



Environmental Justice Task Force Newsletter

August 2020

[covering 6/25/2020 – 7/25/2020] <https://www.uufaithaction.org/blog/>

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

EJTF ACTIVITIES

- **NJ Natural Gas (NJNG) Southern Reliability Link (SRL) Pipeline Protest 7/2/2020**

EJTF Co-Chair Peggy Middaugh joined People over Pipelines, local residents, the NJ Sierra Club, the Pinelands Preservation Alliance, and others to protest the SRL pipeline. In June, a drill bit sent toxic sludge cracking through the foundation of a house, giving the owner two minutes to leave before it was condemned. The groups demand that work on the SRL stop until an independent investigation can be held on this and other accidents. (See articles on p. 11)



EJTF Co-Chair Peggy Middaugh



The beautiful home in a tranquil neighborhood surrounded by a forest, with a brook on one side, that was condemned after NJNG's SRL drilling accident



NJNG SRL pipeline "socially distanced" protest



"Corporate America" Flag

- **NJ Assembly Environment and Solid Waste Committee "Virtual" Hearing**

On July 20, 2020, EJTF member Nancy Griffeth (highlighted in top Zoom screen) participated in a hearing on the bill A2212, which would require cumulative impacts to be considered in approving permits for new power plants or major new manufacturing facilities in communities already overburdened by pollution. This is the partner bill to S232 that was recently passed in the Senate after Gov. Murphy announced his support. At the hearing, Sen. Cory Booker gave his support (from his car, see inset at right) and Catherine McCabe, Commissioner of the NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), sent a letter of support.



Speaking for the bill were Nicky Sheats (NJ Environmental Justice Alliance), Kim Gaddy (Clean Water Action) and Melissa Miles (Ironbound Community Center), who gave the following eloquent and touching statement: "COVID has impressed upon me the fact that I'm a parent first. My children are the first in my family to come down with asthma, the only in my family to have ADHD. They grew up across the street from a plastic factory, around the corner from a truck route, 1 mile from the Covanta incinerator, 2 miles from the sewage treatment plant, the two power plants, and the fat rendering plant. Now we're sheltered in place in a community where we can barely breathe the air."

A number of industry figures spoke in opposition to the bill on varying grounds, including the possibilities that it would add uncertainty and delay to projects, require cutting back operations of existing plants, and/or preclude approval of new industrial plants.

More than 70 environmental and other groups signed a letter in support of the bill (https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdtZoZBdiDqQn9XaG1fOE9WWfAWRc7NCDTZOW7ile-ivAVcow/viewform?usp=send_form) and the EJTF also submitted written comments, stating "This bill addresses the terrible burden placed on certain communities — mostly communities of color and low income communities — by environmental pollution from a variety of sources. Members of these communities are affected by and killed by heart and lung diseases far more than others are, due to this high level of environmental pollution. COVID-19 has been far worse in these communities than others, in part because of the environmental pollution and in part because so many of their members are essential workers. We must stop treating our essential workers as if they are expendable, and protect their lives by reducing the environmental pollutants in their neighborhoods. This bill represents a good beginning toward that end." The bill passed the committee 4-2. (See articles p. 8-9)

- **Presentation on NJ Clean Energy Program at EJTF July Zoom Meeting**



The EJTF's Zoom meeting for July featured a presentation by Elizabeth Ebinger and Michele Calabrese, Outreach Program Managers for the NJ Board of Public Utilities' (BPU) NJ Clean Energy Program (in partnership with GreenFaith). The presentation highlighted how nonprofits and religious institutions can save money on renewable energy projects through the NJ Clean Energy Program, and also provided information on benefits for residential customers. A video introduction to the program is here: njcleanenergy.com/files/file/newsletter_pdf/NJCEPvideo%202018-01%20-17064_preview.mp4 and the program's home page, with multiple information and links, is here: <https://njcleanenergy.com>.

EVENTS AVAILABLE ONLINE
(some upcoming, some past but viewable as videos)

NJBPU Public Meeting to Discuss Draft NJ Offshore Wind Strategic Plan Webinar
Monday, August 3, 2020 - 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

The NJ Board of Public Utilities (BPU) has rescheduled the public meeting (originally scheduled for July 20, 2020) on the draft New Jersey Offshore Wind Strategic Plan. The Notice is available here: https://www.nj.gov/bpu/pdf/publicnotice/OSWSP%20Stakeholder%20Meeting%20Notice_FINAL_7.15.20.pdf. The meeting will consist of a brief presentation by BPU Staff recapping the NJ offshore wind goals and activities to date, as well as background on the requirements of the Offshore Wind Economic Development Act (“OWEDA”), and relevant Executive Orders. A brief presentation about the draft Strategic Plan will follow. The floor will then be opened for comments by members of the public. See article on p. 12 for further information and a link to the Strategic Plan.

You must register for the Offshore Wind Strategic Plan Stakeholder Meeting **on or before August 3, 2020** via the following link: <https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/8995147915621801998>. After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the webinar and about checking your system requirements in advance of the meeting.

Members of the public may file written comments on the draft Strategic Plan regardless of whether they participate in the public meeting. Comments may be submitted electronically to Osw.Stakeholder@bpu.nj.gov with a copy to Board.Secretary@bpu.nj.gov in PDF or Word format; include a subject line of “OSWSP Comments.” All comments must be received on or before **5:00 p.m. EDT on August 17, 2020**.

DRBC Advisory Committee on Climate Change Meeting Webinar
Tuesday, August 4, 2020 - 1:00 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.

In December 2019, the Delaware River Basin Commission (DRBC) established the 18-member Advisory Committee on Climate Change (ACCC) to "provide the commission and the basin community with vital, scientific expertise for identifying and prioritizing [climate change-related] threats and vulnerabilities, as well as provide recommendations for

mitigation, adaptation and improved resiliency." Part of the ACCC's initial charge is to help inform DRBC's future water resource planning efforts considering climate change; support development of a comprehensive study on climate impacts to the basin's water supply and water quality; and organize a Delaware River Basin Climate Forum with commission staff and partners to share basin-focused climate science.

The agenda for the August 4, 2020 webinar is here:

https://www.state.nj.us/drbc/library/documents/ACCC/080420/agenda_draft.pdf. Join the meeting at: <https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/575103461> or dial in at (571) 317-3122 - access code: 575-103-461. Contact Kristen Bowman Kavanagh, (609) 883-9500 ext. 221, for more information.

Additional information about the ACCC, including webpage, webinar, report, and presentations, are available here:

https://www.nj.gov/drbc/about/advisory/ACCC_index.html

**"En-ROADS Climate Solutions Simulator Demonstration" via Zoom
Thursday, August 6, 2020 - 7:00 p.m.**

The Green Earth Ministry of the Morristown Unitarian Fellowship is partnering with the Citizens Climate Lobby chapter of Morristown to offer an online "En-ROADS Climate Solutions Simulator" demonstration event via Zoom.



View video overview at: <https://vimeo.com/359091159>

Have you seen the En-ROADS Climate Solutions Simulator in action? This user-friendly climate modeling system shows the impact of various global actions, including energy policy, transportation, and land use, and their effect on climate change.

En-ROADS provides the ability to explore the likely consequences of energy, economic growth, land use, and other policies and uncertainties, with the goal of improving understanding. The simulation, developed by Climate Interactive, Ventana Systems, and MIT Sloan, runs on an ordinary laptop in a fraction of a second, is available online, offers an intuitive interface, has been carefully grounded in the best available science, and has been calibrated against a wide range of existing integrated assessment, climate and energy models.

Join online on **Thursday, August 6 at 7:00 p.m.** as Dr. Ernest Dorflinger demonstrates En-ROADS and answers your questions. Please register at <https://bit.ly/2OuCFQc>, to participate in this free program, and you'll be sent a Zoom invitation.

Delaware Riverkeeper "Gibbstown LNG Export Terminal Summer Series"

"The Puerto Rico Connection: Fracked LNG from Gibbstown NJ to San Juan PR?" Thursday, August 6, 2020 - 7:00 p.m. via Zoom

Learn about what the people in Puerto Rico are doing to stop New Fortress Energy from importing Liquid Natural Gas (LNG) from Gibbstown, NJ. Ruth Santiago, an organizer and environmental activist helping to lead the struggle against LNG and working for alternative and efficient energy, will explain the story of New Fortress Energy in Puerto Rico. Adriana González will discuss her work to promote zero waste solutions, community solutions for clean energy and environmental policy in Puerto Rico. Hear from Jeff Tittel about the grass roots organizing against the LNG import terminal by the Puerto Rican Chapter of Sierra Club. New Fortress Energy is experiencing a combination of forces that is working against the environmental damage, unjust public safety and health risks, and devastating climate impacts that fracked LNG represents locally and globally. This zoom forum will examine the scandal, the finances, and the groundswell of opposition that define Gibbstown's Puerto Rico Connection. Register here: bit.ly/DRNLNGSS3

"The Gibbstown Fracked Gas Export Terminal EXPOSED" YouTube Video of Webinar

EJTF Co-Chair Peggy Middaugh attended, and highly recommends, this excellent presentation on the Gibbstown Liquid Natural Gas (LNG) export terminal that UUFANJ has gone on record as opposing. A link to a YouTube video of the presentation is here: <https://youtu.be/k-Ax6iGI-dU>. This project would be the first time in the U.S. that LNG would be transported by truck or rail from one state to another (i.e., from PA to Gibbstown NJ). The LNG would then be exported via ships docking on the Delaware River. Residents along the proposed route fear that many could be killed if a truck or train accident occurred and a tank of LNG exploded. A detailed history of the proposed project is available here: <https://www.delawariverkeeper.org/ongoing-issues/gibbstown-logistics-center-lng-ngl-exports-proposed?page=1>. An interactive map with the ability to show locations of different proposed routes, minority and low-income populations, schools, controversial facilities etc. is available here: <https://www.delawariverkeeper.org/taxonomy/term/1174>. A petition to stop the project is here: <https://actionnetwork.org/petitions/petition-to-stop-fracked-gas-export-on-the-delaware-river/>. (Note: if you sign, you may receive updates from Empower New Jersey, the sponsor of the petition, unless you opt out.)

"Terror in Transit - The Path to the Proposed Gibbstown LNG Export Terminal" YouTube Video of Webinar

This presentation, which features the Delaware Riverkeeper's Interactive Transportation Route Maps related to the proposed Gibbstown Liquid Natural Gas (LNG) export terminal, covers the transportation of the LNG through communities. It focuses on the hidden underside of the transportation routes: that people of color and low income populations who live in the high-hazard zone along the transportation route outnumber others, and there are hundreds of schools and day care centers located where the most intense and immediate impacts from an accident or LNG release would occur. The video is available here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SVP5tlBTHPI>.

GREEN AMENDMENT Talk by Maya van Rossum - via Zoom
Sunday, August 16, 2020 - 1:00 p.m.



This is a talk that was originally scheduled for March 22, 2020, sponsored by the Green Earth Ministry of the Beacon UU Congregation in Summit; it has been rescheduled as a Zoom talk. Maya Van Rossum is a veteran environmentalist, original petitioner and leader of the Green Amendment movement, and author of the book, "The Green Amendment: Securing Our Right to a Healthy Environment." She will speak on the Green Amendment, which would enshrine environmental rights in the state constitution, to give the people of New Jersey the right to clean water and air, to a stable climate, to be able to live in environments free of dangerous toxins, and to be able to provide the many health, economic and quality of life benefits of healthy environments. Join the meeting and learn about the future of environmental advocacy!

To join the Zoom meeting:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88531596701?pwd=bmt5dm5FZ2JMRG5NV05heXBUK3BrZzo9>
Meeting ID: 885 3159 6701; Passcode: 187245

To join by phone: One tap mobile:

+13126266799,,88531596701#,,,,,0#,,187245# US (Chicago)
+19292056099,,88531596701#,,,,,0#,,187245# US (New York)

Summer Lecture Series via Zoom

Hosted by Mercer County Park Commission and Conserve Wildlife Foundation of NJ
Thursday, August 20, 2020 - 7:00 p.m.

Wildlife takes center stage in a summer series of webinar presentations from the Mercer County Park Commission Naturalist Department. This online programming focuses on wildlife that affects our lives, even in an urbanized environment. There is one program remaining; it is free, but registration is required (see link below).

Thursday, August 20, 2020, 7:00 p.m. – "Bats: Creatures of the Night"

https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_iMJcuSEXTwic8ZorZrNVQQ

In case you missed the other lectures in the series, the Mercer County Park Commission has a YouTube page where you can find the videos:

https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLacgAT-O6_h2G-IPXoRzqabnb1Z2TWrxX

8th Annual Delaware River Watershed Forum (Virtual)

"From the Headwaters to the Bay and the Tribs In-Between: Staying Connected Amidst a Pandemic"

September 14 through September 17, 2020

EJTF Co-Chair Ray Nichols highly recommends this forum. While it's focused on protecting the Delaware River Watershed, many of the sessions will be relevant to environmentalists from throughout the East-central U.S. Each day is planned to feature 3-4 hours of sessions that include engaging speakers, facilitated discussions, and workshops. Links to the detailed schedule, list of sessions, and registration are available at

<http://www.delriverwatershed.org/2020-forum> (registration before 7/31/2020 - \$75; after 7/31/2020 - \$100).



Rutgers Climate Institute Listing of **Virtual** Climate Seminars Multiple dates

Multiple online events are listed on this site, including those from the Rutgers Climate Institute and also many climate-related events sponsored by various groups such as EPA, NOAA, and others. The listing for August 2020 is here:

<https://climatechange.rutgers.edu/events/all-climate-events/month.calendar/2020/08/01/>.

One webinar in the NJ Climate Change Resource Center Summer Webinar Series, "Climate Adaptation Planning for New Jersey's Urban and Natural Forests," is on **Monday, August 17, 2020 at 12:00 p.m.** Natural resource professionals need scientifically credible, relevant, and timely information on climate change, its effects on ecosystems, and potential management options in order to effectively respond to climate change. This webinar, hosted by the Northern Institute of Applied Climate Science and Rutgers University, will introduce two resources that use science to address managers' needs: the Climate Change Response Framework, and New Jersey Forest Adapt. Register here: <https://go.rutgers.edu/d86grlf1>.

"Better Food, Less Carbon in the New Digital Economy" Webinar **Friday, August 21, 2020 - 1:15 p.m. to 2:45 p.m.**

The Security and Sustainability Network presents a webinar in conjunction with Arizona State University to address how smart systems can link agricultural stakeholders with farmers, ranchers, and foresters to decarbonize the food chain. Traditional agriculture negatively affects biodiversity and emits about 26% of global greenhouse gases that contribute to climate change. The agriculture ecosystem comprises land use, crop production, livestock and fisheries, and the food supply chain. In this system lies meaningful, measurable, and sustainable regenerative applications that can greatly reduce the impact of agriculture on the planet. Panelists will explore opportunities to lower carbon emissions, improve biodiversity, and increase world-wide food systems' resilience by digitally connecting it from soil to fork. Register here: <https://register.gotowebinar.com/register/5740773817464924430>

Past webinars in the series are also available here: <https://ssfonline.org/archives/webinars>

"Strong Infrastructure, Healthy New Jersey" **Virtual Jersey Water Works 2020 Membership Meeting Video**

This video (available here: <https://www.jerseywaterworks.org/events-2/2020-membership-meeting/>) presents the virtual Jersey Water Works 2020 Membership Meeting held 7/20/2020. It includes a Panel Discussion "Smart Infrastructure, Healthy New Jersey," and a preview of the "Jersey WaterCheck" online resource that will: include every drinking water and wastewater system in the state; incorporate data from publicly available sources and survey information in one website; and create the foundation needed to transform NJ's water infrastructure. The agenda is here: <https://www.jerseywaterworks.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/2020-Membership-Meeting-Agenda-1.pdf>. In 2020, Jersey Water Works prioritized five project areas: eliminating the risk of lead in drinking water; identifying water-related environmental justice hot spots through mapping; assuring water affordability; ensuring that the Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO) long term control plans are implemented in a way to protect environmental justice communities from combined sewage flooding; and cultivating workforce development programs across skill levels and ensuring local hiring for CSO projects.

New Jersey Clean Energy Conference: "Charting the Path to 2050" - POSTPONED

The Conference was originally scheduled for April 6-7, 2020 in Atlantic City, NJ. Register for email updates about the rescheduling of the conference here:
<https://www.nj.gov/bpu/about/contact/subscribe.html>

EJTF's GOALS FOR 2020

- 1) Mandatory emissions reductions in EJ communities, along with transitioning to electric vehicles, especially buses and trucks** (This is a re-focusing of our goal to get off fossil fuels, now that the Energy Master Plan is complete - we need to focus on the most important sources of emissions in EJ communities.)

- 2) Mitigating lead in the New Jersey water supply** (This affects much more than just Newark.) Report on drinking water: <https://www.jerseywaterworks.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/JWW-Lead-Report.pdf>*

NEWS RELATED TO EJTF ISSUES

ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

- **Bill Advances to Help Lower-Income Communities in NJ Block Projects that Could Increase Pollution** - At a 7/20/2020 virtual hearing attended by **EJTF member Nancy Griffeth (see p. 2)**, the NJ Assembly Environment and Solid Waste Committee approved a bill that takes a much-needed step toward addressing environmental justice issues in NJ. The bill - A2212, which is identical to bill S232 that has already passed the Senate - would require the NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) "to evaluate environmental and public health

stressors of certain facilities on overburdened communities when reviewing certain permit applications." This bill has been endorsed by Gov. Murphy and DEP Commissioner McCabe (see Op-Ed below). <https://www.njspotlight.com/2020/07/bill-advances-to-help-lower-income-communities-in-nj-block-projects-that-could-increase-pollution/> The identical Senate version of this bill is further described in the following two articles.

- **Another Push for Laws to Help Poorer NJ Communities Long Affected by Pollution -** More information on the bill S-232 (see articles above and below, and Op-Ed below) giving some viewpoints of representatives of business. <https://www.njspotlight.com/2020/07/another-push-for-laws-to-help-poorer-nj-communities-long-affected-by-pollution/>
- **NJ Senate Bill Helps Environmental-Justice Communities Block Further Pollution -** More information on the bill S232 (see articles above and Op-Ed below), giving some viewpoints of environmental justice advocates. <https://www.njspotlight.com/2020/06/nj-senate-bill-helps-environmental-justice-communities-block-further-pollution/>
- **Op-Ed: Gov. Murphy, DEP: It's Time to Make Good on Our Promise of Environmental Justice -** (by NJ Governor Phil Murphy and NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) Commissioner Catherine McCabe) - "...The cumulative effect of pollution from too many polluting facilities concentrated in marginalized neighborhoods is an important part of the reason we see a significantly higher incidence of asthma and other respiratory illnesses among the residents of these overburdened communities. These are the same communities whose underlying health conditions (in part the result of environmental stresses) have made them disproportionately impacted by COVID-19... Senator Troy Singleton and his colleagues in the New Jersey Senate, with the support of the administration, have taken necessary action by passing Senate bill S232, to begin to address the environmental injustice caused by these gaps in our laws. This bill, if enacted, would require consideration of the potential for disproportionate cumulative health impacts on the local community when certain types of new facilities, or expanded facilities, are proposed in an overburdened neighborhood. It would also give members of the community greater notice and opportunities to be heard... While wealthier and more powerful communities in New Jersey have long used zoning laws and other means to protect their residential neighborhoods from these types of facilities, our low income, and communities of color have been powerless to prevent this concentration in the areas surrounding their homes. This is an injustice that has affected the lives and health of millions of people." <https://www.nj.com/opinion/2020/07/gov-murphy-dep-its-time-to-make-good-on-our-promise-of-environmental-justice-opinion.html>
- **New Jersey Bill Would Create Equitable Clean Energy Projects Across the State -** On 7/20/2020, the NJ Senate Environment and Energy Committee voted 4-0 in favor of the bill S2484, which would create the Office of Clean Energy Equity in the NJ Board of Public Utilities (BPU), and which EJTF supported. This office would be charged with promoting, guiding, and overseeing the equitable deployment of clean energy, energy efficiency, and energy storage programs and technologies in overburdened communities, as defined in the bill. Funding would be provided by "no less than 10 percent of the BPU's annual total clean energy budget, or at least \$50 million annually, whichever is greater." The bill would also require the BPU to: (1) establish onsite solar or community solar programs, which benefit 250,000 low income households or 35 percent of the low income households in the State, whichever is larger, by 2030, with the goal of reducing these households' average energy burden to below six percent of household income; and (2) require the establishment of a minimum of 400 megawatts of energy storage in overburdened communities by 2030. The legislation also requires new construction in low-income communities to be built ready for solar, and includes integration of workforce development training into the clean energy and energy storage programs. <https://dailyenergyinsider.com/news/26412-new-jersey-bill-would-create-equitable-clean-energy-projects-across-the-state/>



- **Roundtable: The Urgency of Delivering Environmental Justice — and Clean Energy — in New Jersey** - The "Environmental Justice and Clean Energy in NJ" NJ Spotlight Roundtable originally scheduled for March 2020 was held virtually on June 30 via Zoom. The Roundtable can be viewed here: <https://www.njspotlight.com/2020/07/environmental-justice-and-clean-energy-in-new-jersey/>. There is a 10-minute opening conversation between U.S. Senator Cory Booker and NJ Spotlight Founding Editor John Mooney. Members of the panel are: Ana Isabel Baptista, PhD, director of the Tishman Environment and Design Center at the New School; Maria Lopez-Nuñez, deputy director, organizing and advocacy, Ironbound Community Corporation in Newark; Dr. Nicky Sheats, Esq., New Jersey Environmental Justice Alliance and the Center for Urban Environment at the John S. Watson Institute for Public Policy at Thomas Edison University; and Rick Thigpen, senior vice president at PSEG and a trustee of NJTV; with Tom Johnson, NJ Spotlight Energy & Environment Reporter, moderating. Questions that were addressed include:

- What are the practical steps to ensuring environmental justice (EJ) and low- and moderate-income (LMI) communities benefit from clean energy advances in New Jersey?
- How will a 21st century clean energy economy improve air quality and create long-term jobs for these communities?
- What needs to be done to bring community solar, expanded opportunities for reducing energy usage, and emerging technologies (such as energy storage) to these communities?
- How can community energy planning contribute to equitable clean energy outcomes?
- What is the utility's role in these challenges?

A partial transcript is available here: <https://www.njspotlight.com/2020/07/roundtable-the-urgency-of-delivering-environmental-justice-and-clean-energy-in-new-jersey/>

ELECTRIC VEHICLES

- **NJ Joins Multistate Deal to Transition to Zero-Emission Trucks and Buses by 2050** - New Jersey is collaborating with 14 other states and the District of Columbia on a first-of-its-kind agreement to transition to 100% zero-emission trucks and buses by 2050. Environmental advocates call the move a major turning point nationally in addressing air pollution. To provide a framework and help coordinate state efforts to meet these goals, the signatory jurisdictions will work through the existing multi-state ZEV (Zero Emission Vehicle) Task Force, facilitated by the Northeast States for Coordinated Air Use Management (NESCAUM), to develop and implement a ZEV action plan for trucks and buses within six months. (The Action Plan previously developed for light-duty ZEVs is available here: <http://www.nescaum.org/documents/2018-zev-action-plan.pdf/>) <https://www.njspotlight.com/2020/07/nj-joins-multistate-deal-to-transition-to-zero-emission-trucks-and-buses-by-2050/>

FOSSIL FUEL INFRASTRUCTURE

- **New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection Suspends New Jersey Natural Gas SRL Pipeline Permit** - Last month there was an incident in which a homeowner was given 2 minutes to leave her home that was irreparably damaged by gas pipeline drilling related to the NJ Natural Gas (NJNG) Southern Reliability Link (SRL), (see p. 1 for photos of EJTF's participation in a protest, and see article here: <https://www.nj.com/monmouth/2020/06/homeowner-had-2-minutes-to-grab-her-belongings-after-nj-pipeline-project-wrecked-her-home.html>). Subsequently, the NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) suspended the pipeline permit (the DEP's letter is here: [DEP letter https://pinelandsalliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/NJNG_SRL_suspension_7.8.2020-002.pdf](https://pinelandsalliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/NJNG_SRL_suspension_7.8.2020-002.pdf)). However, trenching and laying of pipe is continuing. Jeff Tittel, Director of the NJ Sierra Club, has stated that "DEP needs to investigate the entire pipeline; they need to hold NJNG accountable and charge them for violations and damages done. There should also be a stay on this pipeline until the Sierra Club and Pinelands Preservation Alliance have our day in court." <https://www.insidernj.com/press-release/new-jersey-department-environmental-protection-suspends-new-jersey-natural-gas-srl-pipeline-permit/>
- **Op-Ed: Enough with the Unneeded Pipelines to Nowhere** (by Carlton Montgomery, Executive Director of the Pinelands Preservation Alliance) - This Op-Ed provides a good history of the NJ Natural Gas (NJNG) Southern Reliability Link (SRL) pipeline and previous attempts to stop it (see previous article, and photos of EJTF's participation in the latest protest, on p. 1). <https://www.app.com/story/opinion/columnists/2020/07/10/enough-unneeded-pipelines-nowhere/5384888002/>
- **Court Decisions Give Enviros Hope that Natural Gas Pipelines Can Be Further Delayed or Halted in New Jersey** - Several recent key victories around the country related to pipelines may bode well for the future of stopping them in NJ. There seems to be some shift in policies, and also more sophistication on the part of environmentalists and other affected groups in working within the regulatory framework and the courts, either to achieve victories outright or to result in such increases in overall costs that projects are abandoned. However, some projects in NJ are still moving forward, so a moratorium on new fossil fuel projects is still needed. <https://www.njspotlight.com/2020/07/court-decisions-give-enviros-hope-that-natural-gas-pipelines-can-be-further-delayed-or-halted-in-new-jersey/>
- **Trump's EPA 'Trying to Strip Away' Power of States to Prevent Water Pollution, NJ Says** - Last month, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) issued "updated" regulations that govern Section 401 of the Clean Water Act (CWA) related to state certification of water quality compliance for federal permits or licenses for discharges into U.S. waters. CWA Section 401 has been used by states to block proposed energy projects like new natural-gas pipelines and other fossil-fuel projects. For example, both NY and NJ cited it in their denial of the NESE project. NJ Attorney General Grewal has joined the Attorneys General of California, New York, Washington, Colorado, Connecticut, Illinois, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Nevada, New Mexico, North Carolina, Oregon, Rhode Island, Vermont, Virginia, Wisconsin and the District of Columbia in filing a lawsuit asserting that the new rule must be vacated. The reasons given are that it unlawfully limits the ability of the states to protect precious wetlands and waterways within their own borders, it violates the Clean Water Act, and it runs afoul of the federal Administrative Procedure Act (APA). <https://www.njspotlight.com/2020/07/trumps-epa-trying-to-strip-away-power-of-states-to-prevent-water-pollution-nj-says/>

RENEWABLE RESOURCES

- **New Road Map for Murphy Administration's Offshore Wind Ambitions** - NJ has issued a draft Offshore Wind Strategic Plan (available here: https://www.nj.gov/bpu/pdf/Draft_NJ_OffshoreWindStrategicPlan%26Appendices_7-13-20.pdf), that outlines how it will meet the energy goal of 7,500 megawatts of offshore wind capacity by 2035, but the plan doesn't provide cost details. (See p. 3 for information on the 8/3/2020 public meeting and instructions on submitting written comments by 8/17/2020.) The draft offers a series of recommendations focusing on five priorities: environmental and natural resource protection; commercial and recreational fisheries; supply chain and workforce development; ports and harbors; and energy markets and transmission. <https://www.njspotlight.com/2020/07/new-road-map-for-murphy-administrations-offshore-wind-ambitions/>



- **Poll: 76% of New Jerseyans Support Using Renewable Energy to Reduce Electric Bills for Low-Income Families** - A poll from Yale University, George Mason University and Climate Nexus dealing with energy (poll results are here: https://votesolar.org/files/9315/9423/9481/PR2010_NJ_Poll_Toplines.pdf) found that at least 7 in 10 New Jerseyans support the proposals included in the New Jersey Clean Energy Equity Act (S 2484). These include: reducing electricity bills of at least 250,000 low-income residents by 2030; establishing an Office of Clean Energy Equity; increasing the amount of storage of renewable energy in low-income communities; developing paid workforce training programs in the clean energy sector; allocating 10% of the Board of Public Utilities' budget to increase access to clean energy; and requiring that all new construction in low-income communities is solar energy-ready. <https://www.njshines.org/poll/>

CLIMATE CHANGE

- **Jersey Renews Releases Roadmap Toward a Just, Green Recovery** - According to its press release, "Jersey Renews, a diverse coalition working toward state-based policy solutions to address climate change, has laid out 10 core principles that must be the foundation for any just, green economic recovery. The report, "A Roadmap Toward a Just, Green Recovery" [available here: <https://jerseyrenews.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/NJRenewsReportFinal.pdf>], was released and distributed to the co-chairs of Governor Murphy's Restart and Recovery Advisory Council, which has been tasked with drafting recommendations on what a long-term economic recovery will look like for the state. Twenty-five faith, environmental, labor and social justice organizations have endorsed the recommendations, which were crafted based on input from more than twenty partners." **EJTF member Nancy Griffeth, representing UU Faith Action NJ**, is quoted in the press release, stating that "COVID-19 has devastated so many families and communities, especially communities of color and the urban poor. We strongly believe that we have to work to alleviate the suffering of those most affected by the pandemic and the economic collapse. For these reasons, we support the recommended actions in the Jersey Renews roadmap." <https://jerseyrenews.org/press-release-jersey-renews-releases-roadmap-for-a-just-green-recovery/>

- NJ Shore Towns See More ‘Sunny-Day’ Floods as Seas Rise, Federal Report Says** - A report just issued by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), "2019 State of U.S. High Tide Flooding with a 2020 Outlook," predicts a greater increase in high-tide flooding (HTF) for the Northeast than for any other U.S. region (https://tidesandcurrents.noaa.gov/publications/Techrpt_092_2019_State_of_US_High_Tide_Flooding_with_a_2020_Outlook_30June2020.pdf). For Sandy Hook, NJ, the 2020 outlook projects an almost tripling of such events since 2000, and projects that 2050 may see between 70 and 160 of them. Jeff Tittel, director of the NJ Sierra Club, points out that this report should carry much weight because it's a scientific assessment by a professional body coming out of a presidential administration that denies climate change. "They are professionals and scientists who have been doing this a long time no matter who is in the White House, and when they come out with a report like this, you should read it and understand that it's alarming," Tittel said. <https://www.njspotlight.com/2020/07/nj-shore-towns-see-more-sunny-day-floods-as-seas-rise-federal-report-says/>
- DEP Report Specifies Climate-Change Effects but Avoids Policy Prescriptions** - As required by Gov. Murphy's executive order, the NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) has issued the "2020 New Jersey Scientific Report on Climate Change" (<https://www.nj.gov/dep/climatechange/docs/nj-scientific-report-2020.pdf>). It "collects the best available science and existing data regarding the current and anticipated environmental effects of climate change globally, nationally, regionally, and locally to present state-specific information to inform State and local decision-makers as they understand and respond to its impacts." The report is 205 pages long; there is a 10-page Executive Summary at the beginning. A climate change strategy document will be issued in September that will include a coastal resiliency report. A national report just issued by the research group First Street Foundation, "The First National Flood Risk Assessment" (https://assets.firststreet.org/uploads/2020/06/first_street_foundation_first_national_flood_risk_assessment.pdf) places NJ in the five highest ranked states for the greatest proportional increase of properties with significant flood risk over the next 30 years, as follows: Louisiana (69.7%), Delaware (21%), New Jersey (19.1%), Florida (18.6%), and South Carolina (16.7%). <https://www.njspotlight.com/2020/07/dep-report-specifies-climate-change-effects-but-avoids-policy-prescriptions/>



- Climate Change in New Jersey: Warmer and Wetter** - This article summarizes the major findings included in the NJ Department of Environmental Protection's (DEP) "2020 New Jersey Scientific Report on Climate Change" (see article above). <https://centraljersey.com/2020/07/12/climate-change-in-new-jersey-warmer-and-wetter/>

- **NJ Policymakers Face a Steep Climb in Implementing Climate-Science Report, Analysts Say** - This article describes issues and resistance from various groups that may result from attempts to develop strategies to address the issues described in the NJ Department of Environmental Protection's (DEP) "2020 New Jersey Scientific Report on Climate Change" (see previous two articles above). <https://www.njspotlight.com/2020/07/nj-policymakers-face-a-steep-climb-in-implementing-climate-science-report-analysts-say/>

POLLUTION

- **New Jersey Joins Battle With Trump Administration Over Mercury Emissions** - Although NJ has instituted strong limits on mercury emissions from power plants and waste-to-energy incinerators, it is subject to wind-blown pollution from power plants in states to the west and the south. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has decided not to regulate mercury emissions from oil and coal power plants, issuing a final rule that states the regulation of these power plants is not "appropriate and necessary," which rolls back an Obama administration rule. NJ Attorney General Grewal has joined the Attorneys General of Connecticut, Delaware, Illinois, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont, Virginia, Washington and Wisconsin and the District of Columbia in a lawsuit challenging EPA's final rule, along with the cities of Baltimore, Chicago and New York, and Erie County. The Sierra Club and other environmental, health, and civil rights organizations already have sued the Trump administration for undermining the mercury standards. <https://www.njspotlight.com/2020/07/new-jersey-joins-battle-with-trump-administration-over-mercury-emissions/>

OTHER

- **These Power Companies Fought for a \$300 Million Nuclear Subsidy. Now They Want a New Deal** - Last December, the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC), issued a ruling that the nation's biggest electric grid operator, PJM, must include electricity from state-subsidized renewable sources in its "capacity market," a move designed to bring the price of clean power in line with that generated by fossil fuels. The change was designed to address what FERC saw as a distortion of competition in the energy market as a result of state subsidies for clean fuels. However, in NJ, the rule may prevent the state from meeting its clean-energy goals. The NJ Board of Public Utilities (BPU) is considering options to deal with this ruling (a petition for review has also been filed). However, the Public Service Enterprise Group and Exelon Generation Company, two of NJ's largest energy companies, have submitted a complicated proposal to the BPU, in which they would give up the previously-approved \$300 million annual subsidy for South Jersey nuclear power plants. This article describes reactions on several sides of the issue. <https://www.njspotlight.com/2020/06/these-power-companies-fought-for-a-300-million-nuclear-subsidy-now-they-want-a-new-deal/>
- **Three Former Governors Push Senate to Act on Stalled 'Green' Nominations** - Nominations for appointments to both the Highlands Council and the Pinelands Commission have been awaiting Senate action since the previous legislative session. Gov. Murphy resubmitted the nominations in March. Three former governors (Thomas Kean, Christine Whitman and James Florio), along with 20 environmental groups, sent a letter to Senate President Sweeney asking him to advance the nominations (available here: <https://pinelandsalliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Senator-Sweeney-Signed-Letter-062020.pdf>). In addition, there is an action item (available here: <https://pinelandsalliance.salsalabs.org/commission2020nominations/index.html>).to send an email to the Senate Judiciary Committee asking for action on the Pinelands Commission nominations. <https://www.njspotlight.com/2020/06/three-former-governors-push-senate-to-act-on-stalled-green-nominations/>

- **Possible Lifeline for New Jersey School of Conservation as Takeover Is Sought -** The 71-year-old NJ School of Conservation located in Stokes State Forest, overseen by Montclair State University, is in danger of closing on September 1. The University cites economics as the reason it can no longer operate the school, which is the nation's oldest and largest university-based environmental education facility. It has put out a "request for expression of interest" for "recommendations for economically self-sustaining educational programming that considers and leverages both the unique campus setting and the existing relationship with the Department of Environmental Protection ("NJDEP")" and including maintenance of the buildings and grounds. <https://www.njspotlight.com/2020/07/possible-lifeline-for-new-jersey-school-of-conservation-as-takeover-is-sought/>
 - **Nonprofits Plan 'Green Infrastructure' to Help Fight Algae Blooms in NJ Lakes -** As a start for addressing the runoff into lakes of phosphorus that contributes to the formation of harmful algal blooms (HABs), nonprofit groups are planning to install rain gardens and other "green infrastructure." The purpose of these gardens and other installations, such as rock cages, is to remove up to 90% of the phosphorus by filtering action, so that it does not enter the lakes. <https://www.njspotlight.com/2020/07/nonprofits-plan-green-infrastructure-to-help-fight-algae-blooms-in-nj-lakes/>
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New Addition to the UU FaithAction NJ Staff:

In order to help UUFANJ get back up and running while the organization and its intrepid Executive Director, Rev. Rob Gregson, continue to recover from a rough spring/early summer, Charles Loflin is joining the staff until the end of August. Charles is currently the ministerial intern with the Morristown UU congregation and has been retained by the Board. He has a background in internet/social media management, so you may soon see upgrades to the UUFANJ website, Facebook page, YouTube channel, etc.



In Charles' words: "I'm so excited to be working with UU FaithAction NJ through the end of August. As a member of the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Montclair, I've had the privilege of participating in events and actions since the UULMNJ days. As I begin my third (and hopefully final!) year of seminary at Meadville Lombard, this is a great opportunity to further explore social justice work as part of my vocational call. I bring with me many years of technical experience as a developer of web applications and social media integrations, so much of my work will be focused on the "backend" work of updating and improving the website and exploring additional ways of leveraging technology. Additionally, I'm looking forward to working with the Task Forces and Committees as a resource and to provide assistance to Rob as needed."

MORATORIUM MONDAYS CONTINUE



Please continue to contact Gov. Murphy every Monday and urge him to declare a climate emergency moratorium on fossil fuel projects! Either call through the EmpowerNJ 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 (609-262-6000). 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 New Jersey until there are rules in place to achieve 100% clean energy goals.

UU FaithAction NJ - Environmental Justice Task Force - <https://uufaithaction.org/environment/>
Co-Chairs – Peggy Middaugh and Ray Nichols

Visit our website for Environmental links and resources / sign up for email alerts / join the EJTF
