaders and activists from around the U.S. protesting against Formosa Plastics, a Taiwan-based company that has its U.S. headquarters in Livingston, NJ. It operates facilities in Texas and Louisiana as well as in Taiwan and Vietnam, and it is accused of dumping plastic pellets in waterways. Six protesters were arrested.

<https://www.njspotlightnews.org/video/protesters-travel-to-nj-challenge-formosa-plastics-over-pollution-claims/>

OTHER

School of Conservation Budget Rises

After Gov. Murphy's proposed SFY 2025 budget included a 60% cut in funding for the NJ School of Conservation (NJSOC), an outcry ensued. The legislature's last-minute additions to the budget resulted in an addition to the proposed amount that brings the NJSOC budget to \$2.8 million, which is \$800,000 more than in SFY 2024.

<https://www.townshipjournal.com/home/school-of-conservation-budget-rises-BD3500650>

NJ Faces Increasing Pressure to End Investments in Fossil Fuels

This article describes a protest by climate activists, and testimony given by them, at a recent meeting of the NJ State Investment Council, which is the panel that sets policy for current and retired NJ government workers. They are calling for total fossil fuel divestment from the pension fund; it is estimated that the pension fund has more than \$2 billion invested in the fossil fuel industry. Also see the Opinion piece below.

<https://www.njspotlightnews.org/2024/07/nj-faces-increasing-pressure-to-end-investments-in-fossil-fuels-divest-divestment-pension-fund/>

Opinion: Gen Z Says No to More Fossil Fuel Investments

In this piece, Ben Dziobek, executive director of Climate Revolution Action Network, a Gen Z-led climate organization based in New Jersey, calls for total fossil fuel divestment from the NJ government workers' pension fund. He calls for action from the governor's office, attorney general, and the NJ Department of the Treasury, and for the Assembly and Senate appropriations committees to post and pass the bill (S198) that "Prohibits investment by State of pension and annuity funds in, and requires divestment from, 200 largest publicly traded fossil fuel companies," which was reported out of committee in the Senate, but was not passed before the legislature went on break for the summer.

<https://www.njspotlightnews.org/2024/08/op-ed-climate-revolution-action-network-leader-says-nj-pension-fund-falls-short-fossil-fuel-divestment-actions/>

Democrats Pitch Budget Reform

This article and 4-1/2-minute news video describe the current NJ budget process, in which multiple additions have traditionally been made at the last minute with no public input, and include proposals made by prospective Democratic candidates for NJ governor. Advocacy groups, including environmental groups, have long asked for changes to the process because of the lack of public input at this critical time.

<https://www.njspotlightnews.org/2024/08/democrats-pitch-budget-reform/>

EJTF's GOALS for 2023/2024

- 1. Advocating for the adoption of the Green Amendment in New Jersey through work in our congregations and as a Task Force;**
- 2. Working toward resolving the many challenges in New Jersey related to food-insecurity, including but not limited to promoting regenerative agriculture, increasing accessibility of healthy food, reducing food waste, and encouraging community and family gardens;**
- 3. Supporting 100% renewable energy and energy conservation through measures such as the Clean Energy Equity Act, and those affecting transportation and Electric Vehicles (EVs).**
- 4. Advocating for better health and reducing climate change for all by protecting and expanding New Jersey's public and urban forests.**

UU FaithAction NJ - Environmental Justice Task Force - Peggy Middaugh, Chair
Visit <https://uufaithaction.org/environment/> for links and resources, and to join the EJTF

MORATORIUM MONDAYS CONTINUE

Please continue to contact Gov. Murphy every Monday and urge him to declare a climate emergency moratorium on fossil fuel projects! These efforts have been successful in that a number of projects have been stopped or delayed in the past. Either call through the Empower NJ number (866-586-4069) to get coaching on the topic of the week, emphasizing what is in the news, or call directly to the governor's office (609-292-6000). Over 50 environmental, citizen, faith, and progressive groups in NJ are calling on Governor Murphy to enact a moratorium on all new fossil fuel projects in NJ until there are rules in place to achieve 100% clean energy goals.