



A newsletter focused on environmental justice-related events and actions specifically affecting New Jersey.

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

EJTF and CONGREGATIONAL ACTIVITIES - Doing Our Part!

- EJTF members and UU Congregational members made their presence known at a number of the rallies and protests taking place in NJ in February. Pictured below at rallies in Trenton and Camden, NJ are: **Unitarian Universalist Ocean County Congregation (UUOCC) members Tom Ragan** (with "Democracy Defender" sign), **Bob Ehrmann** (with "Resist" sign and next to "We're Here For You" sign) and **UUOCC and EJTF member Peggy Middaugh** (with "Vought NO" sign). More activities are shown on [p. 2](#).



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

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

MARCH 2025 (with hyperlinks to details on the following pages)						
Sun.	Mon.	Tues.	Wed.	Thurs.	Fri.	Sat.
						1 New Jersey Youth Climate Convergence - 9:30 a.m.
2	3 "Energy Capital, Discursive Power and the Shaping of Energy Futures" - 12:00 p.m. Comments Due: NJBPU Net Metering Policies for Class I Renewable Energy Systems Policy	4 "New Jersey at a Crossroads: How and Where Do We Grow From Here?" - 8:30 a.m. *NJ Plan Mtg. - Camden County - 6:00 p.m.	5 LWVNJ - "Protests and Rallies: Know Your Rights" - 6:00 p.m.	6 "Trump's Second Act: Power, Resistance, and the Limits of Governance" - 1:15 p.m. *NJ Plan Mtg. - Hunterdon County - 6:00 p.m.	7	8 36th Annual Pinelands Short Course - 9:00 a.m.
9	10 NJ Climate Superfund Act Assembly Lobby Day - 12:00 p.m. "From Individual Behavior to Collective Action: Behavior Change in the Climate Crisis" - 2:55 p.m. *NJ Plan Mtg. - Passaic County - 2:00 p.m.	11 *NJ Plan Mtg. - Burlington County - 6:00 p.m.	12 DRBC 1Q Business Meeting - 10:30 a.m. LWVNJ - "Deep Canvassing" - 6:00 p.m.	13 *NJ Plan Mtg. - Ocean County - 9:30 a.m. NJ Community Forestry Council - 10:00 a.m. *NJ Plan Mtg. - Atlantic County - 5:00 p.m. NJBPU Energy Master Plan Zoom (see https://tinyurl.com/39ex22m9)	14	15 NJ Forestry Association 50th Annual Meeting - "A Land Ethic for the 21st Century: Exploring the Interconnectedness of People and the Land" - 8:30 a.m.
16	17	18 LWVNJ - "Understanding the State Budget Process" - 6:00 p.m.	19 "Microplastics in Your Water" - 3:00 p.m.	20	21 "Sustaining Innovation in New Jersey Climate Policy - Past, Present and Future" - 8:00 a.m.	22 World Water Day - The Watershed Institute - 10:00 a.m. OR - 12:30 p.m.
23	24 *NJ Plan Mtg. - Middlesex County - 6:00 p.m.	25 *NJ Plan Mtg. - Gloucester County - 6:00 p.m. Elders Climate Action March National Call - 7:00 p.m.	26 *NJ Plan Mtg. - Cape May County - 2:00 p.m. LWVNJ - "Municipal Resolutions & Ordinances" - 6:00 p.m.	27 Comments Due: NJ Draft Energy Master Plan (see https://tinyurl.com/39ex22m9)	28 *NJ Plan Mtg. - Sussex County - 6:00 p.m.	29 2025 Watershed Congress 8:30 a.m.
30	31 *NJ Plan Mtg. - Monmouth County - 6:30 p.m. Comments Due: NJDEP 2025/2026 Forest Management Activities in Sparta Mountain WMA Forest Stewardship Plan	<p>See box on p. 4 for items with open comment dates or multiple dates, and recurring events series.</p> <p>*NJ State Development and Redevelopment Plan Public Meeting (see p. 4).</p>				

Items with Open Comment Dates or Multiple Dates, and Recurring Events Series

Preliminary Draft of the NJ State Development and Redevelopment Plan - Open for Public Comment

From the NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP): "The NJ State Planning Commission recently unveiled their preliminary update to the NJ State Development and Redevelopment Plan [available here: <https://tinyurl.com/4ke74wfx>]. The preliminary update provides a roadmap to how NJ will continue to address critical challenges that the state faces, including climate change, equity, housing affordability, infrastructure modernization, and economic development. Residents can provide feedback on the draft plan by filling out [a] survey [available here: <https://tinyurl.com/mu52n7kv>] or by emailing comments directly to **stateplan.comments@sos.nj.gov**." Public comments can be submitted at any time during the Cross-Acceptance process, which culminates with the State Planning Commission meeting (anticipated to be in December of 2025) at which the vote will take place to adopt the final version of the Plan. To ensure adequate time for comments to be considered, however, the Office of Planning Advocacy recommends submitting them by April 16, while the county public information meetings are still taking place (see below). Additional information about the plan is available here: <https://www.nj.gov/state/bac/planning/state-plan/development/index.shtml>.

NJ State Development and Redevelopment Plan Public Meetings

The State Planning Commission is hosting public meetings in the 21 NJ counties between February 12 and April 16, 2025. The purpose of these public meetings is to educate the public on how the Cross-acceptance process will work and to give members of the public; state, local, and county officials; and all other interested parties an opportunity to learn about, comment on, and discuss the proposed changes to the Draft Preliminary State Development and Redevelopment Plan. The schedule for public meetings in March and April is available here: <https://tinyurl.com/2r3f8pkz>.

"NJ Atlas of Disaster" Monthly Speaker Series

Rebuild by Design has started a monthly event series, "offering an in-depth look at the updated findings from the NJ Atlas of Disaster [available here: <https://rebuildbydesign.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/NJ-Atlas-of-Disaster.pdf>], along with insights from guest speakers who are leading efforts to address climate challenges in New Jersey. Each session explores localized climate impacts, the economic and social costs of inaction, and strategies for building a more resilient future. The series is designed to engage policymakers, community leaders, and the public in conversations about equitable climate adaptation and infrastructure funding. Resilience experts and local leaders, will join each month to share their experiences and solutions. Sessions take place during the end of each month and are open to all who are interested in advancing New Jersey's climate resilience." Additional information, including descriptions of sessions and registration to receive notices of future events, is available here: <https://rebuildbydesign.org/nj-speaker-series/>. Past sessions include: "Hoboken's Innovative Approach to Tackling The Challenges of Heavy Rainfall" and "NJDEP's Work on Building Resilience in New Jersey." See [p. 11](#) for a link to the Hoboken-related video.

NJDEP's Bureau of Sustainability "Sustainability Speakers Series"

The NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) Sustainability Speaker Series (S3) "provides a forum to share ideas and strategies to expand social, environmental and economic sustainability within New Jersey. S3 brings together sustainability experts and NJ leaders from diverse sectors to discuss how organizations can incorporate sustainability into business decisions. All events are planned and managed by the Bureau of Sustainability. S3 is open to everyone; businesses, colleges, government officials, schools, nonprofits and residents. Each S3 meeting has a unique sustainability related theme, and features presentations from experts and NJ leaders. If you are interested in participating in S3, you may email **Sustainability@dep.nj.gov** or sign up here: <https://dep.nj.gov/sustainability/outreach-and-education/sustainability-speaker-series-s3/>. That website also includes information and supporting materials about previous events. See [p. 11](#) for a description and link to the January 2025 event, "Government Sustainability (including Decarbonization)."

FUTURE EVENTS

New Jersey Youth Climate Convergence 3/1/2025, 9:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. New Brunswick, NJ - In-person

Food & Water Watch (**an EJTF partner**) is hosting the New Jersey Youth Climate Convergence on 3/1/2025 "in partnership with a growing number of youth and student-driven climate organizations across the state.... This will be a day full of educational programming, with workshops about strategic organizing training, environmental justice, and how we're pressuring New Jersey lawmakers to take action on climate change.... This event is geared towards high schoolers, college students, graduate students, and other young people. All are welcome, especially brand-new youth activists!" Additional information and the link to register are available here: <https://www.mobilize.us/fww/event/748770/>.

"Energy Capital, Discursive Power and the Shaping of Energy Futures" - Webinar 3/3/2025, 12:00 p.m. - 1:00 p.m.

This talk, part of the Dartmouth "New Energy Series," will be presented by Dr. Megan Egler, Postdoctoral Fellow, Institute of Integrated Energy Systems, University of Victoria. "Whether it's the Premier of Canada's oil country reviving a decades-old slogan to portray climate action akin to people 'freezing in the dark', or a solar developer leveraging the harmful legacies of coal mining in Appalachia to promote new solar projects, powerful narratives are being wielded to shape energy futures - and often in ways that reinforce existing power dynamics. Drawing on her research and experiences in historical fossil fuel producing regions across Canada and the US, Dr. Egler's talk will explore how energy capital exploits the people, histories, and landscapes of these regions to control narrative and define the terms of energy's future." Additional information and the link to register are available on this webpage: <https://irving.dartmouth.edu/news-events/news-events/new-energy-series>.

NJBPU Net Metering Policies for Class I Renewable Energy Systems Policy Comments Due 3/3/2025

The NJ Board of Public Utilities (BPU) held a Technical Conference for stakeholders to present their perspectives on possible designs of a net

energy metering ("NEM") successor policy in NJ. "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 Technical Conference was held 2/10/2025; the presentations from the Technical Conference will be taken into consideration when the BPU develops a shortlist of potential NEM successor policy options in the subsequent phase of this stakeholder process. **The deadline for comments on this matter is 5:00 p.m. on 3/3/2025.** A link to the BPU Notice, which gives additional detailed information about the Conference and what it covered; the link to post comments; and a link to public comments previously made by "Vote Solar" are all available here:

<https://tinyurl.com/3rpbazdz>. The video of the 2/10/2025 Technical Conference is available here: <https://tinyurl.com/ycx4cawf>, and the BPU presentation the Technical Conference is available here: <https://tinyurl.com/265xxefj>.

"New Jersey at a Crossroads: How and Where Do We Grow From Here?" 3/4/2025, 8:30 a.m. - 1:45 p.m. New Brunswick, NJ - In-person

"Rutgers Business School Center for Real Estate, in conjunction with Sills Cummis & Gross P.C., presents its second annual Winter Symposium: 'New Jersey at a Crossroads: How and Where Do We Grow from Here?' Hear from distinguished industry experts on how our land-constrained state can retain and attract residents and businesses while modernizing its stressed transportation and utility infrastructure, addressing housing affordability, recognizing climate change, and reconciling regional planning and time-honored local home rule, among other challenges." Additional information, including the link to register (**\$175 registration**) is available here:

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/new-jersey-at-a-crossroads-how-and-where-do-we-grow-from-here-tickets-1111885482409?aff=oddtcreator>

**"Trump's Second Act: Power, Resistance,
and the Limits of Governance"**
3/6/2025, 1:15 p.m. - 2:15 p.m. - Webinar

This webinar is sponsored by the Security and Sustainability Forum (SSF) and will be presented by "one of the most respected voices in sustainability, energy, and societal resilience,.... Richard Heinberg, Senior Fellow of Post Carbon Institute and author of many award-winning books on energy and the environment." This is the third in the SSF's *Trump 2.0 Deregulatory Agenda Series*. "The 2024 presidential election has ushered in a political landscape that will shape the nation's trajectory for years. Donald Trump's return to the White House raises urgent questions about the future of democracy, governance, and institutional resilience in the United States. How will power be wielded? What are the implications for policy, social cohesion, and global stability?" Registration is available here: <https://register.gotowebinar.com/register/4878324630320992863>. Links to recordings of the first two webinars in the series are available on [p. 11](#).

36th Annual Pinelands Short Course
3/8/2025, 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
Galloway Township, NJ - In-person

The "Pinelands Short Course," a much-touted daylong event featuring educational presentations that explore the unique history, ecology, and culture of the Pinelands, is being held on 3/8/2025. This year's Pinelands Short Course will feature 37 presentations, including 24 new programs that will explore the region's unique history, ecology, culture, and music. The Short Course is hosted by Stockton University for the NJ Pinelands Commission. Registration is now open, and those interested are encouraged to register as soon possible because the course is very popular, seating is limited, and registration (**\$60**) is first-come first-serve. Additional information is available here: https://www.nj.gov/pinelands/home/news/PSC_PinelandsShortCoursePressRelease2025%20--%20FINAL.pdf and the course schedule, descriptions of sessions, and the link to register are available here: <https://stockton.edu/aging/events/spring2025pinelandscourse.html>.

NJ Climate Superfund Act
Assembly Lobby Day
3/10/2025, 12:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.
Trenton, NJ - In-person

This event is sponsored by EmpowerNJ, a coalition of which **UUFANJ is a member**. "It's been [over] two months since the NJ Climate Superfund Act received its first hearing and vote in the New Jersey Legislature, when it passed the Senate Environment Committee on Dec. 12. Now, it looks like this crucial legislation might start moving in the Assembly, and we plan to be there to see it through! The Assembly Environment Committee is holding a meeting on March 10, and with 4 out of 7 members on the Committee as sponsors of the NJ Climate Superfund Act, there's simply no good reason it shouldn't be heard and passed out of Committee on that date. Join us on March 10th to call on the Assembly Environment Committee and the NJ legislature as a whole to pass the NJ Climate Superfund Act. While the main event is in the afternoon, **you can also join us early at 10:30 AM** to lobby legislators outside of the morning committees!

From EmpowerNJ: "The NJ Climate Superfund Act (S3545/A4696) would make New Jersey more affordable by shifting the costs of climate destruction from consumers, taxpayers and ratepayers to NJ's largest most significant corporate polluters most responsible for the emissions causing the damage (oil, gas, and coal producers and refiners, think the Exxons of the world) and providing roughly \$1 billion / year for municipal resiliency and mitigation projects to build back stronger and reduce the risk of more climate destruction in the future." Additional information and the link to RSVP are available here: <https://actionnetwork.org/events/nj-climate-superfund-act-assembly-lobby-day>.

**"From Individual Behavior to Collective
Action: Behavior Change in the Climate
Crisis" - Webinar**
3/10/2025, 2:55 p.m. - 4:10 p.m.

This webinar, part of the Cornell Atkinson Center for Sustainability "Perspectives on the Climate Change Challenge" Seminars, will be presented by Dr. Neil Lewis, Jr., "a Nancy and Peter Meinig Family Investigator in the Life Sciences, and Associate Professor of Communication, Medicine, and Public Policy at Cornell University and Weill

Cornell Medicine. His research examines how people's social contexts and identities influence how they make sense of the world around them, and the implications of those meaning-making processes for their motivation to pursue a variety of goals in life." Abstract: "Climate change is fundamentally a collective problem - the issue will affect everyone in some way. Because of this, behavioral scientists have studied a variety of ways to get people from a broad range of backgrounds to engage with the issue of climate change; they have done this in attempts to mitigate (or adapt to) the climate crisis. Some have taken individual-focused approaches that target individual level behavioral changes, others have taken more collective approaches - attempting to mobilize large groups of people. In this talk [Dr. Lewis] will present research on the efficacy of these different strategies, and their implications for interventions and policies to address the climate crisis." Additional information and the Zoom link are available here: <https://events.cornell.edu/event/neil-lewis-jr-from-individual-behavior-to-collective-action-behavior-change-in-the-climate-crisis>.

**Delaware River Basin Commission (DRBC)
First Quarter 2025 Business Meeting
3/12/2025, 10:30 a.m. - via Zoom**

The Delaware River Basin Commission (DRBC) will hold its first-quarter business meeting on Wednesday, 3/12/2025. 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://tinyurl.com/57tp43ua>.

**NJ Community Forestry Council
3/13/2025, 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. Links to additional information, including how to join virtually, are available here: <https://dep.nj.gov/event/nj-community-forestry-council-4/>

**NJ Forestry Association 50th Annual Meeting - "A Land Ethic for the 21st Century: Exploring the Interconnectedness of People and the Land"
3/15/2025, 8:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.**

Although primarily geared toward those who are connected to forests, forestry and stewardship in their employment, the meeting will include the following topics, which may be of interest:

- Intentional (prescribed) fire as part of good stewardship
- Adapting restoration work to the local social, cultural, economic and ecological values
- The costs and benefits of 'holistic' resource management
- Informing and educating legislators and rulemakers to support science-based stewardship
- NJ Forest Update
- Wildfire Risk in NJ
- Programs for Forest Landowners
- Legislative and Regulatory Concerns.

Additional information, including links to the agenda and to register (**\$95**, which includes the full program plus a continental breakfast and luncheon) are available here:

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/njfas-50th-annual-meeting-march-15-2025-rutgers-university-registration-1063871421059>.

**"Microplastics in Your Water" - Webinar
3/19/2025, 3:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.**

In this webinar, "Join Food & Water Watch Researcher Natalie Balbuena and Public Water for All Campaign Director Mary Grant to learn about microplastics in your water. We'll talk about the human health risks we've found and what we're

working on to help communities test and remove these contaminants." The link to register is available here:

<https://www.mobilize.us/fww/event/752027/>.

"Sustaining Innovation in New Jersey Climate Policy - Past, Present and Future"

3/21/2025, 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Piscataway, NJ - In-person

This Rutgers "New Jersey Climate Change Resource Center Conference" will feature "a day-long dialogue regarding New Jersey's state climate policies, where New Jersey has to go to reach its climate goals, challenges to reaching those goals, lessons we can learn from others, and opportunities that we might explore with leading local and national experts." Additional information, including the agenda and registration link (**\$100**) is available here:

<https://njccrc.rutgers.edu>.

World Water Day - The Watershed Institute
3/22/2025, 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. session

or

12:30 p.m. - 2:30 p.m. session

Pennington, NJ - In-person

These two identical "World Water Day" sessions are sponsored by The Watershed Institute. "Each session will offer games, explorations in our lab, water-themed arts and crafts, a vernal pool exploration hike, visits with critters that live in our water, and so much more! Try a sample from our Water Bar - small cups filled with drinking water from local towns and wells - and vote on which one you think tastes the best. Learn about the importance of protecting our local water ways and the various actions you can take to keep our water clean, safe and healthy. World Water Day is an annual United Nations event, started in 1993, focusing on the importance of water. This year the UN is focused on saving glaciers." Additional information and registration for the 10:00 a.m. session are available here:

<https://tinyurl.com/bdvxa7zr> and for the 12:30

session are available here:

<https://tinyurl.com/yc7rscbt>.

Elders Climate Action March National Call and Action Party – Topic To Be Announced
3/25/2025, 7:00 p.m. - 8:15 p.m. - Online

On the 4th Tuesday of the month, the Elders Climate Action (ECA) regularly holds a one-hour National Call with a speaker, and a 15-minute "Climate Action Now" (CAN) App Action Party after the speaker. The CAN app, "gives individuals the ability to take planet-saving actions from their phone in seconds." The topic and speaker for March will be available along with additional information, including the registration link and a QR code to set up the CAN app in advance, here: https://www.eldersclimateaction.org/event/nc_mar2025/.

2025 Watershed Congress
3/29/2025, 8:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.
Reading, PA - In-person

The Watershed Congress is presented by the Delaware Riverkeeper Network and its partner organizations. Unlike other years, which were presented in a hybrid format, this year is all in person. "The Watershed Congress has evolved since 1998 to advance the best available information and techniques for protecting and restoring watersheds. The focus on networking across disciplines means that the Watershed Congress melds science, policy, and practical applications into one program. As a result, the annual Watershed Congress is a highly anticipated event for people interested in understanding, protecting, and restoring their local streams." Links to access details of the event, including program information, and to purchase tickets (**\$75**) are available here:

<https://www.classy.org/event/2025-watershed-congress/e646213>.

Comment Period Open for NJDEP
2025/2026 Forest Management Activities
in Sparta Mountain WMA Forest
Stewardship Plan
Comments Due 3/31/2025

As announced by the NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP): "In accordance with the 2021 Addendum [available here: [8](https://dep.nj.gov/njfw/wp-</p></div><div data-bbox=)

[content/uploads/njfw/sparta-fsp-addendum-final-7-9-21.pdf](https://dep.nj.gov/njfw/sparta-fsp-addendum-final-7-9-21.pdf)], forest management activities planned for next year (2025/26) is (sic) now open for comment. **Please email comments to sharon.petzinger@dep.nj.gov by March 31, 2025.** As outlined in the 2017 Sparta Mountain WMA Forest Stewardship Plan [available here: https://dep.nj.gov/njfw/wp-content/uploads/njfw/smwma_approved_forest_stewardship_plan.pdf], forest management activities in the form of a modified seed tree prescription will be implemented on 10 acres within Stand 18 next fall/winter (November 2025 – March 2026). This prescription will likely retain around 20 sq. ft. of basal area per acre across the 10-acre site to allow for the growth of young oak and hickory trees, blackberries, sedges, and a variety of other native shrub and sapling plants. This will also create breeding and/or foraging habitat for the 80 different bird species that have been observed using other managed sites on Sparta Mountain WMA. Trees to be retained will likely be the co-dominant or dominant size classes that are of good vigor for longevity. In some instances we may retain clusters of trees – some of which may not fit the above description if they have high wildlife value (i.e. stems with advanced decay, cavities or exfoliating bark). Desirable trees that are underrepresented in the area (e.g. white oak and black cherry) may also be retained for diversity purposes. Additionally, white ash stems that do not already exhibit characteristics of Emerald Ash Borer infestation may be preserved to retain genetic diversity in the event those individuals are resistant to the insect." Additional information, including a map, is available here: <https://dep.nj.gov/njfw/news-2025-01-31-comment-period-open-for-forest-management-activities-on-sparta-mountain-wma/>. [Note: EJTF is following the lead of the NJ Highlands Coalition on this issue - see the article, including a link to a video, on [p. 19](#).]

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 March 2025 sessions are listed in the next column; descriptions of these and future sessions are available here: <https://www.lwvnj.org/training>.

LWVNJ - "Protests and Rallies: Know Your Rights" - via Zoom 3/5/2025, 6:00 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.

"Activism happens at the ballot box, in the State House, and in the streets. Join us and ACLU-NJ for this informative and critical training to help ensure you know your rights as a protestor." Registration is available here: <https://tinyurl.com/uuz9bwkb>.

LWVNJ - "Deep Canvassing" - via Zoom 3/12/2025, 6:00 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.

"Looking to take your voter outreach to the next level? Join us for a discussion on the most impactful form of voter outreach – canvassing. In 2025, the League is partnering on an ambitious nonpartisan campaign to reach 1 million voters ahead of the November general election. Join us to learn how you can get involved in the campaign and sharpen your canvassing skills." Registration is available here: <https://tinyurl.com/2pajf44v>.

LWVNJ - "Understanding the State Budget Process" - via Zoom 3/18/2025, 6:00 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.

"Each year the Executive and Legislative Branches work together to approve a new state budget and determine how the state's resources will be allocated. This process is complex and can be difficult to follow. During this training experts will walk you through how government agencies and the Office of Management and Budget collaborate to determine policy and program priorities, review important fiscal deadlines, and help you understand the ins-and-outs of this important government exercise." Registration is available here: <https://tinyurl.com/3rv7f5e4>.

LWVNJ - "Municipal Resolutions & Ordinances" - via Zoom 3/26/2025, 6:00 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.

"Looking for ways to make a difference in your community? Municipal resolutions are a tool that activists can use to show support for larger policy changes. In this training, we will discuss what legislation looks like at the local level, what

municipal resolutions are, and how you can use these tools to build support for grassroots organizing campaigns. Participants will be encouraged to get to work right away by passing resolutions in support of the Climate Superfund Act!" Registration is available here: <https://tinyurl.com/3d5ywfvy>.



**Environmental Voter
Project Informational
Webinar
4/9/2025, 7:00 p.m.
- via Zoom**

EJTF member Nadine Sapirman, a supporter of the Environmental Voter Project (EVP), has arranged with its Executive Director to hold an information webinar for NJ Unitarian Universalists. The EVF is a non-partisan organization whose mission is to "identify inactive environmentalists and transform them into consistent voters to build the power of the environmental movement." They do this through scientifically tested messaging in phone calls, postcards, targeted online ads and in-person canvassing. This webinar will review what the Environmental Voter Project is, how they identify and mobilize voters, and ways that UUs can support their important work. The EVP has just started working in NJ, which is great news for the state, with a gubernatorial election this year. Details, including the Zoom registration, will be provided in the April EJTF newsletter. Additional information about the Environmental Voter Project is available here: <https://www.environmentalvoter.org>.

VIDEOS+ OF PAST EVENTS

**Eco-Logic Radio Show:
"Save Money - Save Energy: Hypermiling,
Power Strips, & More"
- Recording of Radio Show**

The Eco-Logic radio/internet program on WBAI (co-hosted by EJTF member Sally Gellert) aired this recent show, "Save Money - Save Energy: Hypermiling, Power Strips, & More" related to EJTF's goals. "It wasn't only individual choices that got us into this climate crisis, and so

individual choices alone won't get us out of it. Nonetheless, there are things we can do as individuals to burn less fossil fuels and these things just happen to save us money, which gives us discretionary income to use wherever we like. On this Eco-Logic, we [highlighted] energy-saving tips for your car and your home--things you can do right away or soon.... This episode [had] Wyldon Fishman, President and founder of NY Solar Energy Society, which does educational outreach to families needing to reduce energy usage, talking about great tips everyone can use to save money, time, and energy, and our own Sally Gellert talking about hypermiling and other ways to save money when driving." 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>. The recording of this show is available here: <https://www.wbai.org/archive/program/episode/?id=56013>.

**"Is Cleantech's Future 'Clear or Cloudy'
under the Inflation Reduction Act?"
- Video of Webinar**

This Elders Climate Action (ECA) webinar was presented by climate and energy journalist, Amena Saiyid. "There are understandable concerns for the future of the environment in general, and climate in particular. While it may be too early to know to what extent the Inflation Reduction Act will be impacted, there are meaningful reasons to retain hope.... Since it was passed the Inflation Reduction Act's (IRA) clean energy and cleantech provisions are boosting the economies of mostly Republican-led states, according to a Cipher analysis of Clean Investment Monitor data. Ideally, climate change should be a priority, but practically voters and the general public give priority to economic considerations. Protecting the IRA accomplishes both economic and environmental objectives.... Amena [provided] the news and the latest data analysis covering the technological innovations needed to combat climate change and transform our global energy systems." The video is available here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aXD1amE4PM>.

"Guardrails of Governance: Legal and Administrative Resilience in Trump 2.0" **- Video of Webinar**

"This is the second webinar in the Security and Sustainability Forum's 'Navigating the Trump 2.0 Deregulatory Agenda' series [the video of the first webinar in the series is available here: <https://vimeo.com/1040547249>]. It delve[d] into potential risks to the rule of law and administrative governance in the newly elected Trump 2.0 administration, particularly in light of recent Supreme Court rulings affirming presidential immunity for official acts.... This panel explore[d] the guardrails, checks and balances that the Trump administration will confront.... Attendees [gained] insights into actionable strategies for federal, state, and local officials, public interest groups, and citizens to preserve institutional integrity and protect democratic governance during changing times. The webinar was a collaboration between the Security and Sustainability Forum, George Washington University's [GWU] Law School, and the GWU Environmental and Energy Management Institute." The video is available here: <https://tinyurl.com/5a97mya4>.

"Hoboken's Innovative Approach to Tackling The Challenges of Heavy Rainfall" **- Video of Webinar**

This is the first session of a monthly event series (described on [p. 4](#)) sponsored by Rebuild by Design, which offers "an in-depth look at the updated findings from the NJ Atlas of Disaster [available here: <https://rebuildbydesign.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/NJ-Atlas-of-Disaster.pdf>], along with insights from guest speakers who are leading efforts to address climate challenges in New Jersey." This speaker event featured "Hoboken's adaptation infrastructure, with a deep dive on innovative funding strategies for driving climate resilience and job growth, and the New Jersey Atlas of Disaster. Featuring: 'Hoboken's Innovative Approach to Tackling The Challenges of Heavy Rainfall' presented by Caleb Stratton, Chief Resilience Officer, City of Hoboken and 'The NJ Atlas of Disaster' presented by Amy Chester, Director, Rebuild by Design." The video is available here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w2TrJi7uPWI>.

"Government Sustainability (including Decarbonization) - Video of Webinar

During this NJ Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) Sustainable Speaker Series (S3) (described on [p. 4](#)) meeting "registrants learned about decarbonization and general sustainability initiatives being implemented by government agencies and community organizations. Stephen Myers and Daniel Clark from NJDEP's Bureau of Climate Change & Clean Energy presented on the NJDEP's Lead by Example Initiative, Lauren Skowronski from Sustainable Jersey explained Sustainable Jersey's Regional Hubs, and Peter Fried from the Madison Green Team presented on the decarbonization efforts taking place in Madison, NJ." The video is available here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-km8TVyxiEE>. Additionally, links to the agenda and presentation materials are available here: <https://tinyurl.com/ujpj8py6>.

Option Green: "The True Cost of Fashion" **- Video of Webinar**

This event was part of the Option Green series co-sponsored by the East Brunswick Public Library and Friends of the East Brunswick Environmental Commission. "Who makes our clothes, and where and how they are made are all ethical questions related to the almost three trillion-dollar-a-year global fashion industry. How has our love for buying cheap clothing come at a high cost to the people who make it and the planet? In this talk, we [examined] solutions for a more sustainable future for the global industry, now in a crisis, through innovation, policy reforms, and conscious consumerism." The talk was presented by Kathleen Webber, "an associate professor of journalism and professional writing at The College of New Jersey. She has been a freelance journalist since 1998 writing about sustainability in the global fashion industry, innovation in creating circular economies and domestic manufacturing." The video is available here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3rdrak8iR5o> and a resource list is available here: <https://tinyurl.com/2vw46x23>.

"Thriving through Change: Opportunities for Local Climate Action"

- Video of Webinar

This webinar presented by the Association of NJ Environmental Commissions (ANJEC) featured two resilience planners from Arcadis, which is one of the NJ Department of Environmental Protection's (DEP) consultants on the Resilient NJ program. The webinar covered Community Engagement and Risk Communication, and had the following goals:

- "Understand why risk communication is an important part of resilience;
- Become familiar with best practices in wide-spread and effective communication of climate change and climate-related hazards;
- Feel empowered to take action in your community; and
- Learn about ideas for events and initiatives to communicate risk and reach out to the community regarding climate change. The video is available here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EXIWmudGU4Q>.

"Navigating Climate Information for Effective Policy-Making"

- Video of Webinar

Although this overall Environmental and Energy Study Institute (EESI) briefing series, "Congressional Climate Camp," is geared toward the federal Congress, the topics being covered in this briefing may also be applied to more local policies. In the briefing, EESI reviewed "climate science, cutting-edge innovations, and the role of the legislative process in climate mitigation and adaptation.... The briefing [covered] climate concepts and terminology - from types of greenhouse gases to renewable energy technologies - to help you identify policy solutions at the intersection of these issue areas. At this briefing, panelists will showcase tools - like the EN-ROADS simulator, co-developed by MIT Sloan and Climate Interactive - that staff can use to easily digest climate data and generate policy ideas." The video is available here:

<https://www.eesi.org/briefings/view/012925camp>.

"An Overview of Technical Note 190-12: Conservation Activities in Organic Farming Systems Part 1: Soil Health, Climate and Nutrients" - Video of Webinar

This U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) webinar covered "select topics from Technical Note 12 - Conservation Activities in Organic Farming Systems [this very comprehensive - but easy-to-understand - document is available here:

<https://tinyurl.com/3ehzz45h>] - which provides a wealth of knowledge needed to effectively support the unique requirements of organic producers. Tech Note 12 helps organic producers articulate the conservation benefits of their practices.... Part one of this webinar [covered] the areas of soil health, climate, and nutrient management as they relate to organic management. The webinar provide[d] detailed scientific information in these areas as they relate to organic production and give real-world examples that illustrate how conservation activities have been implemented." Additional information, including how to register to view the video, is available here:

<https://conservationwebinars.net/webinars/an-overview-of-technical-note-190-12-conservation-activities-in-organic-farming-systems-part-1-soil-health-climate-and-nutrients/>.

"Challenges and Opportunities of Scaling Nature-based Solutions for Climate Adaptation" - Video of Webinar

This webinar was sponsored by the U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Climate and Social Interactions Division. "Nature-based solutions including green infrastructure (NbS/GI) have been implemented for some time as a multifunctional, decentralized strategy for stormwater management. Locally, the benefits and co-benefits of these systems are well quantified. However, to address regional climate risks, NbS/GI need to be upscaled in non-trivial ways across urbanized landscapes. This upscaling poses several formidable physical, economic, and collaboration-related challenges. Addressing these challenges represents one of the front lines in advancing comprehensive resilience and sustainability planning. This webinar episode [featured] how Franco Montalto, ... [of the] Consortium for Climate Risk in the Urban Northeast (CCRUN), has leveraged funding.... to

advance science to support local action and adaptation at a broader scale." Additional information, the video, and the link to presentation materials are available here: <https://cpo.noaa.gov/challenges-and-opportunities-of-scaling-nature-based-solutions-for-climate-adaptation/>.

"Can AI Help Reduce Emissions of Greenhouse Gases?" - Video of Webinar

The Center on Global Energy Policy (CGEP) at Columbia University's School of International and Public Affairs presented this webinar: Can AI Help Reduce Emissions of Greenhouse Gases? "A new 17-chapter volume by CGEP Inaugural Fellow David Sandalow and a team of 24 co-authors explores that question. in a 90-minute virtual discussion. The Artificial Intelligence for Climate Change Mitigation Roadmap (Second Edition) provides introductions to both AI and climate change, examines the potential for AI to help reduce emissions in eight sectors (including the power sector, transport sector, and manufacturing), and analyzes crosscutting issues including the role of large language models. The Roadmap also explores the rapidly growing power demand for AI and the extent to which computing operations for AI will increase emissions." This webinar provided a presentation of the Roadmap by the Roadmap's principal co-authors. The video is available here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RWK4yAeWdzY>.

"Empowering Vulnerable Communities Facing the Consequences of Climate (Action)" - Video of Webinar

This webinar, part of the Cornell Atkinson Center for Sustainability "Perspectives on the Climate Change Challenge" Seminars, was presented by Dr. Michael Charles (Diné/Navajo), an Assistant Professor in the Department of Biological and Environmental Engineering at Cornell University, an Affiliate Faculty of the American Indian and Indigenous Studies Program, and a Faculty Fellow of the Cornell Atkinson Center for Sustainability. "Climate change poses threats to all life on our planet but the consequences do not impact all communities equally. With the complexity of the technological, political, and economic systems that humankind has built around ourselves, our solutions to address climate change also redistribute risks disproportionately. In this

seminar, we [dove] into the trade-offs that must be considered to make 'sustainable' decisions and how information can be used to advocate for the safety and growth of vulnerable communities. Particularly, we [talked] about the role Indigenous communities can play in the transition towards renewable energy, food sovereignty, and just research governance." The video is available here: <https://www.atkinson.cornell.edu/media/empowering-vulnerable-communities-facing-the-consequences-of-climate-action/>.

NEWS RELATED TO EJTF ISSUES [covering 1/26/2025 – 2/25/2025]

ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

NJDEP 2025 Environmental Justice Advisory Council Workplan Now Available

The NJ Department of Environmental Protection's (DEP) Environmental Justice Advisory Council (EJAC) recently published its 2025 Workplan. From the DEP: "The council, representing broad-based constituents and geography, serves as an advisory board to the Commissioner and provides a valuable forum for discussions about integrating environmental justice into DEP's programs, policies, and activities. The workplan summarizes projects that members will prioritize in 2025, working within established Environmental Education and Communications, Air, Land, and Water Working Groups." The workplan is available here: <https://dep.nj.gov/ej/ej-council/>.

NJDEP EJMAP Tool Update

The NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) announced an update of certain parameters of its Environmental Justice Mapping, Assessment and Protection (EJMAP) tool (available here: <https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/548632a2351b41b8a0443cfc3a9f4ef6>) that is used for any permit application that is subject to the NJ EJ Law. Permit applications submitted on or after 1/31/25 must use the new stressor data layer for analysis. The DEP updated the EJMAP with new Overburden Community(OBC)/Adjacent block group (ABG) determinations based on the 2023 American Community Survey (ACS) and any new stressor

data made publicly available since its 7/31/24, release. [Note: the Federal Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool (CEJST) was taken down from the federal website on 1/20/2025; a version of it that has been restored by scientists is available here: <https://tinyurl.com/5t2fhxbs>. The scientists' website states, "We are working on an overhaul, but in the meantime some links and text may incorrectly suggest that this site is affiliated with the US Government."]

<https://dep.nj.gov/wp-content/uploads/ej/docs/njdep-ej-map-update-notice-january-25.pdf>

Opinion: Power to the People - How to Make Energy More Reliable and Accessible

In this piece, Philip Odonkor, an assistant professor in the Department of Systems and Enterprises and the director of the Design Informatics Lab at Stevens Institute of Technology, addresses "energy insecurity" and inequality, and the future potential of decentralized systems to "give communities control over their energy destinies."

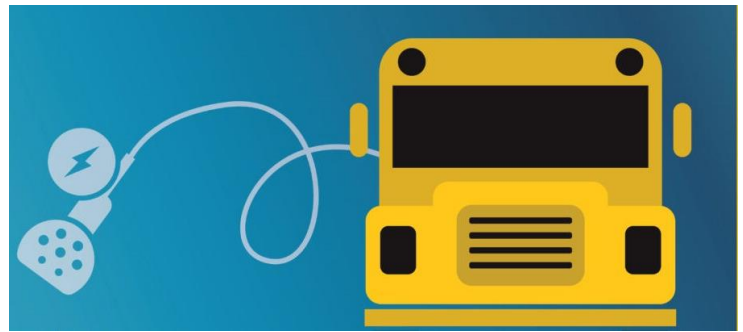
<https://www.njspotlightnews.org/2025/01/philip-odonkor-op-ed-decentralize-community-centered-energy-systems-end-energy-insecurity/>

ELECTRIC VEHICLES & VEHICLE EMISSION REDUCTION

Murphy Administration Announces Availability of \$35 Million for Local Government Vehicle Electrification Projects

From Gov. Murphy's press release: "The Murphy Administration today [2/7/2025] announced the availability of \$35 million in grants to help local governments electrify their shuttle, school bus and truck fleets to protect public health and the environment, leveraging proceeds from New Jersey's participation in the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI). The new funding is for the replacement of diesel vehicles owned by, or serving, local towns including shuttles, transit buses, garbage trucks, dump trucks and small school buses."

https://dep.nj.gov/newsrel/25_p007/



NJEDA Board Approves Programs to Expand Number of Zero Emission Medium and Heavy-Duty Vehicles on NJ Roadways

From the press release: "The New Jersey Economic Development Authority (NJEDA) Board yesterday approved two programs aimed at putting more zero emissions vehicles on roads across the state.... The Board approved Phase III of NJ ZIP, which will provide vouchers to businesses and institutional organizations to offset the cost of purchasing new, zero emission medium and heavy-duty vehicles. The size of vouchers awarded through Phase III, which is funded at \$75 million, will vary depending on the class of vehicle being purchased, from a minimum of \$15,000 for Class 2b vehicles to \$175,000 for Class 8 vehicles. Bonuses will be available for school busses, small businesses; women-, minority-, and veteran-owned businesses. Additionally, 50 percent of funds will be set aside for applications from small businesses in Overburdened Communities (OBCs).... the Board also approved a new, \$25 million program known as the NJ ZEV Financing Program, which is a loan program to support businesses adopting medium and heavy-duty zero emission vehicles. The program complements NJ ZIP by offering financing for vehicle costs that may not be met by NJ ZIP vouchers or other available grant funding resources. Loans will also be available through the program for business not utilizing the NJ ZIP program.... Funding for both NJ ZIP and NJ ZEV are from the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI)."

<https://www.njeda.gov/njeda-board-approves-programs-to-expand-number-of-zero-emission-medium-and-heavy-duty-vehicles-on-nj-roadways/>

Trump Administration Freezes Billions for Electric Vehicle Chargers

In 12/2024, the New Jersey Department of Transportation (NJDOT) announced the award of a \$20.96 million contract to build EV charging stations at 19 locations along NJDOT-maintained Interstate Highways, using Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) National Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (NEVI) Formula Program funds. On 2/6/2025, the FHWA sent a memo (available here: <https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/nevi/resources/state-plan-approval-suspension.pdf>) to states informing them that the underlying guidance used to approve NEVI plans has been rescinded and all State plans previously approved are suspended until new guidance is issued and new plans are approved, and no new obligations may take place. While the letter states that "Until new guidance is issued, reimbursement of existing obligations will be allowed in order to not disrupt current financial commitments," it is not clear whether this will affect the NJDOT contract previously awarded. <https://www.njspotlightnews.org/2025/02/trump-administration-freezes-electric-vehicle-charging-funds-legality-of-freeze-is-questioned/>

FOSSIL FUEL INFRASTRUCTURE

FERC Reinstates Transco Gas Pipeline Approval

In 2023, a coalition of environmental organizations, backed by eight state Attorneys General and the NJ Ratepayer Advocate, appealed the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission's (FERC) approval of a Williams Co. subsidiary's Regional Energy Access Expansion (REAE) project, which was planned to expand natural gas compressor stations in Branchburg and Old Bridge and build a new natural gas compressor station in West Deptford, plus 36.1 miles of pipeline in PA. In July 2024, a U.S. Court of Appeals vacated FERC's certificate of approval and remanded the case to FERC "for appropriate action." FERC has now reinstated its approval of the pipeline project. In addition, FERC has ended its ongoing proceeding related to "Consideration of Greenhouse Gas [GHG] Emissions in Natural Gas Infrastructure." It had issued a draft policy statement outlining a procedure, but now has

terminated that approach and states that it will consider GHG impacts on a case-by-case basis. <https://www.utilitydive.com/news/ferc-transco-gas-pipeline-ghg-policy-review/738349/>

Fourth Ironbound Power Plant a 'Slap in the Face,' Newark Mayor Says

The NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) has given approval to the Passaic Valley Sewerage Commission (PVSC) to begin construction of its gas-fired power plant. Newark Mayor Baraka's statement is available here: <https://www.newarknj.gov/news/mayor-ras-j-barakas-statement-on-passaic-valley-sewerage-commissions-new-gas-fueled-power-plant>. Only one more final permit is needed - a federal air permit - which is now under a 45-day review by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). If the federal air permit is granted, DEP can issue a final decision to proceed. <https://www.tapinto.net/towns/newark/sections/eastward/articles/fourth-ironbound-power-plant-a-slap-in-the-face-newark-mayor-says>

RENEWABLE RESOURCES (other than Offshore Wind)

New Bill in the New Jersey Legislature Aims to Simplify Solar Permitting for Homeowners

A bill (S1400/A5264) has been introduced in the NJ legislature that would require local governments to adopt instant solar permitting for residential rooftop solar. The bill "Requires establishment of [an] automated platform to expedite construction code approval of applications to install residential solar energy systems." According to the bill, NJ has the fifth slowest known solar permitting timelines of any state in the country, and approximately one-in-five residential solar energy installation projects are cancelled after submission of an application for a permit which, according to solar energy system installers, is largely a direct result of frustration experienced in attempting to maneuver through New Jersey's permitting process. The bill would establish a "State Smart Solar Permitting Platform" - an internet-based platform that, consistent with construction codes, "automates

plan review, produces a code-compliant approval, and instantly releases a permit or permit revision in response to the receipt of an acceptable application to construct a residential solar energy system."

<https://environmentamerica.org/newjersey/updates/new-bill-in-the-new-jersey-legislature-aims-to-simplify-solar-permitting-for-homeowners/>

NJ's Largest Multifamily Solar Installation Catching Rays at the Beach

In what Environment New Jersey Director Doug O'Malley has described as "exactly what we should be seeing in Jersey City with the expansion of new high-rise development," the largest solar panel installation on a high-rise multifamily residential building in NJ has been completed at The Beach, a rental apartment tower in Jersey City's Newport neighborhood.

<https://www.newsbreak.com/njbiz-2010983/3785086479792-nj-s-largest-multifamily-solar-installation-catching-rays-at-the-beach>

LAND MANAGEMENT/ AGRICULTURE/FOOD

Applications for NJEDA's Feed NJ Program Now Open

From the press release: "The New Jersey Economic Development Authority's (NJEDA) Food Equity and Economic Development in New Jersey (FEED NJ) Program is now accepting applications. FEED NJ is a \$30 million pilot program awarding grants between \$50,000 and \$500,000 for innovative projects that strengthen food access and food security in New Jersey's most acute Food Desert Communities (FDCs).... FEED NJ will provide grants... to cover up to 100 percent of costs for projects aimed at improving New Jersey residents' ability to access fresh, affordable, and healthy food in one or more of 14 Primary Focus FDCs.... Eligible applicants must be for-profit or non-profit entities that have been in existence for at least two years at the time of the application. Projects must primarily serve residents of one or more of the 14 Primary Focus FDCs..... Applications for FEED NJ are now open, and are due by Thursday, April 3, 2025, at 5:00 p.m."

Links to additional information are available in the press release.

<https://www.njeda.gov/applications-for-njedas-feed-nj-program-now-open/>



Secretary of Agriculture Highlights CSA Week at Mercer County Farm

This NJ Department of Agriculture (NJDA) press release describes Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) in NJ, and how it supports both farmers and consumers, focusing on one USDA Certified Organic farm - Chickadee Creek Farm in Pennington, NJ. Links are provided to the farm's website, and to a website where you can find CSA's throughout NJ.

<https://www.nj.gov/agriculture/news/press/2025/approved/press250217.html>

Underserved Farmers Network Resource Seminar and Idea Sharing Event Takes Place

In the context of a meeting that took place before the beginning of the NJ Agricultural Convention, this NJ Department of Agriculture (NJDA) press release describes the Underserved Farmers Network in NJ, including how it came about and who it serves.

<https://www.nj.gov/agriculture/news/press/2025/approved/press250213.html>

OFFSHORE WIND

Problems for NJ Offshore Wind

From *NJ Spotlight News*: "New Jersey's nascent offshore wind energy industry took a double hit today [2/3/2025], with the Murphy administration cancelling a fourth bid solicitation for new farms and then pulling back on a turbine assembly port in South Jersey." Related news videos and articles are below:

New Jersey Adapts to Loss of Offshore Wind in Near Future

5-minute news video about ramifications of pausing offshore wind, and potential repurposing of Wind Port.

<https://www.njspotlightnews.org/video/new-jersey-adapts-to-loss-of-offshore-wind-in-near-future/>

Another Blow to NJ's Offshore Wind Industry

1-minute news video about possible impacts of Shell's withdrawal from Atlantic Shores.

<https://www.njspotlightnews.org/video/another-blow-to-njs-offshore-wind-industry/>

New Jersey Cancels Fourth Offshore Wind Solicitation as Shell Exits Atlantic Shores Project

Article about ramifications of Shell withdrawing from Atlantic Shores and impacts on offshore wind solicitation.

<https://gcaptain.com/new-jersey-cancels-fourth-offshore-wind-solicitation-as-shell-exits-atlantic-shores-project/>

Trump Memorandum Stalls Most New Jersey Wind Projects

From the *New Jersey Monitor* : "A memorandum issued on President Donald Trump's first day in office will pause nearly all offshore wind projects in New Jersey, with the prospect of a longer-lasting standstill if his administration moves to rescind approvals issued under President Joe Biden."

<https://newjerseymonitor.com/2025/01/28/trump-memorandum-stalls-most-nj-wind-projects/>

Second Partner Exits Embattled Atlantic Shores Offshore Wind Project

Atlantic Shores Offshore Wind, LLC (Atlantic Shores) was a 50:50 joint venture partnership between Shell New Energies US LLC and EDF-RE Offshore Development, LLC (a subsidiary of EDF Renewables North America). In January 2024, Shell announced that it was withdrawing from the project. In February 2024, NJ announced that it would not proceed with its fourth offshore wind solicitation, under which Atlantic Shores had submitted a re-bid. EDF has now announced that it "has written down \$940 million in the project." Atlantic Shores was the only NJ offshore wind project to have received final federal approval. <https://justthenews.com/politics-policy/energy/second-partner-exits-controversial-new-jersey-offshore-wind-project>

CLIMATE CHANGE

NJ's Climate Change Lawsuit Against Oil Companies Dismissed

In 2022, NJ filed a lawsuit against five major oil companies and their trade association, seeking civil monetary penalties for the impacts of climate change, citing willful disinformation campaigns by the industry. The NJ Supreme Court has dismissed the lawsuit with prejudice (court opinion available here:

<https://www.documentcloud.org/documents/25513841-20250205-njvsbigoil-dismissalorderopinion/>), citing previous cases and stating that "The basic scheme of the [federal] Constitution . . . demands that federal common law... govern any dispute involving air and water in their ambient or interstate aspects." The NJ Attorney General's office immediately filed an appeal.

<https://www.njspotlightnews.org/2025/02/nj-receives-big-blow-in-climate-lawsuit-against-big-oil-companies/>

How Proposed DEP Regulations Could Impact Development at the Shore, Elsewhere

This article describes the key points of the NJ Department of Environmental Protection's (DEP) proposed New Jersey Protecting Against Climate

Threat's (NJPACT) regulations' Resilient Environments and Landscapes (REAL) rules and their potential impact on shore towns. <https://www.njspotlightnews.org/2025/02/proposed-nj-climate-rules-would-bring-big-changes-meet-some-resistance/>

Turning the Tide in Atlantic City

This article describes the projected flooding issues threatening Atlantic City related to climate change, and the obstacles to addressing them. Atlantic City has been identified by studies as having some of the most at-risk infrastructure in the nation for flooding. Funds to address the issue are lacking; it is the only city in NJ that does not have access to capital, according to a city grant consultant. <https://www.njspotlightnews.org/2025/02/turning-the-tide-in-atlantic-city/>

National Fish and Wildlife Foundation Grants Bring Federal Funding for Resilient NJ Program to \$26.5 Million Since 2021

From the NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) press release: "Recent coastal ecosystem-restoration grants to Sayreville and Long Beach Township through the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation's National Coastal Resilience Fund have brought federal funding for communities participating in the state's innovative Resilient NJ program to \$26.5 million since 2021.... To date, Resilient NJ has funded planning projects in 32 municipalities. In addition, a multi-municipal planning project in Burlington County is expected to kick off this year, spanning 11 municipalities along the Route 130 corridor.... These newly funded initiatives - wetland and upland restoration along Sayreville's South River and a salt marsh restoration and living shoreline project in Long Beach Township - will implement natural solutions to protect lives, property, and natural resources from the intensifying impacts of climate change."

https://dep.nj.gov/newsrel/25_006/

NJR Pledges \$50K to Launch Rutgers University's Communities Sustainability & Resiliency Project

New Jersey Resources (NJR), the parent company of New Jersey Natural Gas (NJNG), has announced that it will provide \$50,000 from its Coastal Climate Initiative (CCI) to support the first Rutgers University "Vibrant Communities" program's sustainability and resiliency project. The "Vibrant Communities" program is a collaboration between corporate partners, Rutgers graduate students and New Jersey communities. The focus of this project will be "the creation and implementation of a sustainable landscape master plan in the Manitou Park section of South Toms River Borough, a community identified as being overburdened." <https://www.roi-nj.com/2025/01/28/industry/energy-utilities/njr-pledges-50k-to-launch-rutgers-universitys-communities-sustainability-resiliency-project/>



New U.S. Forestry and Agriculture GHG Inventory Dashboard

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has developed an interactive dashboard, updated annually, that allows users to explore emissions estimates from the agriculture and forestry sectors. It includes maps, graphs, and details by state and includes supplemental data that helps provide additional context about the drivers of those emissions. Data are included for Cropland Soils (N₂O), Enteric Fermentation (CH₄), Managed Livestock Waste (CH₄ + N₂O), Grazed Lands (CH₄ + N₂O), Rice Cultivation + Residue Burning (CH₄ + N₂O), Energy Use, Forests, Harvested Wood, Urban Trees, and Agricultural Soils. As of 2022, the inventory shows that NJ had -6.0 million metric tons of carbon dioxide emissions (net) from

the agriculture and forestry sector. The inventory Dashboard viewer is available here (select for NJ under "State" at the left of the screen):

<https://tinyurl.com/359avkum>.

Heat Standards Advance for NJ Workplaces

This 4-1/2-minute news video shows the testimony given for and against bill A5022 that "Establishes [an] 'Occupational Heat-Related Illness and Injury Prevention Program' and occupational heat stress standard in DOLWD. [NJ Department of Labor and Workforce Development]." It has been reported out of the Assembly Labor Committee; its counterpart in the Senate (S3884) has not been voted on in the Senate Labor Committee. Labor unions expressed support of the bill, while business representatives opposed it, stating that the requirements would be overly burdensome and expensive.

<https://www.njspotlightnews.org/video/heat-standards-advance-for-nj-workplaces/>

FOREST HEALTH

We Are Killing Our Most Valuable Forests

This piece by the NJ Highlands Coalition Director of Policy and Communications describes the devastating effects on a NJ forest of the "Young Forest Initiative." "The state Department of Environmental Protection's Division of Fish and Wildlife receives funding from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Young Forest Initiative to create new forest edges deep into the Highland Core Forest, which purports to attract declining species of songbirds by nearly clear-cutting 10-acre forest stands in locations throughout the 3,500-acre Sparta Mountain Wildlife Management Area. In a video investigation we made, 'Two Years After the Cut: Assessing the Regeneration of the Forest at Stand 9 on Sparta Mountain,' available on the NJ Highlands Coalition's You Tube Channel [available here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IS-jIFIKzis&t=2s>], we surveyed a near clearcut two years after the logging operation. We found no evidence that any of the targeted songbirds were present. What we did find were newly emergent invasive species along the access road leading to the site and

within the site and conditions so favorable to deer that it is certain their numbers would increase."

<https://njhighlandscoalition.org/news/we-are-killing-our-most-valuable-forests/>

LEAD REDUCTION IN HOUSEHOLDS

House Republicans Seek to Cancel Key Lead/Water Safety Rule that Will Replace All Toxic Lead Pipes in 10 Years, Protect Tens of Millions

A Joint Resolution (H.J.Res.44, available here: <https://www.congress.gov/bill/119th-congress/house-joint-resolution/44>) has been introduced in the U.S. House of Representatives entitled "Providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the Environmental Protection Agency relating to 'National Primary Drinking Water Regulations for Lead and Copper: Improvements (LCRI).'" It would repeal the requirements in the rules finalized by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in October 2024, which require the replacement of all toxic lead water pipes in most communities across the country within a decade, and also require more rigorous testing of drinking water and a lower threshold for requiring communities to take action against lead exposure in water. Food & Water Watch has a petition (available here: <https://act.foodandwaterwatch.org/page/78470/action/1>) that you can sign to send a message to Congress to reject this resolution.

<https://www.foodandwaterwatch.org/2025/02/13/house-republicans-seek-to-cancel-key-lead-water-safety-rule-that-will-replace-all-toxic-lead-pipes-in-10-years-protect-tens-of-millions/>

Jersey Water Works Issues Report: "Lessons Learned After Two Years of Accelerating Lead Service Line Replacement in New Jersey Communities"

From NJ Water Works: "As there is no safe level for lead exposure, water systems in New Jersey are working to meet the new statutory requirement to replace all lead service lines (LSL) by 2031. Despite progress, drinking water systems, governments, and stakeholders face numerous obstacles in complying with the legislation. Overcoming these challenges requires

clear standards and communication, sustainable financing models, and education and outreach to property owners about the benefits of LSLR [lead service line replacement]. A comprehensive approach that includes more robust statewide guidance from the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) and improved customer billing transparency is necessary to ensure the timely and successful replacement of LSLs, protect public health, and minimize health risks associated with lead in drinking water. This report outlines the major challenges and provides recommendations for improving efficiencies." The report is available here:

<https://cms.jerseywaterworks.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/01/Advancing-Public-Health-Lessons-Learned-After-Two-Years-of-Accelerating-Lead-Service-Line-Replacement-in-New-Jersey-Communities.pdf>.



DRINKING WATER (other than lead)

EPA Investigates Warren County PFAS Hot Spot

From the mid-1950's to the mid-1970's, sludge containing PFAS ("forever chemicals"), from the Castle Creek Fabrics & Northern Dyeing Corporation mill in Washington Township, was spread on a 50-acre farm. Between 12,000 and 14,000 gallons of sludge was spread on the farm daily. It dried and was plowed into the soil, and then seeped into groundwater and private wells. Due to complicated geology, it may have reached the Musconetcong River. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is investigating, and is

providing well testing. Where PFAS is found, bottled water and, eventually, water filtration systems, are being supplied to homeowners. <https://www.njspotlightnews.org/2025/02/pfas-hot-spot-rural-warren-county-nj-prompts-urgent-epa-testing-wells-next-soil-groundwater-musconetcong-river/>

Amid Series of Rapid-Fire Policy Reversals, Trump Quietly Withdraws Proposed Limits on PFAS

As part of the new federal administration's freeze on issuance of new regulations, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Proposed Rule on "Clean Water Act Effluent Limitations Guidelines (ELG) and Standards for PFAS Manufacturers Under the Organic Chemicals, Plastics and Synthetic Fibers (OCSPI) Point Source Category" was withdrawn by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB). The rule had not been finalized; it had been sent to the White House for review in June 2024. The proposed rule "looks to limit the amount of PFAS ["forever chemicals"] discharged from PFAS manufacturing facilities, both directly into surface water and indirectly via Publicly Owned Treatment Works." Withdrawal of this proposed rule does not affect the PFAS National Primary Drinking Water Regulation (NPDWR) that was finalized in April 2024. <https://www.thenewlede.org/2025/01/amid-series-of-rapid-fire-policy-reversals-trump-quietly-withdraws-proposed-limits-on-pfas/>

Hazard NJ Season 2, Episode 4: Nothing is 'Forever'

"Hazard NJ" is 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 website. Episode 4, "Nothing is 'Forever,'" looks at how researchers in the NJ are ramping up efforts to destroy these so-called "forever chemicals." <https://www.njspotlightnews.org/podcast/hazard-nj-season-2-episode-4-nothing-is-forever/>.

ENERGY EFFICIENCY

New Jersey Receives Over \$185M in Energy Efficiency Grants for Low-and Moderate-Income Residents and Workforce Development

From the NJ Board of Utilities (BPU) press release: "The New Jersey Board of Public Utilities (NJBPU) has received over \$185M in federal funding from the Home Efficiency Rebates (HER or HOMES), Home Electrification and Appliance Rebates (HEAR or HEEHR), and Training for Residential Energy Contractors (TREC) programs from the United States Department of Energy (DOE). These grants, provided under the Biden Administration's Inflation Reduction Act (IRA), will fund energy efficiency and electrification programs for low-and-moderate-income communities, helping save money on utility bills, and bolster energy efficiency workforce development programs in New Jersey." [Note: similar grants have been reported in other states as having been "halted."]

<https://www.nj.gov/bpu/newsroom/2025/approved/20250127.html>

POLLUTION

Controversial Bill to Cut Plastic Packaging Advances

This 4-1/2-minute news video shows the ninth hearing in the Senate Environment Committee of a bill (S3398), the "Packaging and Paper Product Stewardship Act," that would require companies to cut plastic packaging by 50% over 10 years. Testimony of both supporters and opponents are shown; the bill was voted on at the hearing, and was approved. An identical bill (A5009) had not yet had a hearing in the Assembly.

<https://www.njspotlightnews.org/video/controversial-bill-to-cut-plastic-packaging-advances/>

NJ Republican Lawmaker Wants to Repeal Ban on Plastic Bags, Straws

A bill (A5338) has been introduced in the Assembly Environment, Natural Resources, and Solid Waste Committee that "Repeals law prohibiting sale or distribution of single-use plastic carryout bags, single-use paper carryout bags,

polystyrene foam food service products, and single-use plastic straws." The bill's sponsor, Assemblyman Azzariti Jr., stated that "New Jersey's 9 million residents started accumulating massive amounts of woven and reusable bags after the plastic bag ban went into effect. It became so overwhelming that these bags eventually ended up in the garbage, because they aren't recyclable or biodegradable. There's been no consensus on if the ban has worked, and in fact, there's only evidence to suggest that prohibiting single-use plastics may even have the opposite effect." A study released last year by the Freedomia Group is cited, which reported that New Jersey's anti-plastics law has been followed by a near tripling of plastic consumption.

<https://www.njassemblygop.com/CivicAlerts.aspx?AID=694>

EDUCATION and YOUTH-RELATED

Fifth-Graders Dive Into Environmental Preservation

At Indian Mills Memorial School in Shamong, NJ, fifth-grade students were involved in a project to raise awareness about protecting the environment. "In partnership with Monica Cahill from Pinelands Adventures [an initiative of the Pinelands Preservation Alliance], students engaged in an interactive lesson in November, focusing on environmental preservation. Following that, they spent several weeks conducting research on various environmental topics and created public service announcements (PSAs) to inspire their peers and community." They focused on forest fires/drought, pollution (air, ocean, water), animal habitats, climate change and plastics.

<https://southjersey.media/featured/fifth-graders-dive-into-environmental-preservation/>

OTHER

DEP Presents Projects for Liberty State Park at Revitalization Program Open House Ahead of Groundbreaking

This NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) press release describes the materials that were presented at the last Liberty State Park (LSP)

Revitalization Program Open House, held on 1/25/2025. The public comment period has ended, but the press release contains links to the materials presented at the open house as well as other materials and videos related to the LSP Revitalization Program.

https://dep.nj.gov/newsrel/25_0005/

Caldwell Councilman Raises Concerns About Turf Surface Planned for the Middle School Field

At a Caldwell Borough Council meeting, Caldwell Borough Councilman Ken Jurgensen raised the

issue of his and the Environmental Commission's safety concerns regarding a pending project that would install artificial turf on a Grover Cleveland Middle School (GCMS) field. This article describes those concerns, which include the fact that the artificial turf is composed of PFAS "forever chemicals."

<https://www.tapinto.net/towns/west-essex/articles/caldwell-councilman-raises-concerns-about-turf-surface-planned-for-the-middle-school-field>

EJTF's GOALS for 2024/2025

- 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.**

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.

UU FaithAction NJ - Environmental Justice Task Force -

Visit <https://uufaithaction.org/environment/> for links and resources, and to join the EJTF
