



Join us at the "New Jersey Needs a Climate Superfund Act!"
Rally & Lobby Day - 12/12/2024 in Trenton - [See p. 6.](#)

<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.

A FEW HIGHLIGHTS OF EJTF's VERY ACTIVE 2024!



Photos - Top row L - R: Legislative Committee Hearing (photo courtesy of Mike Skelly); UUFANJ "Justice for All" Gala; Global Wind Day Celebration EJTF booth (photo by Mike Skelly).
Middle row L - R: NJ Climate Action Gathering (photo by Food & Water Watch - NJ); Rally & Lobby Day for a Squeaky Clean Energy Future (photo by EmpowerNJ).
Bottom row L - R: Green Amendment postcards sent to legislators; Preparing "Get out the Vote" letters (photo by Mike Skelly).

And we're looking forward to even more involvement in 2025!!

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EJTF ACTIVITIES (Cont.)

- **EJTF Chair Peggy Middaugh and EJTF member Mike Skelly** attended a Pembertown Township Planning Board meeting to provide support to an **EJTF partner**, the Pinelands Preservation Alliance, in their opposition to a proposed development project in the Township.



Photos by Mike Skelly

LOCAL GOVERNMENT INITIATIVES

As we move into a time of potentially different levels of federal government involvement, there are many State and local government initiatives that are beginning or ongoing. Here are a number of local programs/projects, with most highlighted in the ANJEC (Association of NJ Environmental Commissions) News (available here: <https://www.anjecnews.com/news-highlights.html>) just this month:

- Chair of South Orange Environmental Commission Speaks About Sustainability Changes (<https://www.tapinto.net/towns/soma/sections/green/articles/chair-of-south-orange-environmental-commission-speaks-about-sustainability-changes-at-town-council-meeting>)
- Asbury Park Honored for Leading Sustainability and EV Adoption Efforts (<https://www.tapinto.net/towns/asbury-park/sections/government/articles/asbury-park-honored-for-leading-sustainability-and-ev-adoption-efforts>)
- South Brunswick Township Purchases Over 200 Acres of Wooded Lands for Open Space (<https://www.tapinto.net/towns/south-brunswick/sections/government/articles/south-brunswick-township-purchases-over-200-acres-of-wooded-lands-for-open-space>)
- Leave the Leaves: Eco-Friendly Initiative Aims to Make Jersey City Friendlier Environment (<https://www.tapinto.net/towns/jersey-city/sections/green/articles/leave-the-leaves-eco-friendly-initiative-aims-to-make-jersey-city-friendlier-environment-for-pollinators>)
- Lebanon Township Resident Honored with NJ Forest Stewardship Award (<https://www.tapinto.net/towns/north-hunterdon/sections/home-and-garden/articles/lebanon-township-resident-honored-with-nj-forest-stewardship-award>)
- Jersey City To Grant NJDEP Easement For Rebuild By Design Work (<https://www.tapinto.net/towns/jersey-city/sections/economic-development/articles/jersey-city-to-grant-njdep-easement-for-rebuild-by-design-work>)
- Madison installs a rain garden, a stormwater management measure anyone can build in their lawns (https://www.newjerseyhills.com/madison_eagle/news/stormwater-matters-madison-installs-a-rain-garden-a-stormwater-management-measure-anyone-can-build-in/article_ef666d1e-9ae2-11ef-9be2-2f9337030ee4.html)
- South Orange NJ Proposes New Tree Ordinance Amendment (<https://www.tapinto.net/towns/soma/sections/government/articles/south-orange-nj-proposes-new-tree-ordinance-amendment>)
- Little Falls Planning Board Approves Comprehensive Master Plan for Future Development (<https://www.tapinto.net/towns/passaic-valley/sections/government/articles/little-falls-planning-board-approves-comprehensive-master-plan-for-future-development>)
- NJBPU Awards Major Community Energy Plan Implementation Grant to Borough of Madison (<https://www.nj.gov/bpu/newsroom/2024/approved/20241115.html>)

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

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

DECEMBER 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	<p>3 "Electrify Your Life: Starting the Electrification Journey in Your Home" - 1:00 p.m.</p> <p>NJBPU Community Solar Energy Program Stakeholder Meeting - 3:00 p.m.</p> <p>EmpowerNJ Post-Election Strategy Session & Potluck - 6:00 p.m.</p> <p>Morris County EJ DEP Community Engagement Session - 6:00 p.m.</p>	<p>4 "Administrative Advocacy in New York and New Jersey; How Do State Regulations Advance EJ Accountability?" - 5:00 p.m.</p> <p>LWVNJ - "Rapid Response & Grassroots Mobilization" - 6:00 p.m.</p> <p>"Fighting Artificial Turf in NJ" - 7:00 p.m.</p>	<p>5 DRBC 4Q Business Meeting - 10:30 a.m.</p>	<p>6 Comments Due: NJBPU Notice of Substantial Changes to Community Solar Rules</p>	7
8	9	10	<p>11 "Induction Cooking Demonstration by Chef Rachelle Boucher" - 3:00 p.m.</p> <p>LWVNJ - "Building Power: You Count" - 6:00 p.m.</p> <p>"MACH2: Our Community Speaks Out" - 6:30 p.m.</p>	<p>12 New Jersey Needs a Climate Superfund Act! - Rally & Lobby Day - 9:00 a.m.</p> <p>NJ Community Forestry Council - 10:00 a.m.</p>	<p>13 Jersey Water Works Conference 2024 - 8:00 a.m.</p>	14
15	16	<p>17 DRBC Advisory Committee on Climate Change Meeting - 1:30 p.m.</p>	<p>18 Comments Due: NJBPU Energy Storage Incentive Program 2024 Straw Proposal</p>	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31	<p>NJBPU Net Metering Policies for Class I Renewable Energy Systems Comments Requested</p>			

FUTURE EVENTS

NJBPU Net Metering Policies for Class I Renewable Energy Systems Comments Requested

The NJ Board of Public Utilities (BPU) is seeking stakeholder input on the successes and obstacles of comparable approaches to guide the policy planning process for future changes in net metering. "Net metering permits owners and operators of class I renewable energy generation facilities to receive credits for any electricity that is supplied back to the electric grid. In New Jersey, net metering is predominantly utilized for solar installations at residential, commercial, and public entity locations. Net metering must be offered at non-discriminatory rates to accommodate systems of any sized capacity." A public meeting was held by the BPU in November, for which the video and the presentation slides are available. No due date for comments has been given. A link to the BPU Notice, which gives additional information about the program; the link to post comments; and the link to the public comments made by "Vote Solar" are all available here:

https://publicaccess.bpu.state.nj.us/CaseSummary.aspx?case_id=2113318. The video of the public meeting is available here: <https://tinyurl.com/kwfu232m>, and the presentation from the meeting is available here: <https://tinyurl.com/42mhfxbj>.

"Electrify Your Life: Starting the Electrification Journey in Your Home" 12/3/2024, 1:00 p.m. - 2:30 p.m. - Webinar

The Elders Climate Action (ECA) Electrify Your Life series is designed for elders who want to know how to plan and implement home electrification options. "During this session, ECA's electrification volunteers will suggest where to look for recently updated information so that you can begin or extend your own electrification journey, including how to look for an electrification coach, how to seek out a contractor, and where to obtain helpful information about rebates and financing. We will point you in the direction of those U.S. states already offering rebates, including, where

available, local information would be found." Additional information and the link to register (**suggested donation: \$10**) are available here: https://www.eldersclimateaction.org/event/electrify_de c3/.

NJBPU Community Solar Energy Program Stakeholder Meeting - Virtual 12/3/2024, 3:00 p.m. - 4:30 p.m.

"Staff of the New Jersey Board of Public Utilities ('NJBPU' or 'Board') hereby gives notice of a stakeholder meeting to solicit input from the public and interested parties on the Community Solar Energy Program ('CSEP') as part of Board Staff's ('Staff') one-year checkup proceeding." Additional information, including a description of the program, questions for stakeholders, how to submit written comments, and the registration link, is available here: https://www.nj.gov/bpu/pdf/publicnotice/Notice_StakeholderMeeting_OneYearReview_CSEP.pdf. Note: those wishing to speak at the meeting need to register 48 hours ahead of the meeting and request to speak. **Written comments are due by 5:00 p.m. on 12/16/2024.**

EmpowerNJ Post-Election Strategy Session & Potluck 12/3/2024, 6:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m. Highland Park, NJ - In-person

EmpowerNJ (a coalition of which **UUFANJ is a member**) is hosting a strategy session and potluck "to assess the current moment and chart our path forward." It is clear that the next weeks and months are key for enacting effective state-level climate solutions. Additional information and the link to register are available here: <https://actionnetwork.org/events/empowernj-post-election-strategy-session-potluck/>.

Morris County EJ DEP Community Engagement Session - Hybrid 12/3/2024, 6:00 p.m. - 7:30 p.m. Morristown, NJ - In-person & on Zoom

The NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) is inviting Morris County residents to attend a community engagement session regarding

Environmental Justice, with DEP Commissioner Shawn LaTourette and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Region 2 Regional Administrator Lisa Garcia. This community engagement session will provide residents, community groups, and other members of the public with a chance to discuss environmental justice issues in Morris 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. Registration is available here: <https://tinyurl.com/morris-ej>.

"Administrative Advocacy in New York and New Jersey; How Do State Regulations Advance EJ Accountability?"
- Webinar
12/4/2024, 5:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.

As part of the U. S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Region 2 Thriving Communities Technical Assistance Center (TCTAC), this training is part of a series, presented by the NYU School of Law Institute for Policy Integrity, that focuses on providing Environmental Justice (EJ) communities with the tools to effectively engage with government at all levels. "Are you interested in learning about environmental justice rules and regulations specific to New York and New Jersey? This training focuses on how environmental justice is considered in these state's regulatory processes and ways that communities can engage the process. Participants will hear about examples of engaging with state agencies to protect the environment, public health, and public welfare, and learn how to utilize this information to advance community-based environmental justice initiatives." Registration is available here: <https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZ0udO2qpiIrE90Sfalxo5QOeqGsdOdKBwyo>.

"Fighting Artificial Turf in NJ" - Webinar
12/4/2024, 7:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.

This webinar, co-hosted by the NJ Sierra Club, the Association of NJ Environmental Commissions (ANJEC), the Pinelands Preservation Alliance, and Waterspirit, will feature a panel of experts and local activists, including residents who have experience fighting turf fields. The panel will provide an overview of the impacts of astroturf on communities and public health, including its

financial costs versus alternatives, and actions that can be taken locally or statewide. Registration is available here: https://act.sierraclub.org/events/details?formcam_paignid=701Po00000UHtBiIAL&mapLinkHref=.

Delaware River Basin Commission (DRBC)
Fourth Quarter 2024 Business Meeting
12/5/2024, 10:30 a.m. - via Zoom

The Delaware River Basin Commission (DRBC) will hold its fourth-quarter business meeting on Thursday, 12/5/2024. 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 are available here: <https://www.nj.gov/drbc/meetings/upcoming/#2/>.

NJBPU Notice of Substantial Changes to Community Solar Rules
Comments Due 12/6/2024

The NJ Community Solar Pilot Program was initially created in 2018, and the initial rules for the Pilot Program are still in effect, despite the program being judged as a success by the NJ Board of Public Utilities (BPU) with the intention of making it a permanent program. Amendments to the Pilot Program rules that would create the permanent program were proposed in September 2023, but were never adopted in light of the substantial comments received. In response to the comments, the BPU has now issued a "Notice of Substantial Changes" to those proposed rules. **Comments on the proposed changes are due by 5:00 p.m. on 12/6/2024.** The proposed amendments to the previously-proposed rules, the comments received, and instructions on how to comment are available here: <https://tinyurl.com/2x5vzfbz> and additional details are available in this article: <https://natlawreview.com/article/new-jersey-bpu-proposes-substantial-changes-community-solar-rules>

"Induction Cooking Demonstration by Chef Rachelle Boucher" - Webinar
12/11/2024, 3:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.

"Get 'inducted' into the Elders Climate Action [ECA] Electrification Fan Club with real time

lessons about the many benefits of induction cooking. Join renowned chef Rachelle Boucher and our ECA team in the kitchen as they cook and demonstrate the wonders of today's electric kitchens, while also sharing holiday prep and cooking tips!" Rachelle Boucher is the Senior Lead for Culinary Experiences and Events for the Building Decarbonization Coalition, whose mission is to bring people and organizations together to advance the transition to a clean energy future. Additional information and the link to register (**suggested donation: \$10**) are available here: https://www.eldersclimateaction.org/event/chef_d ec11/.

"MACH2: Our Community Speaks Out"
12/11/2024, 6:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.
- via Zoom

This webinar is sponsored by the Delaware Riverkeeper Network. "It's been more than a year since the MACH 2 Hydrogen Hub was announced, along with the other six proposed hubs across the nation. After all this time, we know very little due to the exclusion of the public from the 'hub' process and the secretive practices that have kept us in the dark. Our communities have organized, fought for information, advocated for opportunities to influence decisions and planning, and made our opposition to the proposed MACH2 sprawl of hydrogen projects known. At this special community webinar, we will hear from community members and group representatives and we will share what we have learned about the plans for MACH2 and its potential impacts for southeastern PA, South/Central NJ and the state of Delaware." Additional information and the link to register are available here: https://delawareriverkeeper.org/events/mach2-our-community-speaks-out/?mc_id=46.

New Jersey Needs a Climate Superfund Act!
- Rally & Lobby Day
12/12/2024, 9:00 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.
Trenton, NJ - In-person

In what has been termed possibly the most important legislative event of the month, EmpowerNJ (a coalition of which **UUFANJ is a member**) is organizing a Rally and Lobby Day at the Trenton State House to call on the Senate Environment Committee, the full legislature, and

Gov. Murphy to enact the Climate Superfund Act. In light of National events, it is now more vital than ever that this legislation be passed now. It would make the largest fossil fuel corporations pay their share for the damages caused by climate change, with funds going to projects that help communities recover from and become more resilient to increasingly destructive climate impacts. Additional information and the link to register are available here: <https://actionnetwork.org/events/new-jersey-needs-a-climate-superfund-act/>.

NJ Community Forestry Council
12/12/2024, 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>.

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/>.

**Delaware River Basin Commission (DRBC) Advisory Committee on Climate Change Meeting - via Zoom
12/17/2024, 1:30 p.m.**

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

**NJBPU Energy Storage Incentive Program 2024 Straw Proposal
Comments Due 12/18/2024**

The NJ Board of Public Utilities (BPU) has issued a Straw Proposal for the NJ Storage Incentive Program (NJ SIP) that is intended to "build a critical foundation for a long-term energy storage effort in the State.... In this 2024 Straw Proposal, ('Straw')... the ...BPU... proposes to create two energy storage segments for Front-of-Meter and Behind-the-Meter energy storage incentives, patterned after the [BPU's] Successor Solar Incentive (SuSI) Program. However, while the SuSI Program incentivizes stand-alone solar and Grid Supply solar-plus-storage projects, this Straw will focus on incentivizing stand-alone Grid Supply energy storage projects as well as solar-plus-storage projects that are ineligible to receive storage incentives from the SuSI Program."
Comments are due by 5:00 p.m. on 12/18/2024. Additional information, including a copy of the Straw Proposal and instructions on how to comment, is available here: <https://tinyurl.com/y9zhu2z7>. A video of a previous public stakeholder meeting is available here: <https://tinyurl.com/28e92hhx> and the presentation slides used at the meeting are available here: <https://tinyurl.com/3u4d35ek>.

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 sessions scheduled for December 2024 are listed below; descriptions of these and future sessions are available here: <https://www.lwvnj.org/training>.

**LWVNJ - "Rapid Response & Grassroots Mobilization" - via Zoom
12/4/2024, 6:00 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.**

"Have you ever received unexpected news that impacted your campaign and had to scramble to react? You are not alone! Predicting when a bill will be heard in committee, when public comments periods will open, or when rulings or statements will be released can be near impossible at times. Preparing certain resources and making a plan of action ahead of time can make all the difference when these unexpected situations arise. Join us for a training to understand what resources to prepare in advance and what plans to have in place for impactful rapid response and grassroots mobilization." Registration is available here: <https://tinyurl.com/yksz24us>.

**LWVNJ - "Building Power: You Count"
12/11/2024, 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/562w5sjh>.

VIDEOS+ OF PAST EVENTS

"Changes in South Jersey Estuaries: Influences of Climate Change, Invasive Species and Human Modifications" **- Video of Webinar**

This webinar was 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.... [In this webinar] 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." The featured speaker, Dr. Ken Able (Professor Emeritus, Rutgers University), has more than 45 years of experience studying New Jersey's estuaries. The video is available here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CJZoxC6HMcs>.

Cape May County EJ DEP Community Engagement Session **- Video and Notes from Meeting**

The NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) invited Cape May County residents to attend a community engagement session regarding Environmental Justice, with DEP Commissioner Shawn LaTourette and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Region 2 Regional Administrator Lisa Garcia. This community engagement session was one of a series being conducted by DEP in communities across NJ, intended to provide residents, community groups, and other members of the public with a chance to discuss environmental justice issues. However, at this session, a number of attendees raised questions about the DEP "Resilient Environments and Landscapes" (REAL) proposed rules under the "NJ Protecting Against Climate Threats" (NJ PACT) initiative. Public officials and residents challenged the proposal, and Commissioner LaTourette - while promising to meet with local officials to discuss it - called out "misinformation" as contributing to some of the concerns. Some attendees pointed out what they said was a lack of local input during development of the proposed rules. Starting at minute 30:35 of the video, and over the course of the rest of the meeting,

Commissioner LaTourette gave a comprehensive and very articulate description of the REAL proposed rules and their intended impact. The video is available here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=He8yhA9ppwE> and notes from the meeting are available here: <https://dep.nj.gov/wp-content/uploads/ej/cape-may-ejces-notes-final-2.pdf>.

"Environmental Justice Concerns With Carbon Capture and Sequestration in the U.S. Power Sector and Beyond" **- Video of Webinar**

This webinar, sponsored by the Princeton University Center for Policy Research on Energy and the Environment, was presented by Dr. Yukyan Lam, the Director of Research and a Senior Scientist at the Tishman Environment and Design Center at The New School University. Her recent work with the Tishman Center has focused on investigating the impacts of climate change mitigation policies and technologies on environmental justice communities and advancing approaches to address cumulative impacts in permitting. The video is available here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c1C6WhF5Stg>.

"Federal Accountability and Environmental Justice Obligations" **- 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 - New York University's Institute for Policy Integrity - hosted the "Federal Accountability and Environmental Justice Obligations" webinar. This webinar focused on "providing Environmental Justice communities with the tools to effectively engage with government at all levels. This training focuse[d] on how Environmental Justice is considered in the regulatory processes across federal agencies and ways that communities can engage the process. Participants [learned] how rules and regulations are created by different agencies to protect the environment, public health, and public welfare." The video is available here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m7q4PJ-PkIY>.

**EPA National Environmental Justice
Community Engagement Calls
- Video of 10/15/2024 Call**

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." The video of the 10/15/2024 call is available here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vQK73ILoI-c>.

**NJBIZ 2024 Energy Panel Discussion
- Video of Webinar**

In this webinar, sponsored by NJBIZ, a panel of experts discussed the following topics on Energy: "What is the status of the transition to clean energy and how will decarbonization affect the bottom line?; has the capacity and reliability of the electric grid improved?; geopolitical issues constraining power supplies, and how the risk be hedged or mitigated; what policies can help make energy more affordable in New Jersey?; emerging technologies changing energy production and distribution sectors; actions intended to mitigate climate change and their effect on energy costs; and much more!" Registration to receive the link to the video is available here:

<https://tinyurl.com/445zvn9f>.

**10th CEEJH Environmental Justice
Symposium: "Environmental Justice Past,
Present, and Future" - Videos of Plenaries**

Community Engagement Environmental Justice & Health (CEEJH) presented 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. The opening plenary was presented by Hip Hop Caucus

**"Why Hydrogen & Carbon Capture Are
False Solutions" - Video of Webinar**

The **EJTF partner** NJ Environmental Justice Alliance (NJEJA) collaborated with WE ACT for Environmental Justice to host this webinar, in which NJEJA's Director of Policy, Brooke Helmick, discussed the Mid-Atlantic Clean Hydrogen Hub (MACH2) and raised concerns about the growing trend of state legislation promoting hydrogen initiatives. The presenters collectively emphasized that while combating climate change is imperative, it should not come at the expense of environmental justice communities. The video is available here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PIgzQq4F7Fw>.

**"Should We Stay or Should We Leave?
Multi-objective Tradeoffs In Identifying
Robust Beach Nourishment and Managed
Retreat Strategies" - Video of Webinar**

This talk, part of the Dartmouth "New Energy Series," was presented by Prabhat Hegde, PhD Candidate, Dartmouth. "In some low-lying coastal areas around the world, decision-makers are beginning to consider 'managed retreat' of human populations to adapt to sea-level rise. One of the main challenges in designing a managed retreat strategy is determining when to trigger retreat. Decision-makers lack tools and scientific understanding to evaluate whether the benefits of interim response strategies, like beach nourishment, outweigh the costs of waiting longer to trigger retreat. In this talk... Prabhat Hegde... contextualize[d] the coastal beach nourishment problem within the umbrella of decision analyses frameworks for climate change adaptation... [and]....demonstrate[d] how considerations of uncertainty and multiple objectives improve upon existing decision-making practices, drastically changing expected outcomes and the recommended timing of retreat." The video is available here:

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

Founder, President and CEO Rev. Yearwood (video available here:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Hb1J8pw_2Qg), and the closing plenary was presented by CEEJH founder Dr. Sacoby Wilson, who spoke about "the milestones, challenges, and successes that have shaped this annual gathering, celebrating the collective efforts of those who have contributed to advancing environmental justice and health equity..." (video available here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JnWq1-QthAE>).

NEWS RELATED TO EJTF ISSUES
[covering 10/26/2024 – 11/25/2024]

**ELECTRIC VEHICLES & VEHICLE
EMISSION REDUCTION**

**Truck Charging Stations Coming to NJ
Turnpike**

This 5-minute news video focuses on nine new electric truck charging stations that will be constructed along the NJ Turnpike, funded by a \$250 million Climate Pollution Reduction Grant from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The grant will fund 24 charging stations in 4 states. The charging stations are particularly needed in NJ so that the trucking industry can comply with the Advanced Clean Truck (ACT) rules, which require increasing percentages of zero-emission trucks to be sold, beginning 1/1/2025. A bill (A4967/S3817) has been introduced that would delay implementation of the ACT requirements for two years (see the article below).

<https://www.njspotlightnews.org/video/truck-charging-stations-coming-to-nj-turnpike/>

**Fight Brewing Over New State Rule to Cut
'Dirty Diesel' Truck Emissions**

This *New Jersey Monitor* article describes pushback from two NJ legislators and the trucking industry on the timetable for implementing NJ's Advanced Clean Truck (ACT) rules, citing the lack of charging infrastructure, the need for improvements in electric vehicle technology, and the need for more affordability. A bill

(A4967/S3817) that would delay implementation of the ACT requirements for two years has been introduced in the NJ legislature. Several other states that passed similar rules have recently announced delays to their implementation.

<https://newjerseymonitor.com/2024/10/31/fight-brewing-over-new-state-rule-to-cut-dirty-diesel-truck-emissions/>



**Biden-Harris Administration Announces
Nearly \$45 Million to Slash Electric
Vehicle Battery Recycling Costs**

From the U.S. Department of Energy press release: "As part of the Biden-Harris Administration's historic Investing in America agenda, the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) today announced \$44.8 million in funding from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) for eight projects that will lower costs of recycling electric drive vehicle batteries and electric drive vehicle battery components, with the long-term aim of lowering vehicle costs." In NJ, "Siemens Corporation, Technology (Princeton, NJ) will receive \$7,998,766 to demonstrate an automated approach for battery disassembly to reduce cost while maintaining the flexibility to handle a variety of types of packs."

<https://www.energy.gov/articles/biden-harris-administration-announces-nearly-45-million-slash-electric-vehicle-battery>

RENEWABLE RESOURCES (other than Offshore Wind)

Lehigh University Has Addressed 100% of its Electricity Consumption with Renewable Energy Certificates

Utilizing a combination of a newly-operational on-campus solar array and Renewable Energy Certificates (RECs) from a combination of on-site and off-site (i.e., partnership in a large-scale solar facility to be constructed in western Kentucky) renewable energy projects, Lehigh University has addressed 100% of its energy consumption. The University has a goal of achieving net carbon neutrality by 2040.

<https://www2.lehigh.edu/news/lehigh-university-has-addressed-100-of-its-electricity-consumption-with-renewable-energy>

LAND MANAGEMENT/ AGRICULTURE/FOOD

Why So Few Organic Farms in New Jersey?

This article describes both the benefits of organic farming and the arduous process required for a farm to be officially certified organic in NJ. Only 81 out of 9,998 farms in NJ - less than 1% - are certified organic, only a slight increase from the 78 certified in 2017. Among other things, organic certification requires a 36-month transition period and rigorous inspections and paperwork. The invaluable assistance provided to farmers by **EJTF partner** the Northeast Organic Farm Association of NJ (NOFA-NJ) is described in the article.

<https://www.njspotlightnews.org/2024/11/not-even-one-percent-nj-farms-organic/>

Rutgers Receives Grant from USDA to Develop an Alternative to Hydroponics Method

From *Rutgers Today*: "Rutgers Health received a \$607,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture to develop 'electroponics,' an alternative to the hydroponics approach to farming that would allow plants to grow under limited water conditions or in zero gravity conditions ready for deployment in space stations. The idea

behind the research is to adapt farming to conditions resulting from climate change where water is a rare commodity and to precisely target the delivery of agrichemicals that can cause serious environmental pollution... The proposed novel and game-changing technology uses electro-spray as a method of precisely delivering water in the form of electrically charged micron-size particles and biopolymer-based nanofibers extracted from food waste that can be used as seed coatings to enhance germination and plant growth suitable for many types of edible plants such as lettuce."

<https://www.rutgers.edu/news/rutgers-receives-grant-usda-develop-alternative-hydroponics-method>

CLIMATE CHANGE



Drought, Record Warmth Fuel Historic Wildfire Risk in NJ

This article describes the lengthening of NJ's fire season and the climate change impacts on it.

<https://www.njspotlightnews.org/2024/11/new-jersey-wildfire-risk-grows-amid-climate-change-effects/>

Murphy Administration Launches Online Funding Directory for Climate Resilience Projects

From the press release: "The Murphy Administration has launched an online Climate Resilience Funding Directory [available here: https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/196a9c8077e847c3b4a815d7c814930c/page/Explore-Grants/?views=news1_view] to help municipalities, community-based organizations and state

agencies identify resources for funding climate resilience projects, including local infrastructure improvements, hazard mitigation efforts and community resilience planning opportunities.... The Climate Resilience Funding Directory offers streamlined access to opportunities for state and federal grants, organized by criteria such as applicant type and cost-share requirements. In addition to connecting users with potential funding sources, the directory showcases success stories from resilience projects and examples of funded initiatives." Included in the Directory are funding opportunities for individuals and non-profit organizations.

https://dep.nj.gov/newsrel/24_0056/

0.02 = October's Record-Low Rainfall in New Jersey, in Inches

Since statewide records began being kept in 1895 (data available here:

https://climate.rutgers.edu/stateclim_v1/nclimdiv/index.php?stn=NJ00&elem=pcpn), this October had the lowest rainfall ever recorded in NJ.

<https://www.njspotlightnews.org/2024/11/rainfall-drought-nj-wildfires-water-restrictions/>

Governor Murphy Signs Memorandum of Understanding with Climate Group, as New Jersey Joins Under2 Coalition

According to its website, Climate Group is "an international nonprofit founded in 2003, and officially launched in 2004, with offices in London, New York, New Delhi, Amsterdam and Beijing. Over the last 20 years, we've grown our network to include over 500 multinational businesses in 175 markets worldwide. We also work closely with governments at all levels. The Under2 Coalition, for which we're the Secretariat, is made up of 167 state and regional governments and has been named one of the international cooperative initiatives with the highest potential for emissions reductions." NJ has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to join 16 other U.S. states in this, "the largest global network of states and regions committed to achieving greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions mitigation." Members and MOU signatories collaborate in supporting international activities and declarations to respond to climate change. "In line with the Paris Agreement, the

guiding principle for reduction of GHG emissions by 2050 must be to limit global warming to no more than 1.5°C. For Parties to this MOU, this means acting as climate leaders and pursuing an emissions reductions trajectory consistent with achieving net zero emissions by 2050 as a Coalition, and individual net zero emissions as soon as possible, in line with the most recent science."

<https://www.nj.gov/governor/news/news/562024/approved/20241108b.shtml>

NJ Business Coalition Urges DEP to Withdraw PACT Land Use Rule

The NJ Business Coalition, which includes more than 100 NJ business groups and associations, sent a letter (available here: https://njbja.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/11/NJBC_letter_in_opposition.pdf) commenting on the NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) "Resilient Environments and Landscapes" (REAL) reforms under the "NJ Protecting Against Climate Threats" (NJ PACT) initiative. Their key concerns fall into five categories: Extreme Projections of Sea Level Rise; Commercial Development; Urban Redevelopment; Affordable Housing; and Retreat from the Shore and Urban River Communities.

<https://njbja.org/nj-business-coalition-urges-dep-to-withdraw-pact-real-climate-rule/>

Opinion: Resilience Rules Would Benefit the Pinelands and All NJ

In this piece by Michael W. Klein, JD, PhD, director of government affairs for the Pinelands Preservation Alliance, he describes the vulnerabilities of the Pinelands to climate-change-related impacts including flooding and sea-level rise leading to saltwater intrusion. He urges NJ residents to support the NJ Department of Environmental Protection's (DEP) Resilient Environments and Landscapes (REAL) regulations, the first in the country to use climate-science modeling to address the effects of climate change.

<https://www.njspotlightnews.org/2024/11/op-ed-urging-support-dep-real-resilience-rules-would-benefit-pinelands-all-nj>

FOREST HEALTH

New Jersey Conservation Foundation and Partners Launch 'Trees for Trenton' Initiative

The "Trees for Trenton" initiative will bring 1,000 shade trees to Trenton over the next several years. This initiative of the NJ Conservation Foundation and its partners - the NJ Tree Foundation [of which EJTF Chair Peggy Middaugh is a Trustee], the City of Trenton, the Outdoor Equity Alliance, The Watershed Institute, and Isles, Inc. - will work with community members whose participation, including help watering the trees and ensuring they are protected from damage, will be critical to the program's success. The program utilizes a grant from the NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) Natural Climate Solutions Grant program, with funding from the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI).
<https://www.trentondaily.com/new-jersey-conservation-foundation-and-partners-launch-trees-for-trenton-initiative/>



NJ Mini Forests Growing Fast in Year 3

This 4-minute video focuses on several mini forests in NJ and NY. From the *Civic Story* news website: "In Union County, New Jersey, fast-growing mini forests are cooling neighborhoods and creating thriving ecosystems. The young trees and shrubs are densely planted in super-rich soil, and grow rapidly both below and above ground. Join us as we assess 3-year old forests in Elizabeth and Summit, NJ, and glimpse a new forest in Ithaca, NY. As local forest-planting catches on, a key microclimate solution will have large impacts."
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eOgG72qhukQ&t=7s>

50,000 Trees Have Been Planted by The Sourland Conservancy!

From the Sourland Conservancy website: "The 90-square-mile Sourland region is home to the largest contiguous forest in Central New Jersey. It encompasses a complex ecosystem of forest, wetlands and grasslands. Its mosaic of habitats is home to an incredibly rich diversity of animal and plant species, many rare or endangered." Since 2020, however, over one million trees - nearly 20% of the region's total - have been lost to the emerald ash borer, and during that time, the Sourland Conservancy has planted 50,000 trees, with the 50,000th tree being planted this October.
<https://patch.com/new-jersey/princeton/50-000-trees-have-been-planted-sourland-conservancy>

DEP Releases Map Defining Legal Roads in Wharton State Forest

From the NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) press release: "Following a public engagement process spanning several years, coupled with careful review and consideration, the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection today [11/25/2024] released a map clearly delineating legal roads for driving vehicles within Wharton State Forest. Designated roads shown on the map, called the Wharton State Forest Visiting Vehicle Use Map, enhance the visitor experience and public safety by supporting State Park Police patrols and the ability to conduct routine maintenance and improving access for emergency response personnel. Further, the map serves to ensure the protection of wildlife habitat and rare plant species found within the forest. Additional signage will be installed to support the map and clarify areas for vehicle access and those closed to vehicles." According to the DEP website (available here: <https://www.nj.gov/dep/parksandforests/wharton/>), "the map is available as a georeferenced PDF, allowing drivers to use their mobile device to determine their location on the map in real time, including in areas with limited or no cellular service, using Avenza or a similar application."
https://dep.nj.gov/newsrel/24_0057/

LEAD REDUCTION IN HOUSEHOLDS

In addition to lead exposure being an issue in infants after birth, research has found that lead present in the mother's bloodstream before birth passes through the placenta, and in addition to impacting the baby, it can lead to health risks of the type found in maternal mortality and morbidity that is occurring in NJ. In some cases, the lead level in the bloodstream increases later in pregnancy, due to "remobilization" of lead from possible long-ago exposures that was locked in the mother's bones and is released as bones change to release calcium (and lead) during pregnancy and also breast-feeding. There are treatments that can address this issue, but there is no requirement to screen for lead during pregnancy. A bill (S3616/A4848) would require such screening if risk factors are found. The following two videos describe this issue:

Is Lead Exposure Adding to NJ's Maternal Deaths? - 6-minute news video:
<https://www.njspotlightnews.org/video/is-lead-exposure-adding-to-njs-maternal-deaths/>

Lead Screening Urged for Pregnant Moms, Newborns - 4-1/2-minute news video:
<https://www.njspotlightnews.org/video/lead-screening-urged-for-pregnant-moms-newborns/>

ENERGY EFFICIENCY

Murphy Administration Announces Approval of Triennium 2 Energy Efficiency Programs

The NJ Board of Public Utilities (BPU) approved the Triennium 2 (T2) energy efficiency programs proposed by NJ's seven electric and gas utilities. From the BPU press release: "Triennium 2 is the second cycle of the State's multi-year utility-run energy efficiency programs. Established by the Clean Energy Act of 2018, natural gas utilities must achieve energy savings of 0.75% and electric utilities must achieve energy savings of 2% of the average annual usage in the prior three years within five years of implementation of their energy efficiency programs.... To promote energy

equity, the Income-Qualified Program will have more capacity compared to T1 [Triennium 1] to provide comprehensive home energy assessments and offer health and safety, weatherization, HVAC, and other energy efficiency upgrades at no cost to eligible customers. More broadly, programs across the utilities' portfolios will continue to include enhanced incentives and more favorable financing terms for income-eligible customers. One notable addition in T2 is the standardization of the Direct Install model, including a Public Sector Direct Install program pathway, which will help support partners in labor in growing a local workforce that represents the diverse fabric of our state."

<https://www.nj.gov/bpu/newsroom/2024/approved/20241031.html>

POLLUTION

EPA Announces Historic \$400M Clean Ports Investment in New Jersey

From the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) press release: "Today [10/30/2024], the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency announced nearly \$400 million in Clean Ports Program funding for the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey and SeaStreak LLC. This transformative investment, part of President Biden's Investing in America agenda, will fund new zero-emission equipment and infrastructure, alongside comprehensive climate and air quality planning." The funds will primarily go to electrify port operations, as well as upgrading the SeaStreak ferry fleet to zero-emissions. A Community Advisory Committee to give local residents input on the plans will also receive funding. At the ports, funding will help replace cargo handling equipment, allow ships to plug in when they are in port, provide voucher incentives to truck drivers to upgrade trucks to zero-emission capability, and support workforce development and training. Details are in the press release, available here: <https://www.epa.gov/newsreleases/epa-announces-historic-400m-clean-ports-investment-new-jersey>. Also see the 5-minute news video, available here:

<https://www.njspotlightnews.org/video/nj-ports-getting-400m-to-cut-air-pollution/>.

EPA Announces Rowan University to Receive \$350,000 Grant to Help Businesses Prevent Pollution as Part of Investing in America Agenda

From the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) press release: "... Rowan University has been selected to receive nearly \$350,000 in grants to provide technical assistance to businesses to develop and adopt pollution prevention (P2) practices in local communities. Rowan University's project focuses on the reduction of specialty chemicals with high global warming potential. Many of these chemicals are used in the electric power industry and in microelectronics processing. Pollution prevention is achieved via reduction in greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, energy utilization, material use, hazardous wastes, as well as cost savings, and the innovative integration of all the above when taken together creates greener facilities that could serve as role models for allied industries to follow. Rowan University is currently working with one of the largest domestic providers of Sulfur Hexafluoride (SF6) for equipment used by electric utilities. Rowan also plans to coordinate with the Electric Power Research Institute to leverage the research that has been done in the past."

<https://www.epa.gov/newsreleases/epa-announces-rowan-university-receive-350000-award-grant-help-businesses-prevent>

DRINKING WATER-RELATED ISSUES (other than lead)

Hazard NJ Traces 'Forever Chemicals' From NJ Roots to Global Crisis

This 5-1/2-minute news video (available here: <https://www.njspotlightnews.org/video/hazard-nj-traces-forever-chemicals-from-nj-roots-to-global-crisis/>) describes Season 2 of "Hazard NJ," an NJ Spotlight News podcast series that examines serious pollution issues. "Season 2 dives deep into the crisis of toxic pollution caused by PFAS, or 'forever chemicals,' around New Jersey and beyond." Each episode is a 28-minute podcast, with transcript available on the site. Episode 1, "**First a Miracle, Then a Curse,**" is available here:

<https://www.njspotlightnews.org/podcast/hazard-nj-season-2-episode-1-first-a-miracle-then-a-curse>, and

Episode 2, "**Soaked in Foam,**" is available here: <https://www.njspotlightnews.org/podcast/hazard-nj-season-2-episode-2-soaked-in-foam/>.

OTHER



Ban Drilling in Large Swath of Coastal Waters, Dems Urge Biden

This article describes a letter (available here: <https://tinyurl.com/2czd5euw>) sent to President Biden from a number of U.S. Representatives, including NJ Representative Pallone, to use his authority under Section 12(a) of the Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act (OCSLA) to permanently withdraw unleased and at-risk areas of the Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) from fossil fuel development. This law has been used by a number of previous presidents, and efforts to overturn any of their previous withdrawals have not been upheld. See <https://www.njspotlightnews.org/2024/11/pallone-senior-house-democrats-urge-biden-disallow-oil-gas-drilling-in-swath-us-continental-shelf/>. Also see the article at <https://www.njspotlightnews.org/2024/11/trump-republicans-signal-keen-undo-weaken-environmental-energy-wildlife-regulations/> for thoughts on potential future environmental deregulation and programmatic impacts on NJ, especially wind energy and Superfund.

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.**
- 5. Advocating for a better understanding of the interconnected web of life by influencing education for people of all ages, including public school curriculum of K-12 students.**

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.