



TAKE ACTION ON KEY NJ LEGISLATIVE BILLS TO SUPPORT OR OPPOSE! See box on [p. 26](#).

<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 and CONGREGATIONAL ACTIVITIES

- **EJTF members** joined more than 70 people who attended the Rally & Lobby Day for a Squeaky Clean Energy Future, held in Trenton on 9/30/2024. There are a number of bills currently in the legislature, including the key "NJ Climate Superfund Act," that will directly affect climate and clean energy in NJ. More information is included in the article and news video on [p. 19](#), and a list of key bills and ways you can take action are shown on [p. 26](#).



Included in holding the UU FaithActionNJ banner, l to r: Barry Bendar, Unitarian Universalist Ocean County Congregation (UUOCC); Susan Druckenbröd, UU Church in Cherry Hill (UUCCH); EJTF Chair Peggy Middaugh, UUOCC; and Cynthia Gutierrez Bernstein, Beacon Unitarian Universalist Congregation in Summit.

NEWSLETTER CONTENTS

EJTF and Congregational Activities	1	- Offshore Wind	19
Future Events	6	- Climate Change	19
Videos+ of Past Events	10	- Forest Health	21
News Related to EJTF Issues	15	- Lead Reduction in Households	22
- Environmental Justice	15	- Pollution	22
- Electric Vehicles/Vehicle Emission Reduction	16	- Drinking Water (other than lead)	23
- Fossil Fuel Infrastructure	17	- Educational and Youth-related	23
- Renewable Resources (other than Offshore Wind)	17	- Other	23
- Land Management/Agriculture/Food	18	EJTF's Goals for 2023/2024	25
		Moratorium Mondays	25
		Legislative Bills List	26

• Climate Justice Revival

A number of NJ congregations participated in the national Unitarian Universalist Climate Justice Revival (of which **UUFANJ** was a sponsor) held the weekend of 9/28/2024 and 9/29/2024. These included: **Beacon UU Congregation in Summit; UU Ocean County Congregation; Central Unitarian Church of Bergen County (now in Westwood) & The Unitarian Society of Ridgewood (combined); UU Church in Cherry Hill; UU Congregation at Montclair; Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Princeton; and The Unitarian Society — East Brunswick.** A sampling of the congregations' services is below:

• Beacon UU Congregation in Summit

The **Climate Justice Revival** at Beacon opened with the Sunday service, "Repair and Recognition: A Faithful Response to the Climate Crisis." After the service, attendees watched a film "Here's the Story" about the Green Amendment for New Jersey, and Maya van Rossum, the Delaware Riverkeeper, talked about ongoing work on the Green Amendment and took questions (see the photo at left, below). Then there was a nature walk and discussion of native plants, followed by a panel discussion on personal action to address climate change. Shown from left in the photo at right, below, the panel was moderated by Robin Tanner, the minister at Beacon, and included Melissa Miles, Executive Director of the **EJTF partner** NJ Environmental Justice Alliance, Matt Smith, Executive Director of the **EJTF partner** Food and Water Watch in NJ, and Kathleen Grant, a psychologist and professor at The College of NJ (TCNJ) who has done work on addressing climate anxiety.



- **Central Unitarian Church of Bergen County (now in Westwood) and The Unitarian Society of Ridgewood**

The **Climate Justice Revival** of the Central Unitarian Church of Bergen County (now in Westwood) and The Unitarian Society of Ridgewood had a packed joint service on Sunday followed by an enthusiastic small-group discussion of what roles members see themselves taking individually and what the two societies might do together. Some items suggested were: an annual UU river clean-up with the Hackensack Riverkeeper; educating about climate justice at quarterly joint events; and better communication of each other's projects. One Ridgewood member offered information about her substack newsletter, <https://climatefriendlylifestyle.substack.com>. Participation in UUFANJ's efforts, in particular the upcoming Issues Conference and the work of the EJTF, were also acknowledged.

- **Unitarian Universalist Ocean County Congregation (UUOCC)**

- **Climate Justice Revival:** The UUOCC held a Climate Worship Service, with a passionate and inspiring talk given by UUOCC member and **EJTF Chair Peggy Middaugh**. In the words of one member, "The energy in the room and in the involvement of so many of us in this experience was fantastic!" Displays in the meeting room (see photos below) showed past, present, and potential future action opportunities for people's involvement in Climate Justice. The music videos were provided by the UU Climate Justice Coalition, and following the service, members watched the video "What the Oil Industry Doesn't Want You to Know" (available here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vDZmVXtA7k>) and participated in a discussion about it and about people's most passionate feelings about climate, illustrated by items brought in by the members. The service was dedicated to Carol Gay, a friend and frequent guest at UUOCC, founder of the Solidarity Singers, and tireless advocate for workers, the poor and the disenfranchised, who recently passed.



- **Get Out The Vote (GOTV):** After several recent Sunday services, UUOCC members, led by **EJTF Chair Peggy Middaugh** (standing at the table in the photo at right), filled out and signed hundreds of GOTV letters. Letters went to Ohio, Pennsylvania, and New Jersey (District 7). Participation at the letter-writing sessions was very good, and a UUOCC member who lives in Hawaii (**EJTF member Carol Hemington**) also participated, so some recipients got letters from Hawaii.

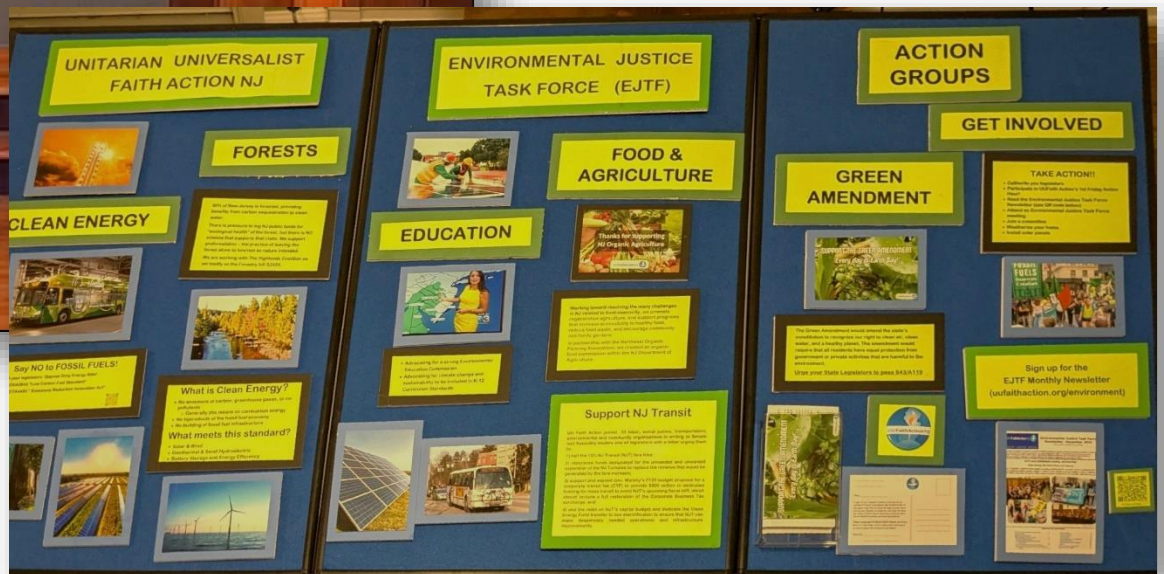
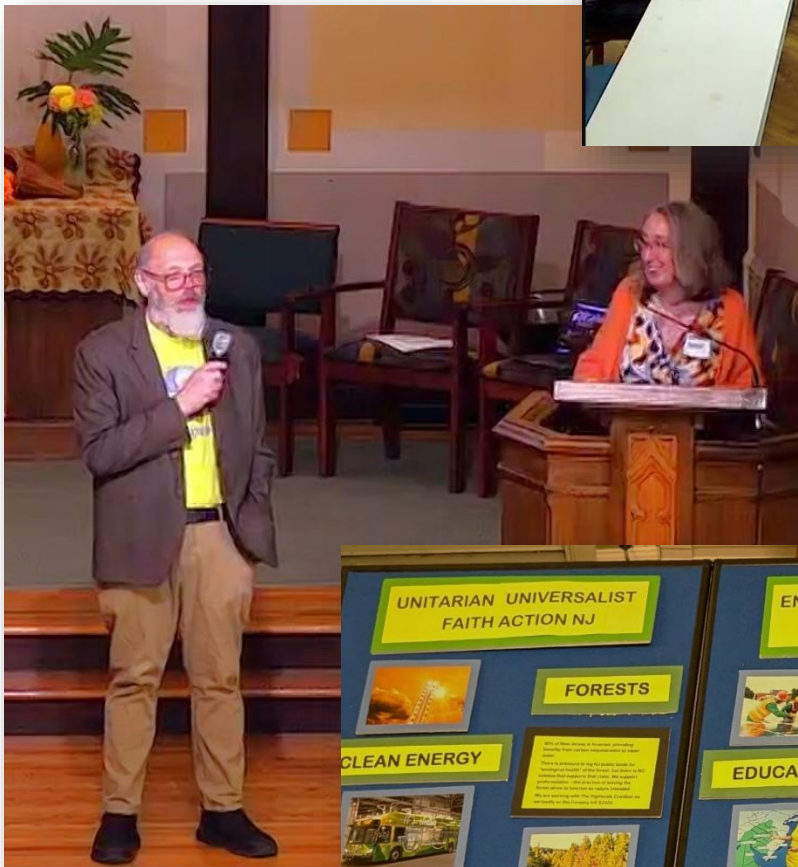


• UUFANJ Fall Issues Conference

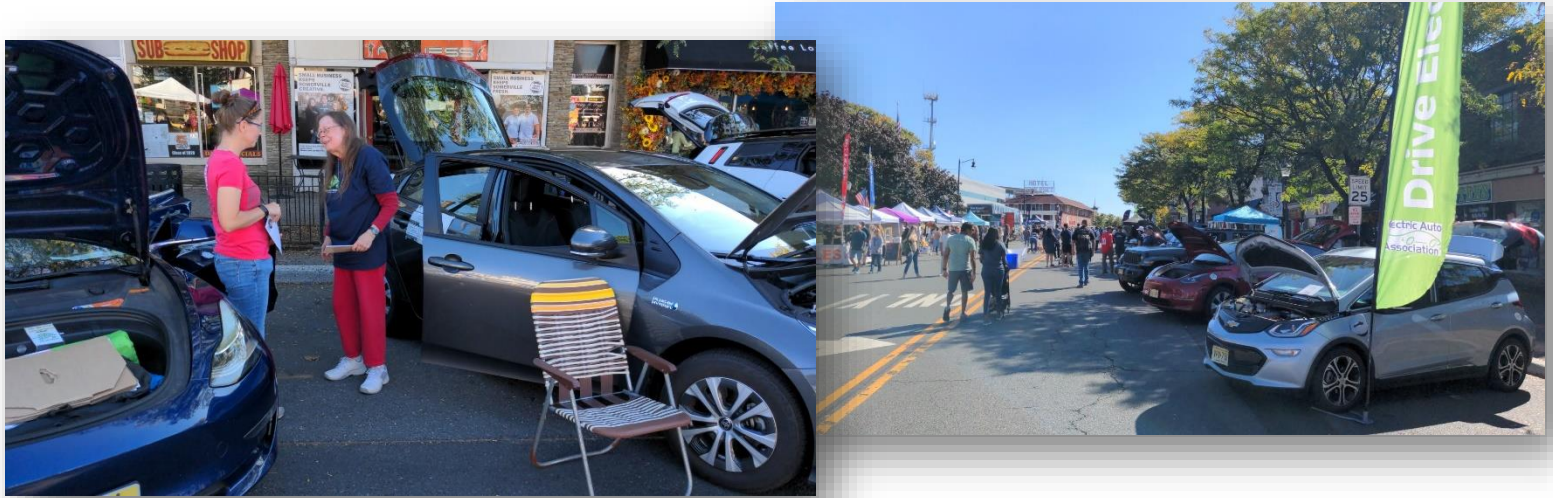
EJTF members **Peggy Middaugh (Chair), Nancy Griffeth, Mike Skelly, Jo Sippie-Gora, Deb Huber, Ray Nichols, and Carol Hemington** attended the UUFANJ Fall Issues Conference, either in person or on Zoom. The EJTF Breakout session (top photo, below) included UUs from Ocean County, Morristown, Montclair, Princeton, Ridgewood, Monmouth County, Dorothea Dix in Bordentown, and Beacon in Summit. Inspiring messages were delivered by UUFANJ Executive Director Rev. Charles Loflin and keynote speaker Jesse Burns, Executive Director of the League of Women Voters of NJ (center photo, below). EJTF brought their display board (pictured at bottom, below) packed with information about how people can get involved in Environmental Justice. UUFANJ prepared and distributed **new Task Force fact sheets (available here:**

https://www.uufaithaction.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/TF-Fact-Sheets_Oct-2024_FINAL.pdf) for the

four UUFANJ Task Forces: Environmental Justice Task Force, Immigration Justice Task Force, Criminal Justice Reform Task Force, and Reproductive Justice Task Force.



- For the second year, **EJTF member Deb Huber** (at right in the left photo below) showed her Prius Prime plug-in EV hybrid at a NJ Electric Vehicle Association (NJEVA) National Drive Electric Week show. At the show on 10/6/2024 in Somerville, NJ, NJEVA teamed up with the Somerville Environmental Committee "to educate and expose people to electric vehicles and their benefits.... NJEVA volunteers brought their EVs to showcase their vehicles and educate fairgoers on how EVs help preserve the environment and save EV owners money." An article about the show is available here: <https://www.tapinto.net/towns/somerville/sections/community/articles/ev-owners-electrify-somerville-street-fair>.



Photos courtesy of NJEVA

- **EJTF member Mike Skelly** has been active in advocating for reducing energy use in the transportation sector by reducing trips needed and miles traveled, by means of promoting biking, walking and mass transit use as a practical and safe alternative to private cars and light duty trucks. **EJTF** also advocated in 2023 and 2024 on the State Transportation Plan, State Transportation Sustainability Plan, and State Energy Master Plan for fewer deaths of pedestrians and bicyclists which disproportionately harm environmental justice and "overburdened" communities of NJ. **UUFANJ** officially joined as a member of the NJ Bike and Walk Coalition, and Mike attended their annual summit (5/2024) on behalf of UUFANJ, where he spoke one-on-one about UUFANJ's position with Shawn LaTourette, Commissioner, NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) who was a keynote speaker at that event . It should be noted that DEP is active in creating and maintaining much of the biking and walking infrastructure that is in the State's control. A 2023 national study shows NJ has the most dangerous roads for pedestrians in all of America. The NJ Bike and Walk Coalition is asking for our support in getting bill S361, establishing an "NJ Target Zero Commission," passed (see [p. 26](#)).

DEP Celebrates 25-Year Milestone Hosting the Americorps NJ Watershed Ambassadors Program

EJTF member Ray Nichols reports that, while he worked at the NJ Department of Environmental Protection, (DEP) he was involved with what he terms "this terrific program." He highly recommends it as a resource available to UUs in NJ who want to do something tied to addressing climate justice, stating "If you, your congregation, or another group is seeking to learn more about climate change or water 💧 and watersheds in NJ, then please read the following article about the NJ Watershed Ambassadors Program and how your local Watershed Ambassador can provide you with information, a program, or a hands-on project." The article is available here:

https://dep.nj.gov/newsrel/24_0051/.

FUTURE EVENTS - *Virtual, In-person, and Hybrid*

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

NOVEMBER 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	4	5	6 DRBC 4Q Public Hearing - 1:30 p.m.	7 NJ WasteWise Business Network Meeting - 10:00 a.m. DEP Public Info. Session/Open House on Solvay Polymers Contamination Settlement - 6:30 p.m. Comments Due: NJDEP Resilient Environments and Landscapes (REAL)	8	9
10	11 "From Green Innovation to Green Jobs" - 12:15 p.m.	12 NJ Tree Foundation Fall Tree Planting - 9:00 a.m. LWVNJ - "Building Power: You Count" - 6:00 p.m. "Changes in South Jersey Estuaries: Influences of Climate Change, Invasive Species and Human Modifications" - 6:30 p.m.	13 Rutgers Climate Symposium 2024 "Signals – Climate Change Communication for Understanding and Action" - 8:15 a.m.	14 Federal Tools for Environmental Justice: "Understanding and Addressing Health Disparities and Community Impacts" - 1:00 p.m.	15	16 NJ Tree Foundation Fall Tree Planting - 10:00 a.m.
17	18	19 EPA National Environmental Justice Community Engagement Call - 2:00 p.m.	20	21 "NJ Electrification Coaches' Guide Your Way" - 7:00 p.m.	22 23rd Annual Joint Venture NJDEP/Air & Waste Management Association Regulatory Update Conference - 9:00 a.m.	23
24	25 "Forever Chemicals, Pesticides and Other Contaminants in our Environment. Impact on Human and Wildlife Health" - 6:30 p.m.	26	27	28	29	30

FUTURE EVENTS

Delaware River Basin Commission (DRBC) Fourth Quarter 2024 Public Hearing 11/6/2024, 1:30 p.m. - Virtual

The Delaware River Basin Commission (DRBC) will hold its fourth-quarter public hearing on Wednesday, 11/6/2024. The hearing is open to the public and will take place remotely via Zoom Webinar, and it will also be livestreamed on the DRBC's YouTube channel. Additional information including a link to the agenda and to register, and information about how to provide testimony, is available here: <https://tinyurl.com/4zd36cyf>.

NJDEP Resilient Environments and Landscapes (REAL) Comments due 11/7/2024

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. **The written comment period has been extended to 11/7/2024.** Additional information, including links to the proposed rule and to provide written comments, is available here: <https://dep.nj.gov/njreal/>.

NJ WasteWise Business Network Meeting 11/7/2024, 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. - Virtual

"The New Jersey WasteWise Business Network is a free educational program designed to help businesses and other organizations learn how waste reduction, recycling, and recycled product procurement not only help the environment, but also their bottom line." Some of the topics to be presented at this webinar/meeting are "Share My Meals...Fighting Food Insecurity and Food Waste," "The Morris and Sussex County Boat Shrink Wrap Recycling Program," "Update on the New Atlantic Coast Recycling Class A Recycling Center and Recycling Markets Update," and "Case Study - Cream Ridge Winery, Inc. - Successful Recycling

and Waste Reduction Strategies That Exceed Industry Standards." Links to the agenda and to register are available here:

<https://www.anjr.com/events/EventDetails.aspx?id=1885299&group=>.

DEP Public Info. Session/Open House on Solvay Polymers Contamination Settlement 11/7/2024 Info. session: 6:30 p.m. - 7:30 p.m. Open House: 7:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m. West Deptford, NJ - In-person

The NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) is hosting a public information session and open house to provide an overview of the state's settlement and public-health protection work stemming from pollution caused by the Solvay Specialty Polymers facility in West Deptford. The DEP will provide an update and will answer health-related questions from the public. Additional information, and links to the DEP Solvay website and to register, are available here: https://dep.nj.gov/newsrel/24_01021pn/.

Background information: The settlement with Solvay that was reached in March 2024 represents the largest single-site natural resource damages and remediation case in NJ history. The settlement provides nearly \$394 million to: "[1] Pay for and implement comprehensive remedial activities at and in the vicinity of the West Deptford facility; [2] Provide financial support for certain public water system upgrades necessary to remove PFAS ["forever chemicals"] from drinking water, which will be administered by the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP); [3] Further investigate and address certain PFAS impacts to public water systems and private potable drinking water wells in the vicinity; and [4] Compensate the public for natural resources injured by the discharge of hazardous substances."

"From Green Innovation to Green Jobs" 11/11/2024, 12:15 p.m. - 1:15 p.m. - Hybrid

**Princeton, NJ - In-person & Livestream on
Media Central**

This talk is sponsored by the Princeton University Center for Policy Research on Energy and the Environment, and will be presented by Dr.

Aurélien Saussay, an Assistant Professor in Environmental Economics in the Grantham Research Institute at the London School of Economics. Dr. Saussay's research "focuses on the interaction between economic inequality and climate change mitigation policies, in order to address the social and political acceptance challenges that hamper the implementation of effective decarbonization. His current agenda concentrates on the employment impacts of the transition to Net Zero." Additional information, including how to RSVP (for those without Princeton University IDs), is available here: <https://cpree.princeton.edu/events/2024/green-innovation-green-jobs>.

League of Women Voters of New Jersey (LWVNJ) Activist Trainings - Virtual

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." The session scheduled for November 2024 is listed below; descriptions of this and future sessions are available here: <https://www.lwvnj.org/training>.

LWVNJ - "Building Power: You Count" 11/12/2024, 6:00 p.m. - 7:30 p.m. - via Zoom

"The 2030 census and next redistricting cycle might seem far away but the time to prepare is now! Why is it so important that every New Jersey resident is counted in the census? What does redistricting have to do with the census? How can you prepare now for 2030? Hear from experts in the field and join us for a discussion on the census, redistricting, power, and why it matters." Registration is available here: <https://tinyurl.com/2766eap5>.

"Changes in South Jersey Estuaries: Influences of Climate Change, Invasive Species and Human Modifications" 11/12/2024, 6:30 p.m. - 7:30 p.m. - via Zoom

This webinar is part of the Rutgers Environmental Stewards' "Earth Day Every Day" series. "Our coastal estuaries in southern New Jersey have experienced many impacts from climate change, including shifts in the animals and plants found both under and above the water. Join us to learn more about the observed changes in a wide range of species, including changes in the fish species found locally and rising sea levels impacting coastal marshes and forests. Dr. Ken Able (Professor Emeritus, Rutgers University) will be our featured speaker and has more than 45 years of experience studying New Jersey's estuaries." Registration is available here: <https://tinyurl.com/392jyb65>.

Rutgers Climate Symposium 2024 "Signals – Climate Change Communication for Understanding and Action" 11/13/2024, 8:15 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. New Brunswick, NJ - In-person

This symposium focuses on "Fostering collaboration among researchers and students from institutions in the greater NJ, NY, and Philadelphia region who are interested in climate change, renewable energy, energy efficiency, or other approaches to reducing greenhouse gas emissions across disciplines representing climate science, human dimensions, technology, the arts, communications, and humanities." It is intended for students, faculty, and staff of academic and research institutions, with a limited number of in person registrations available for unaffiliated members of the public upon request. Additional information including links to the agenda and to register are available here: <https://ruclimatesymposium.rutgers.edu>.

**Federal Tools for Environmental Justice:
"Understanding and Addressing Health
Disparities and Community Impacts"
11/14/2024, 1:00 p.m. - 2:30 p.m.
- via Zoom**

This webinar is sponsored by the River Network. "Have you ever wondered how satellite data could be used to demonstrate the impacts of green infrastructure on public health? Have you heard of EJScreen but you're not sure how to use it? In this webinar, speakers will share more about various tools—such as CDC public health data, EJScreen, and NASA's EJ Data Catalog – that help practitioners map and understand the vulnerabilities impacting our communities' land and waterways, and connect ecosystem health with the health disparities shown by local socioeconomic data. Practitioners will gain a better understanding of the purpose of each tool, how to access and use them, and how to use multiple tools to create a holistic picture of local climate and health challenges and how to address them from an ecosystem perspective." Registration is available here:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZYsd-igqz8pG9wLbL4z06lqON-cb2GhB1m>

**EPA National Environmental Justice
Community Engagement Call
11/19/2024, 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>.

**"NJ 'Electrification Coaches' Guide Your
Way" - Webinar
11/21/2024, 7:00 p.m. - 8:15 p.m.**

Organized by the Sierra Club NJ Chapter's Building Electrification Committee, this webinar will cover: "Planning for a Fossil fuel-free future one home at a time - Learn to electrify your household: Use the IRA (Inflation reduction act) to save.... NJ electrification coaches are eager to show homeowners, renters, & landlords how to eliminate planet-boiling household pollutants. Hear and see example case studies of NJ residents who are migrating from fossil fuels to 100% renewable electricity." Registration is available here: <https://tinyurl.com/48aa9fvk>.

**23rd Annual Joint Venture NJDEP/Air &
Waste Management Association Regulatory
Update Conference - Virtual
11/22/2024, 9:00 a.m. - 4:15 p.m.**

"This conference is designed to provide interested parties with an opportunity to learn about NJDEP [NJ Department of Environmental Protection] regulatory initiatives and updates that concern environmental compliance and enforcement, contaminated site remediation and redevelopment, air quality, energy, materials sustainability, water quality, monitoring and standards, climate change mitigation and monitoring, environmental justice rules and guidance, sustainable waste management, research projects, and emerging contaminants." The agenda is available here:

https://dep.nj.gov/wp-content/uploads/srp/2024_awma-njdep_regulatory_conference_agenda.pdf and registration is available here: <https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/7670917035753970267>.

**"Forever Chemicals, Pesticides and Other
Contaminants in our Environment. Impact
on Human and Wildlife Health"
11/25/2024, 6:30 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.
Lincroft, NJ - In-person**

This "Science Monday" event is organized by the Jersey Shore Group of the Sierra Club NJ Chapter and will focus on the "One Health" approach (bridging the Animal-Environmental-Human Health

interface). "One Health' is an integrated, unifying approach that aims to sustainably balance and optimize the health of people, wildlife, and ecosystems. Kelly Smalling will speak about the One Health perspective of her work at the US Geological Survey's New Jersey Water Science Center [where she is a Research Hydrologist], where she has researched the presence of forever chemicals in tap water throughout the US, and implications of environmental contaminants for the health of humans and wildlife." Additional information is available here:

<https://act.sierraclub.org/events/details?formcampaignid=701Po00000JeiYxIAJ&mapLinkHref=>.

NJ Tree Foundation Fall Tree Plantings Various dates and locations - In-person

"The NJ Tree Foundation [of which EJTF Chair Peggy Middaugh is a Trustee] is a statewide nonprofit organization dedicated to planting trees in New Jersey's most urban neighborhoods, where the need is greatest. Through tree planting, volunteerism, and partnerships, [the NJ Tree Foundation] assist[s] numerous communities in improving their environment and quality of life." The fall tree-plantings are taking place; available dates are shown below:

Urban Airshed Reforestation Program: email Crystal at cwessel@njtreefoundation.org or call 856-287-4488 to sign up -

11/12/2024 - CCMUA Plant, Camden - 20 trees - 50 volunteers needed (9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.)

11/16/2024 - George Page Park, Trenton - 15 trees - 30 volunteers needed (10:00 a.m.- 1:00 p.m.)

Renaissance Trees Program: email Elena at emessina@njtreefoundation.org, or call (609) 439-1755 to sign up -

Date TBD - East 26th St, Paterson

Additional information is available here: <https://njtrees.org/about/camdens-urban-airshed-reforestation-program/> and here: <https://njtrees.org/about/newark-renaissance-trees-program/>.



**Jersey Water Works
Conference 2024
12/13/2023, 8:00 a.m. -
3:30 p.m.
Ewing, NJ - In-person**

Jersey Water Works (JWW) is presenting its Tenth Annual Jersey Water Works Conference, with the theme "The Power of Collaboration: Towards a One Water Future." This is a full-day in person only event and it includes a keynote speaker, featured speakers, six workshops, a utility track, and lunch. Breakout sessions include: "Advancing Public Health: Lessons Learned After Two Years of Accelerating Lead Service Line Replacement in New Jersey Communities"; "Advancing Green Infrastructure: Navigating NJ PACT REAL Updates"; "PFAS and Emerging Contaminants"; "Strategic Vision for Water Infrastructure: Shaping the Water Agenda with New Political Leaders"; and "Enhancing Climate Resilience." Additional information including the agenda and the registration link (**General Registration - \$110, Nonprofit and Government Employees - \$55**), are available here:

<https://www.jerseywaterworks.org/events/water-events/2024-jersey-water-works-annual-conference/>.

VIDEOS+ OF PAST EVENTS

"The Hydrogen Regulatory Landscape – What is Required and What is Missing?" - Video of Webinar

This webinar was sponsored by the Delaware Riverkeeper Network (DRN). "Hydrogen Hubs are the new energy scheme being generated with federal funding across the nation. But the regulations that would govern hydrogen projects and the 'Hubs' is murky and, in some cases, absent... [T]his webinar...explore[d] the many questions everyone is asking about hydrogen gas regulation - what is required and what is missing - with two knowledgeable and practicing attorneys:... Kacy Manahan, Senior Attorney, DRN and Margaret A. Coulter, Senior Attorney, Climate Law Institute, Center for Biological Diversity. We also [gave] 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=A3HwC19GjFU>.

Eco-Logic Radio Shows:

- Recordings of Radio Shows

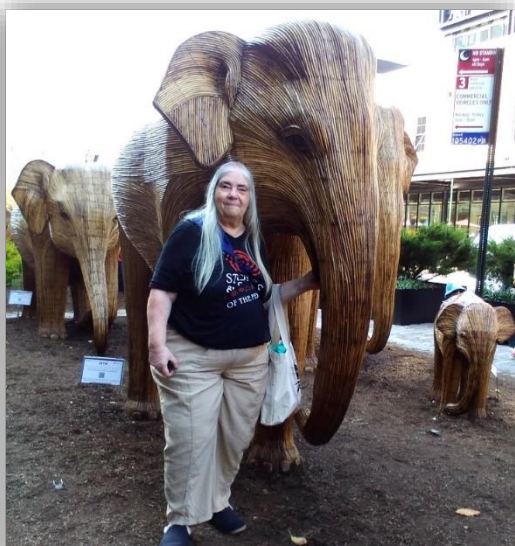
The Eco-Logic radio/internet program on WBAI (co-hosted by **EJTF member Sally Gellert**) aired a number of recent shows related to EJTF's goals. The Eco-Logic radio show airs Wednesdays from 10:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m. on WBAI 99.5 FM, and can also be accessed on <https://wbai.org>. Information about the following shows is available here: <http://www.comicbookradioshow.com/eco-logic.html>; and recording links are shown below:

- **"News, Views & Music Too! Policies, Projects, & Particulars"** (multiple topics) - <https://www.wbai.org/archive/program/episode/?id=53093>;

- **"Defending ESG: Environmental - Social - Governance"** - <https://www.wbai.org/archive/program/episode/?id=53094>;

- **"NJ/NY Harbor Waters - Good News"** - <https://www.wbai.org/archive/program/episode/?id=53095>; and

- **"Celebration of Nature Series - Indigenous Wildlife Conservation"** - <https://www.wbai.org/archive/program/episode/?id=54181>. This show on wildlife conservation focused on "The Great Elephant Migration" art installation that visited NYC. The "100 live-size sculptures of Indian elephants were crafted over the last 5 years by the Coexistence Collective, a team of 200 Indigenous artisans from Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve in South India. The travelling exhibition is raising money for 22 partnering conservation non-governmental organizations, or NGOs, dedicated to saving not only elephants, but various types of wildlife. Eco-Logic was there and ready to report."



EJTF member Sally Gellert at the exhibition.

"Why Hydrogen for Home Heating is a Really Dumb Idea" - Video

This video is from the "Just Have a Think" YouTube channel, a (slightly irreverent) channel that deals with issues related to climate change. "Hydrogen is an extremely useful element here on earth. We use it for all sorts of essential chemical processes. But we don't tend to burn it as a fuel, because it's already made from a fuel - methane, in a process that releases more carbon dioxide than simply burning the methane itself. Canadian petrochemical expert Paul Martin recently co-wrote a peer-reviewed paper examining why filling existing gas pipelines with hydrogen is a very bad idea indeed, and this week we [host Dave Borlace] talk[ed] to him about his findings." The video is available here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cyh4LWIJmc>.

"Mandatory Emissions Reductions in Environmental Justice" - Video of Webinar

"The Equitable and Just National Climate Platform hosted a webinar on Mandatory Emissions Reductions to discuss how climate change mitigation policy should also require reductions of disproportionate pollution loads in environmental justice communities. Speakers included Dr. Nicky Sheats, NJEJA [**EJTF partner** NJ Environmental Justice Alliance] Board Chair and Director of the Center for the Urban Environment at the John S. Watson Institute at Kean University, Dr. Yukyan Lam, Research Director and Senior Scientist at the Tishman Center at the New School, and Brooke Helmick, Director of Policy with the New Jersey Environmental Justice Alliance." The video is available here:

https://zoom.us/clips/share/5SwOMZiWYvcYNvSwJDBEHPJ7IqHaTLnst7H-Oln0zLP0p68-WcASbnw-IDrxM_PAgCFqLA.4yuPW9rQhQTNXaWC

"Navigating Climate & Election Anxiety" - Video of Webinar

This webinar sponsored by Elders Climate Action was presented by Tamara Staton, Citizens' Climate Lobby's (CCL) Education & Resilience Coordinator. "Climate change stands as the defining challenge of our era, a topic that can feel overwhelming in its scope and implications. As we grapple with this global crisis, many of us also face mounting

anxiety about upcoming elections, whose outcomes could profoundly shape our response to climate change and impact the world we cherish.... [the webinar explored] the intersection of climate and election anxiety.... [and introduced] a practical 5-step framework designed to help you navigate these complex emotions and concerns skillfully." The video is available here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6XJrQxMFzgo&t=1s>.

"Nothing Endures but Change: Invasive Species, Climate Change, and Conservation" - Video of Webinar

This webinar, part of the Rutgers Environmental Stewards' "Earth Day Every Day" series, was presented by Dr. Julie Lockwood of Rutgers University. "'Nothing endures but change' is attributed to the philosopher Heraclitus, who viewed the world as always 'becoming' but never 'being'. Echoes of this 2000 year old philosophy are found in scientist's modern understanding of the Earth - including its climate and living residents - as being constantly in flux and evolving. What we face today, however, is change so out of the ordinary that it has few, if any, precedents. This change emerges from globalized travel and trade, massive land use change, and accelerating climate change. In this video, Dr. Lockwood explores the response of terrestrial invasive species to a warming New Jersey climate as an example of the complexity we face as environmental conservationists. Also explored is the 'levers' available to us to reduce the impacts of invasive species under climate change and better conserve our natural heritage." The video is available here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Pk-1vjbAQfg>.

"Food Waste and Climate Change" - Video of Webinar

This webinar, part of the Rutgers Environmental Stewards' "Earth Day Every Day" series, was presented by Dr. Amy Rowe of Rutgers University. "60 million tons of food are wasted in the United States each year and that wasted food generates more than 170 million tons of CO2 equivalents in greenhouse gases each year. Food waste, its climate change impacts, and what you can do to mitigate those impacts [were] discussed during

this presentation." The video is available here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0rLB-gAuKUI>.

"NJ Legislative Priorities for Plastic Reduction" - Video of Webinar

"Plastic pollution is an escalating global crisis, disproportionately affecting communities of color and low-income areas through environmental racism. These overburdened communities, such as Camden, Rahway, and Newark, are often home to incinerators where plastic waste is burned, exposing residents to harmful pollutants." This webinar presented a review of the Packaging Reduction bills (S3398 and S3135), the Skip the Stuff bill (S3195), and the Beverage Container Deposit Act (S3147) bill, all currently in play in the NJ legislature, and presented methods to use to effectively advocate for them. The webinar was hosted by **EJTF partner** NJ Environmental Justice Alliance (NJEJA), Clean Ocean Action, Beyond Plastics, Clean Water Action, and Oceana. The video is available here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8GNZ-83qJWc>.

EPA National Environmental Justice Community Engagement Calls

- Videos of 8/20/2024 & 9/17/2024 Calls

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." Links to the videos are available here: <https://tinyurl.com/5a986sf6>.

"Preventing Lead Exposure in your NJ Community: Bright Futures Begin Lead Free" - Video of Webinar

Hosted by Lead-Free NJ and co-sponsored by Sustainable Jersey, this webinar addressed actions that municipalities and community advocates can

take "to not only comply with state laws, but also go above and beyond..." The webinar topics included:

- Racial and economic disparity in lead exposure
- NJ state law requiring lead paint inspections in rental housing built before 1978
- Free lead paint remediation and abatement program
- NJ state law requiring water utilities to replace lead service lines by 2031
- NJ state law requiring blood lead level testing of children
- Collaborative efforts to eliminate lead exposure
- Sustainable Jersey action items related to lead.

The video is available here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nckxUu3Odo0>.

Option Green: "Honeybees: A Powerful Pollinator" - Video of Webinar

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, was presented by Angela Juffey, Secretary of the Central Jersey Beekeepers Association (CJBA). In this webinar, attendees "...learn[ed] about honeybees, the history of beekeeping, why to keep bees, their behavior and more!.... 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." The video is available here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9e6De3EuDmQ&t=1s>.

"Coastal Forests as Sentinels of Climate Change and Sea Level Rise" - Video of Webinar

In this webinar, Dr. Marcelo Ardón (Associate Professor – NC State University) discussed ghost forests along the coast of the southeastern US and explained their connection to climate change and rising sea levels. "Along the southeastern US coast, it is becoming more and more common to see large patches of dead or dying trees where healthy forests used to be. These areas are called ghost forests, and they have been recorded since at least the 1920's. Ghost forests can be found on the Atlantic coast from New Jersey to Texas and as climate change persists, ghost forests are

expected to become a more prevalent sight. But what causes this mass death of once healthy forests? What are the ecosystem impacts and can anything be done to save the trees?" The link to register to view the webinar on demand is available here:

<https://conservationwebinars.net/webinars/coastal-forests-as-sentinels-of-climate-change-and-sea-level-rise/view>.

"Funding Opportunities for Nonprofits, Municipalities, and Communities" - Video of Webinar

This webinar, sponsored by the Environmental and Energy Study Institute (EESI), explored the portions of the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) and the 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." The video is available here:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P_Ot3r8Yq40.

BOEM Public Meeting on Central Atlantic 2 Offshore Wind Call for Information - Videos & Slides of 9/10 - 9/11/2024 Meeting, and Video of 10/2/2024 Meeting

"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." Additional information, including a map

of the Call Area, is available here: <https://www.boem.gov/renewable-energy/state-activities/central-atlantic>. Links to the meeting videos and slides are available here: <https://www.boem.gov/renewable-energy/state-activities/central-atlantic-2-public-meetings>.

"What Does a Hotter NJ Mean for Our Health? - Video of Webinar"

The NJ Interagency Council on Climate Resilience hosted a webinar that asked: "What Does a Hotter NJ Mean for our Health?" The webinar featured a panel of health professionals who discussed the impacts that extreme heat has on physical and behavioral health, including impacts on vulnerable populations. The video is available here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EilHEK4GLhE>.

NJBPU Energy Efficiency Stakeholder Meeting - Video of Webinar and Slides

The NJ Board of Public Utilities (NJBPU) monthly Clean Energy Program Energy Efficiency Stakeholder meeting for October 2024 included a presentation by a guest speaker on "TCNJ (The College of NJ) Campus Decarbonization Case Study." The campus is pursuing "the trifecta of energy systems... on-site energy systems, generation, renewables; energy efficiency; and ultimately storage." The presentation begins at minute 30:45 of the video of the webinar, available here: <https://tinyurl.com/bde7ny9b>. Slides from the webinar are available here: <https://tinyurl.com/a2vazfsw>.

"Navigating Energy Justice Funding Opportunities" - Video of Webinar

As part of the U. S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Region 2 Thriving Communities Technical Assistance Center (TCTAC), one of the TCTAC partners - Clean Energy Group - presented a training session that provided a primer on the different types of federal energy grants available, where to learn about funding opportunities, and what it takes to apply for a federal energy grant, including documentation, reporting, and other key requirements. The video is available here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N-wAoHoKmL0>.

"Challenges and Lessons from the 'Transit' of Colorado's Just Transition" - Video of Webinar

In this talk, part of the Dartmouth "New Energy Series, Dylan Harris, Assistant Professor of Geography and Environmental Studies at the University of Colorado, Colorado Springs, discussed the experience of three communities in CO that are undergoing transitions away from fossil fuel towards more sustainable industries (i.e., each dealing with the closure of a coal-fired power plant). "They represent a vision of 'transit' in which the future is being actively assembled, and each site contains the material (metal, fiberglass, and dust) and discursive (anxiety, desire, and optimism) components of transition. Harris conclude[d] with some lessons about how a transition away from fossil fuels may truly be just." The recording is available here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KNm8kzqwqRo>.

People's Food Summit 2024 - Videos from North America Sessions

The fourth annual People's Food Summit, a 24-hour world-wide celebration of World Food Day, took place on 10/16/2024. "This unique event [brought] together dynamic speakers from every corner of the world, sharing crucial insights into regenerative agriculture." Speakers' videos from the North America sessions are available at the links shown below:

- **What's Making Our Children Sick? -** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kdIrnJG4vT0>
 - **Banning Bayer's Glyphosate-Based Roundup Herbicide -** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8JW06ik6pAU&t=4s>
 - **Uncovering Glyphosate's Sneaky Toxicity: The Slow Kill -** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MoXT7cXaVU0>
 - **Agribusiness and Food Sovereignty: the agribusiness lobby in the United States** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Skhu3ii4J6s>
 - **Allan Savory, ecologist and founder of the Savory Institute, spoke on biodiversity loss, and its effects on desertification -** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=twqDdkZk8ms&t=1s>
-

NEWS RELATED TO EJTF ISSUES
[covering 9/26/2024 – 10/25/2024]

ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

EJ Rule 'Meaningful Public Participation Guidance' is Now Available

The **EJTF** was highly involved in NJ's process to pass its groundbreaking Environmental Justice Rule. One of the key aspects of the rule is ensuring the involvement of environmental justice communities in the process. The NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) has now issued guidance on this topic for regulated facilities. From the DEP Office of Environmental Justice: "The 'Meaningful Public Participation Guidance' presents the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection's suggestions for how regulated facilities, primarily those subject to the Environmental Justice Rules, can ensure residents of New Jersey's overburdened communities are informed and equipped to meaningfully engage in processes that affect their neighborhoods. This guidance provides an overview of the steps required to create robust dialogues with communities and shares best practices for conducting outreach.... The guidance rounds out with checklists and templates to further support facilities through the public participation process." The guidance is available here:

https://dep.nj.gov/wp-content/uploads/ej/docs/pdf/mpg_njdep_202410.pdf

Biden-Harris Administration Launches Nationwide Environmental Justice Climate Corps

"The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has partnered with AmeriCorps to create the Environmental Justice Climate Corps (EJCC) Program, a new partnership launched to open doors for people to serve in careers that benefit disadvantaged and other low-income communities.... The EJCC partnership will support more than 250 AmeriCorps VISTA members nationwide over three years, with each new participating member completing a one-year term of service. This historic initiative is the largest

environmental partnership in AmeriCorps' history and EPA's first nationwide service effort. EJCC members will be paid a living allowance and reimbursed for selected living expenses. In total, this allowance is equivalent to receiving more than \$25 per hour throughout their year of service."

<https://www.epa.gov/newsreleases/biden-harris-administration-launches-nationwide-environmental-justice-climate-corps>



AG Platkin and DEP Commissioner LaTourette Announce Filing of Four New Environmental Justice Enforcement Actions

From the NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) press release: "New Jersey Attorney General Matthew J. Platkin and Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) Commissioner Shawn M. LaTourette announced one environmental justice (EJ) settlement as well as the filing of four lawsuits to enforce environmental law in and around communities considered overburdened under New Jersey's Environmental Justice Law.... The cases... all consist of current or former gas stations and/or automotive facilities. Including the[se] actions...the Attorney General and the DEP have filed 72 environmental justice cases or actions since 2018.

https://dep.nj.gov/newsrel/24_01023/

ELECTRIC VEHICLES & VEHICLE EMISSION REDUCTION

Time to Pay NJ Sales Tax on Electric Cars

This article describes changes in NJ sales tax, registration fee, and rebates related to electric vehicles (EVs). It includes a 5-minute video explaining the new sales tax.

<https://www.njspotlightnews.org/2024/10/nj-says-time-to-pay-sales-tax-on-electric-cars/>

How Many EVs Are Being Sold in NJ?

This article includes graphics showing sales of electric vehicles (EVs) in NJ over time and by county. It also includes a 5-minute video explaining the new sales tax on EVs.

<https://www.njspotlightnews.org/2024/10/how-many-evs-are-being-sold-in-nj/>

Murphy Administration Jumpstarts Electric School Buses by Announcing \$15 Million First-Round Funding for Bus Purchases

The NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) Commissioner "announced the first-round award of \$15 million in grants for local purchases of 48 electric school buses in New Jersey, marking the state's first comprehensive commitment of funding for these zero-emission buses that will better protect the health of schoolchildren and communities.... In addition to funding for bus purchases, the Commissioner announced the first participants in the New Jersey Fleet Advisor program, a free service that provides experts from DEP's contractor CALSTART to help any New Jersey fleets operating 20 or fewer vehicles develop a plan to transition their medium- and heavy-duty trucks to zero-emission electric trucks, with a focus on fleets in overburdened communities. Fleets that may benefit from this program include small school districts, charter schools, sanitation programs, EMS squads, municipal utilities authorities, refrigerated goods movement, local shuttles, and delivery services."

https://dep.nj.gov/newsrel/24_0045/

NJBPU Announces Adoption of Minimum Filing Requirements for Medium-and-Heavy-Duty Electric Vehicles

From the press release: "The New Jersey Board of Public Utilities (NJBPU) today [10/23/2024] announced the adoption of minimum filing requirements (MFRs) that direct the state's investor-owned electric distribution companies (EDCs) to propose programs to expand charging access for medium-and-heavy-duty (MHD) electric vehicles (EVs) and fleets.... The MFRs will allow EDCs to propose incentives for the 'Make Ready' chargers for public-serving fleets and certain private fleets located in or serving overburdened municipalities and overburdened communities adjacent to Freight EV Corridors. To ensure that MHD EV charging is built in scalable ways that take capacity into account, the MFRs will connect applicants to utilities and require that utilities create and update capacity maps demonstrating where the grid is capable of supporting MHD charging." Also see the article below regarding funds received by NJ for I-95 Freight Corridor EV charging stations.

<https://www.nj.gov/bpu/newsroom/2024/approved/20241023.html>



EPA Awards \$250 Million to Electrify I-95 Freight Corridor with Green Technology

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has awarded "nearly a quarter of a billion dollars (\$250 million) to the Clean Corridor Coalition. This landmark grant, funded through the Climate Pollution Reduction Grant program, will fund the electric vehicle charging infrastructure for commercial zero-emission medium- and heavy-

duty vehicles along the Interstate-95 freight corridor.... The Clean Corridor Coalition [is] led by NJDEP [NJ Department of Environmental Protection].... [T]he project will establish 24 freight truck charging sites, equipping them with 450 charging ports across four states. This infrastructure is expected to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 18.6 million metric tons of CO2 equivalent by 2050." Quoted from the EPA press release available here:

<https://tinyurl.com/43kb7m9a>. A related 1-1/2-minute news video is available here:

<https://www.njspotlightnews.org/video/ev-truck-charging-stations-coming-to-i-95/>.

City of Hoboken Secures Over \$1 Million in Grant Funding for EV Charging Infrastructure

Hoboken received two grants, one from the NJ Board of Public Utilities (BPU) and one from the NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) which total \$1.25 million and will be used for installing EV chargers at its Public Works Facility and also to install publicly-accessible charging stations. Hoboken's goal is for every resident to be within a 5-minute walk of an EV charging station.

<https://www.hobokennj.gov/news/city-of-hoboken-secures-over-1-million-in-grant-funding-for-ev-charging-infrastructure>

FOSSIL FUEL INFRASTRUCTURE

DEP Urged to Block Proposed Newark Power Plant

The NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) held a public hearing on its proposed air permit for the controversial Passaic Valley Sewerage Commission (PVSC) proposed natural gas-fired power plant in Newark. At the meeting, local residents and environmental advocates continued protesting the plant, in light of the fact that this would be the fourth gas power plant in the Ironbound section of Newark. Also, this is the first project that has been subject to NJ's Environmental Justice Law, and while DEP put conditions on the proposed approval, protesters question how they would be enforced, particularly

if there is a change in NJ state administration. They also ask why the permit itself does not include the emissions reductions that are included in the conditions, and they bring up the plant's siting as a possible federal Civil Rights Act violation. See

<https://www.njspotlightnews.org/2024/10/dep-urged-to-block-proposed-newark-power-plant/>. You can send a comment to the DEP and Gov. Murphy at this link: <https://actionnetwork.org/letters/send-a-comment-to-the-nj-dep-no-pvsc-gas-plant>.

RENEWABLE RESOURCES (other than Offshore Wind)

[Also see articles on Agrivoltaics on [p. 18.](#)]

CEP Renewables Completes Construction of 19 MW Brownfield Solar Project in New Jersey

From the CEP Renewables website: "CEP Renewables, NJR Clean Energy Ventures and CS Energy announced that they have completed the 19 MW dc grid supply Foul Rift solar project located in White Township, Warren County, New Jersey. The project was built on a brownfield, a substantially environmentally impaired site, that had been the home to a composting facility for nearly thirty years. Prior to the facility ceasing its operations, it had an extensive history of violations received from the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP). CEP's development of this project resulted in the successful remediation of environmental damage at the site while also providing reliable, clean energy, pollinator habitats, and greater tax revenue for the local community."

<https://www.ceprenewables.com/post/cep-renewables-completes-construction-of-19-mw-brownfield-solar-project-in-new-jersey>

LAND MANAGEMENT/ AGRICULTURE/FOOD

NJBPU Launches First State-Led Dual-Use Agrivoltaics Pilot Program

From the press release: "The New Jersey Board of Public Utilities (NJBPU) today [10/23/2024] approved rules for and launched the Dual-Use Agrivoltaics Pilot Program ('Dual-Use Pilot'), one of the first dual-use agrivoltaics programs in the country. The Dual-Use Pilot will incorporate solar panels on designated farmland, advancing a proven technology that will produce renewable energy while securing a new revenue stream for farmers across the Garden State.... Under the Board's approval to launch the Dual-Use Pilot Program, Staff will issue a Notice of Incentive Availability ('NOIA') in January next year, inviting interested parties to submit expressions of interest for pre-qualification into the Dual-Use Pilot." Also see the article below on the Rutgers Agrivoltaics Demonstration Project.

<https://www.nj.gov/bpu/newsroom/2024/approved/202410231.html>

Rutgers-New Brunswick Inaugurates State-Of-The-Art Agrivoltaics Research and Demonstration Project for Simultaneous Production of Food and Solar Energy

Rutgers University has received \$7.4 million, from several state and federal agencies, to study and demonstrate agrivoltaics (i.e., using the same land simultaneously for both agriculture and solar energy production) projects on three of the university's farms. A project in New Brunswick focuses on well-spaced rows of vertical solar panels with the grazing of cows on the same land. This approach frees more land for agricultural use than previous types of agrivoltaics. See <https://www.rutgers.edu/news/cows-and-solar-panels-new-jersey-first-project-melds-farming-electricity-generation>. Additional information is shown in the 4-1/2-minute news video, available here: <https://www.njspotlightnews.org/video/rutgers-university-cows-and-a-new-innovation-in-solar-energy/>. Also see the article above on NJ's agrivoltaics Pilot Program.

Next Steps in NJ Efforts to Curb Food Insecurity and Hunger

This in-depth NJ Spotlight News article describes the current and future steps NJ is taking to address food insecurity, including the conference and action plan described below. See <https://tinyurl.com/2pc4bd38>.

- Garden State Conference on Food Security: Setting a Table for All, for Always

The NJ Office of the Food Security Advocate (OFSA) held the first NJ Food Security conference, bringing together "community members, policymakers, advocates, community organizations, farmers, grantmakers, school personnel, healthcare providers, local food pantries, community kitchens, academic researchers and others from across and beyond New Jersey." A video of the conference, as well as links to the agenda and presentation materials, is available here: <https://www.nj.gov/foodsecurity/our-work/annual-conference/index.shtml>.

- New Jersey's Food Security Action Plan

As part of the legislation that created the NJ Office of the Food Security Advocate (OFSA), the office is tasked with working with State and community partners to develop a strategic plan to address identified gaps in areas underserved by current food insecurity programs. At the conference described above, the OFSA Executive Director provided an overview of the action plan (available here: <https://www.nj.gov/foodsecurity/documents/2024-annual-conference/MDinglasan%20slide%20deck.pdf>). The timeline includes gathering stakeholders into an Executive Committee and Working Groups from 10/2024 to 1/2025 and publicly sharing a Draft Version of the Food Security Strategic Plan in 8/2025 or 9/2025.

- NJ Food Security Information Resources

See the website of the NJ Office of the Food Security Advocate (available here: <https://www.nj.gov/foodsecurity/>), for resources, and their YouTube "Focused (and Forward)" page /with/69 short videos of the work of many local NJ Food Security groups (available here: <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLq8TZCA6L705N6zSzRE2uBqSqtSF1YTC>).

OFFSHORE WIND

NJ Offshore Wind Project Gets Federal Sign Off

Two key approvals were received for the Atlantic Shores South #1 and #2 offshore wind projects. The U.S. Bureau of Ocean Energy (BOEM) gave its final approval (described here:

<https://www.boem.gov/newsroom/press-releases/boem-approves-construction-and-operations-plan-atlantic-shores-south>), and the U.S.

Environmental Protection Agency approved the required Clean Air Act permit (described here: <https://www.epa.gov/newsreleases/epa-issues-final-clean-air-act-permit-atlantic-shores-project-produce-offshore-wind>). From the EPA press release: "The Atlantic Shores projects will include up to 200 offshore wind turbines, up to eight small, five medium, or four large offshore substations to collect the electricity produced, and the associated cables needed to transport the electricity to the New Jersey shore. This project could generate approximately more than 2,800 megawatts of electrical power for the State of New Jersey. It will also include onshore components that are not addressed in the EPA air permit, such as onshore substations." Anti-offshore-wind groups such as Save Long Beach Island have stated that they intend to sue over the project approval.

<https://www.njspotlightnews.org/2024/10/nj-offshore-wind-project-gets-federal-sign-off/>

NJEDA Receives Notice of \$50M Award for Federal Grant to Advance Offshore Wind Development in New Jersey

The NJ Economic Development Authority (NJEDA) has been selected to receive \$50 million from the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE)'s Transmission Siting and Economic Development (TSED) grant program. With the funds, the EDA plans to "catalyze civic engagement, workforce development, and economic mobility in New Jersey communities impacted by the development of offshore wind transmission projects. NJEDA will fund projects identified and chosen by local residents through Participatory Budgeting, during which residents propose, vote on, and lead spending decisions for projects in localities where new renewable transmission infrastructure is sited.

NJEDA will also provide pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship training opportunities for electrical careers in partnership with the IBEW Local Union 400. Lastly, NJEDA will build new bike trails along transmission rights-of-way and link them with multiple existing paths to connect state, county, and municipal parks."

<https://www.njeda.gov/njeda-receives-notice-of-50m-award-for-federal-grant-to-advance-offshore-wind-development-in-new-jersey/>

Poll: Offshore Wind Not High Priority for NJ Voters

This 1-minute news video describes the results of a Stockton poll on offshore wind in NJ and its importance to people's voting choices. Overall support for offshore wind remains about the same as a year ago (52% strongly or somewhat in favor), with those near the shore being less in favor of it (43%) than those residing more inland (55%). However, only 17% responded that a candidate's position on offshore wind would influence their vote, with more coastal residents (28%) stating that it would influence them. The poll, with a link to full results, is available here: <https://stockton.edu/news/2024/hughes-center-wind-poll-election.html>. The primary concerns of coastal residents who oppose wind turbines (51%) were environmental concerns (ocean floor, marine life, etc.).

<https://www.njspotlightnews.org/video/poll-offshore-wind-not-high-priority-for-nj-voters/>

CLIMATE CHANGE

NJ Lawmakers, Activists Rally Behind 'Climate Superfund Act'

This 1-1/2-minute news video shows the rally shown in the photo on [p. 1](#), in which **UUFANJ representatives** joined with more than 70 environmental advocates in Trenton, to lobby legislators and rally for strong climate and clean energy legislation, including the "Climate Superfund Act." That Act is modeled on the federal Superfund legislation; VT has already passed such an act, while a similar act in NY has passed the legislature but as of 10/9/2024 had not been signed by the governor. The NJ Act (S3545/A4696) would make the largest fossil fuel

corporations pay for the damages caused by climate change, with all funds going to projects to help communities recover from and become more resilient to climate change and extreme weather events. Additional information about the bill is included in the *New Jersey Monitor* article:

"Climate Activists Urge Fines for Fossil Fuel Producers," available here:

<https://newjerseymonitor.com/2024/09/30/climate-activists-urge-fines-for-fossil-fuel-producers/>. The

news video of the rally is available here:

<https://www.njspotlightnews.org/video/nj-lawmakers-activists-rally-behind-climate-superfund-act/>

Governor Murphy Announces \$15 Million FEMA Award to Increase Climate Change Resiliency

From the press release: "To conclude Climate Week, Governor Phil Murphy today [9/27/2024] announced the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) selected New Jersey's application, awarding \$15 million in funding to increase climate change preparedness and provide immediate relief to homeowners in the aftermath of a storm. New Jersey will provide a 10% match, about \$1.5 million, as part of the award. The selection, through FEMA's Safeguarding Tomorrow Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) program, will allow New Jersey to make low-interest loans to local governments most in need of financial assistance, including low-income areas and underserved communities, for their hazard mitigation and resilience infrastructure needs."

<https://www.nj.gov/governor/news/news/562024/approved/20240927a.shtml>

Kean University's Watson Institute Secures \$2.7 Million Grant to Lead Climate Resilience and Equity Initiatives in New Jersey

As part of the NJ Department of Environmental Protection's (DEP) "Building a Climate Ready NJ" initiative, the John S. Watson Institute for Urban Policy and Research at Kean University will receive \$2.7 million for "green infrastructure" and climate resilience initiatives, taking "a leading role in working to advance equity and support for underserved communities." The DEP funds are part of a statewide five-year \$72 million grant in

Inflation Reduction Act funds from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). <https://www.tapinto.net/towns/roselle/articles/kean-university-s-watson-institute-secures-2-7-million-grant-to-lead-climate-resilience-and-equity-initiatives-in-new-jersey>



Murphy Administration Launches \$20 Million Resilience Program to Modernize Stormwater Infrastructure and Management in Face of Climate Change Threats

From the press release: "To mark Climate Week, the Murphy Administration has announced the launch of the Department of Environmental Protection's [DEP] Ready to Be Resilient Stormwater and Resilience Funding Program to modernize stormwater infrastructure and management strategies in the face of increased precipitation that is resulting from a warming climate. The program is funded by \$20 million from the Biden-Harris Administration's American Rescue Plan. The program will provide \$9 million for a variety of resilience-related efforts, including grants to incentivize regional watershed management (with a priority to overburdened communities), development of local technical assistance programs, advancement of flood mapping, and improvement of post-disaster damage assessment protocols. In addition, the program will make \$11 million available as principal forgiveness loans through the State Revolving Fund for local stormwater resilience infrastructure projects that focus on green technologies."

<https://www.nj.gov/governor/news/news/562024/approved/20240926a.shtml>

Raritan Township Secures \$10,000 Community Energy Plan Grant Award

Raritan Township is one of the municipalities that received \$10,000 from the NJ Board of Public Utilities (BPU) Community Energy Plan Grant (CEPG) Program. The CEPG program is designed to "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. Raritan Township plans to use the funds for advisory services to shape a comprehensive energy plan. <https://www.tapinto.net/towns/flemington-slash-raritan/sections/government/articles/raritan-township-secures-10-000-community-energy-plan-grant-award>

Protest Over Public Exclusion at MACH2 Meetings

From the Delaware Riverkeeper Network: "A protest was held by the Delaware Riverkeeper Network, with fellow activists, during the September 11, Mid-Atlantic Hydrogen Hub (MACH2) meeting. MACH2 continues to exclude the public by hosting Monthly Member Meetings and non-members are required to pay \$50 to attend. This meeting was being held at the Holtec Technology campus in Camden, NJ. Holtec is responsible for the development of modular nuclear generators for a hydrogen production project in the proposed MACH2." In addition to charging for meetings, the MACH2 "Green Hydrogen Summit East Coast" taking place in Philadelphia, PA 11/19/2024 - 11/20/2024 has a registration fee of \$1,899. A 2-minute video of the protest is available here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8CT7BKfdg_8.

OSHA Heat Injury and Illness Prevention in Outdoor and Indoor Work Settings Proposed Rulemaking Issued

The federal Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) proposed rules related to heat, which have been in the works for over four years, have been published in the Federal Register; **the public comment period ends 12/30/2024**. These rules are significant to NJ because some opponents to a worker heat-related

bill in the NJ legislature (S2422/A3521) have asked that the NJ bill be held up until the federal rules have been issued. A video about the federal rules is available here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ltvt5Z89DNo>; additional information and a link to the proposed rules are available here: <https://www.osha.gov/heat-exposure/rulemaking>.

Opinion: NJ Could Have the World's Cleanest AI [AI Versus Clean Electricity]

In this opinion piece, Ed Potosnak, executive director of the NJ League of Conservation Voters (LCV), addresses NJ's recent tax incentive for attracting the artificial intelligence (AI) industry and describes the incredible amount of energy the industry requires. If NJ does not move quickly to meet its clean energy goals, it will be dirty energy that powers the industry. Gov. Murphy has goals to accomplish a clean energy transition, but if they are not enshrined in legislation, a new governor could revise them.

<https://www.njspotlightnews.org/2024/09/ensuring-new-jersey-ai-artificial-intelligence-tech-uses-clean-energy-not-fossil-fuels/>

FOREST HEALTH

Hoboken Will Create Division of Urban Forestry in '25 to Accept \$1M Grant for Trees

The City of Hoboken was one of ten NJ cities or groups that received Urban & Community Forestry Inflation Reduction Act Grants from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). Hoboken received \$1 million to "plant trees [300 new and replacement trees in public spaces], design and deliver educational community engagement activities, update maintenance and adaptative management plans, and implement youth and adult green workforce development activities." In response to receiving this grant, Hoboken plans to create a Division of Urban Forestry in 2025.

<https://hudsoncountyview.com/hoboken-will-create-division-of-urban-forestry-in-25-to-accept-1m-grant-for-trees/>

LEAD REDUCTION IN HOUSEHOLDS

Murphy Administration Releases Updated Potential Lead Exposure Mapping Tool During National Lead Poisoning Prevention Week

From the press release: "In recognition of National Lead Poisoning Prevention Week (Oct. 20-26), the New Jersey Departments of Environmental Protection (DEP) and Health (DOH) today [10/25/2024] released updates and additions to a statewide online mapping tool [the "Potential Lead Exposure Mapping Tool," available here: <https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/bc82aa1d39d54e5d944d701cf7e8450d/>] that uses publicly available data to indicate potential sources of lead exposure across the state. The updates add a new map layer showing community water provider level service line inventories as an indicator of potential lead exposure from drinking water, in addition to the existing layers focused on lead paint in New Jersey's housing stock. The combined tool layers will help the public, local health officers, and community groups better understand where children and adults may be at risk for lead exposure across the state." https://dep.nj.gov/newsrel/24_01025/

Biden-Harris Administration Issues Final Rule Requiring Replacement of Lead Pipes Within 10 Years, Announces \$44M in Funding to New Jersey to Provide Clean Water to Schools and Homes

From the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) press release: "The Biden-Harris Administration issued a final rule requiring drinking water systems across the country to identify and replace lead pipes within 10 years. The Lead and Copper Rule Improvements (LCRI) also require more rigorous testing of drinking water and a lower threshold for communities to take action on lead in drinking water....[and the final rule] improves communication within communities so that families are better informed about the risk of lead in drinking water, the location of lead pipes, and plans for replacing them.... [T]he EPA [also] announced \$44,199,000 in newly available drinking water infrastructure

funding for New Jersey through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law. This funding will flow through the drinking water state revolving funds (DWSRFs) and is available to support lead pipe replacement and inventory projects. Additionally, 49% of the funding must be provided to disadvantaged communities as grant funding or principal forgiveness that does not have to be repaid." <https://tinyurl.com/6wrytpmy>

DOJ Alleges Fraud in Newark's Lead Pipe Replacement

This 1-minute news video describes the U.S. Department of Justice's (DOJ) arrest of two individuals who are charged with fraud by failing to fully replace lead service lines at sites in Newark that required remediation between 2019 and 2021. (A joint statement by the NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) Commissioner and Mayor of Newark on the DOJ investigation and on the steps that have been taken to ensure residents' safety, is available here: https://dep.nj.gov/newsrel/24_01004/). The arrested individuals are charged with fraud by submitting falsified documents and pictures, and for their roles in a conspiracy to commit wire fraud. <https://www.njspotlightnews.org/video/doj-alleges-fraud-in-newarks-lead-pipe-replacement/>

POLLUTION



Push to Ditch Plastic Utensils in Restaurants, Schools

This 4-1/2-minute news video describes the bill (S3195) that has been reported out of the Senate Environment and Energy Committee, with amendments. The original bill focused on food service businesses not providing plastic single-use utensils (unless they were "eco-friendly") or

condiments to customers unless they were specifically asked for; the amendments revise this to include all single-use utensils (including chopsticks). In testimony provided at the Committee hearing, environmental and ocean advocacy groups expressed strong support for the bill, while business advocacy representatives stated it may be impractical for some businesses and would add to costs, and some school representatives expressed concern that metal utensils could be misused or "turned into weapons."

<https://www.njspotlightnews.org/video/push-to-ditch-plastic-utensils-in-restaurants-schools/>

Murphy Administration Honors 2024 Recycling and Sustainability Champions Through Annual Awards Program

From the press release: "The New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection [DEP] ... recognized New Jersey's leaders in recycling and sustainability. Their accomplishments serve to inspire others to reduce waste, reuse and repurpose items when possible, and recycle properly to keep the state's environment clean and healthy.... Ten awardees including businesses, organizations and individuals.... include a major energy company recycling or reusing nearly all the waste it generates, a non-profit organization reducing food waste by distributing recovered meals to local families in need, a middle school fighting plastic waste through an educational campaign and recycling thousands of pounds of plastic, and a business that has kept over 10 million pounds of secondhand clothing out of landfills." The list of awardees is included in the press release, available here:

https://dep.nj.gov/newsrel/24_0052/.

DRINKING WATER-RELATED ISSUES (other than lead)

New Jersey Slated to Get a Total of \$168M for Water Infrastructure Through Biden-Harris Investing in America Agenda

From the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) press release: "New Jersey is slated to get more than \$168 million for drinking water and

wastewater improvements – including the \$44 million that was announced as part of EPA's announcement of the Lead and Copper Rule Improvements earlier this month [see article on [p. 21](#)]. This BIL [Bipartisan Infrastructure Law] funding will help communities across the state upgrade water infrastructure that is essential to safely managing wastewater, protecting local freshwater resources, and delivering safe drinking water to homes, schools, and businesses. These... funds will flow through the Clean Water and Drinking Water State Revolving Funds (CWSRF and DWSRF) [and] will fund state-run, low-interest loan programs.... To ensure investments reach communities that need them the most, the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law mandates that a majority of the funding announced today [10/23/2024] must be provided to disadvantaged communities in the form of grants or loans that do not have to be repaid."

<https://tinyurl.com/4stbamrx>

EDUCATIONAL and YOUTH-RELATED

Eli Krantz Completes Native, Invasive Plants Guides for Fanwood's Environmental Commission

An Eagle Scout candidate who recently graduated from Scotch Plains-Fanwood High School worked with the Fanwood Environmental Commission to create a Native Plants Guide and an Invasive Plants Guide for the Fanwood Environmental Commission's website. Outdoor signs with bar codes for more information were also placed in front of plants in demonstration gardens cared for by members of the Environmental Commission.

<https://www.tapinto.net/towns/scotch-plains-slash-fanwood/sections/green/articles/eli-krantz-completes-native-invasive-plants-guides-for-fanwood-s-environmental-commission>

OTHER

NJDEP Reveals Additional \$7.3m for Liberty State Park Revitalization at Open House

The NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) held another in a series of Open House meetings at which they provided additional plans

that have been developed for areas of Liberty State Park (LSP), which took into consideration the myriad of comments made by the public. Details about the Open House including descriptions of the areas included in the LSP plans are available here:

https://dep.nj.gov/newsrel/24_0043/. The DEP also announced that an additional \$7.3 million has been received from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) in funding from the Biden-Harris Administration's climate resilience challenge. The enhanced wetlands in the LSP plan are part of resilience areas that can help reduce the impact of storm surges that are occurring more frequently due to climate change. <https://tinyurl.com/a9pmsa3p>

New Tool for Tracking 30x30 Protected Areas

30x30 is a worldwide initiative for governments to designate 30% of Earth's land and ocean area as protected areas by 2030. SkyTruth, with support from the Bloomberg Ocean Initiative, has developed "the first free, user-friendly platform geared toward democratizing 30x30 monitoring data so that more people can track progress on the Global Biodiversity Framework's 30x30 target. Users can see maps of currently protected areas with overlaid expert assessments of their effectiveness and recommendations on how these areas can be expanded for the greatest amount of biodiversity protection. The tool.... enables users to view existing protected areas, draw potential protected areas, dynamically illustrate the effects of proposed regions on progress toward 30x30, and quickly generate information about the proposed protected area from disparate data sources, including 30x30 research-based recommendations for areas to protect and the location of key habitats." The marine component was developed first, and the terrestrial component was just released. The Tracker is available here: [https://30x30.skytruth.org/progress-tracker/GLOB?settings={\"bbox\":\[-216.85,-85.05,570.5,85.05\],\"labels\":true}&layers=6,144,7,145&layer-settings={}&+30x30+progress+trackers](https://30x30.skytruth.org/progress-tracker/GLOB?settings={\). A past webinar including a demonstration (focusing on the marine portion of the tracker) is available here: <https://vimeo.com/982098457>.

Proposed NEPA Revisions Bill

NJEJA Joins Environmental Justice Advocates in Saying "NO" to Harmful Permitting Reform Bill

The **EJTF partner** New Jersey Environmental Justice Alliance (NJEJA) joined over 175 organizations in sending a letter (available here: <https://njeja.org/no-on-harmful-permitting-reform/>) opposing the Energy Permitting Reform Act of 2024 "EPRA" (S.4753) currently being considered by the U.S. Senate, which would revise the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). The letter states "The legislation is an abhorrent effort to deny mostly Black, Brown, and low-income people the right to a healthy community. This bill will stifle our communities' right to public input, and thwart our transition to an equitable, sustainable, and renewable energy economy."

This is the bill that Sen. Manchin originally put forth, and according to **EJTF partner** Food & Water Watch, it "has at least 5 major policies that come straight out of Project 2025" (a comparison between them, prepared by Prismatic Strategies, is available here: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Isfu8kMMmyYEiHVKaLSEypenj2tycPTS/view>).

Some of those in favor of the bill couch their support in terms of the acceleration of the approval of electric transmission projects (see this NJ Spotlight News article for examples of this support:

<https://www.njspotlightnews.org/2024/10/congress-considers-overhauling-energy-transmission-permits-would-mean-lower-nj-electricity-prices/>).

Here is a link to send a message to Congress to stop this bill:

<https://act.foodandwaterwatch.org/page/74915/action/1>.

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.

TAKE ACTION ON KEY NJ LEGISLATIVE BILLS TO SUPPORT OR OPPOSE!

Additional information on how to take action is available on the UUFANJ "First Fridays" page for October 2024, available here:

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1C_x6nMp8O4LH4XBqfLV2SvOaHJqx9DmlI8vR3Lq80d4/edit?tab=t.0.

- **Support S3545/A4696 – "Climate Superfund Act"**

This bill would hold fossil fuel extractors and refiners that do business in NJ, and are responsible for more than 1 billion tons of greenhouse gas pollution since 1995, liable for damages for the costs of climate change. The bill empowers the NJ State Treasurer to assess the damages caused by climate change over the past 30 years, and the NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) to collect the damages and use the funds for climate mitigation and adaptation efforts. You can send a letter to Gov. Murphy, legislative leadership, and your legislators, calling on them to support the Climate Superfund Act, at this link: <https://tinyurl.com/3ftctx3v>.

- **Strengthen and Pass S237/A1480 – "Clean Energy Standard"**

This bill seeks to achieve 100% clean electricity in NJ by 2035; however, amendments are needed to further support labor and ensure that only truly squeaky clean energy qualifies.

- **Oppose S2425/A3645 – "Low Carbon Fuel Standard"**

This bill would require New Jerseyans to subsidize expensive dirty alternatives to gasoline (like the misleadingly-named "Renewable" Natural Gas (RNG), biomass-diesel, biogasoline, and fuels produced from carbon capture technology, hydrogen and electrofuels, which worsen climate change and create deadly co-pollutants). The bill's intended theoretical greenhouse gas emission reductions rely on a complex credit trading scheme, creating a market that is prone to fraud, greenwashing, and that may well increase the pollution burden on low income communities of color.

- **Oppose S2827/A4493 – "Emissions Reduction Innovation Act"**

While its stated intent is to reduce emissions in overburdened communities, this bill ultimately requires ratepayers to give billions of dollars to utilities to subsidize false solutions like the misleadingly-named "Renewable" Natural Gas (RNG), carbon capture, and hydrogen. These approaches perpetuate our reliance on dirty fossil fuels, increase climate and other hazardous air pollution, jeopardize public health and prevent the transition to truly clean renewable energy technologies by extending the operation of polluting facilities.

- **Support S361/A1476 – Establishes "New Jersey Target Zero Commission"**

The NJ Bike and Walk Coalition is asking for our support in getting bill S361 passed. The bill requires formation of a commission and a process to plan for and implement changes that will cut walking, biking, and traffic fatalities to zero. By implementing the Vision Zero Program in Hoboken NJ there has not been a single pedestrian, bicycle, or auto occupant death in 7 years.

- **Support S3783 – Artificial Turf Prohibition for Certain Entities**

This bill prohibits municipalities, school districts, and State departments and agencies from purchasing, installing, or using artificial turf.

- **Support SR113 – Urges DEP to Cease Funding Synthetic Turf**

This bill urges DEP to cease funding synthetic turf field projects through the Green Acres program, and prioritize investing in natural grass playing fields.