



Environmental Justice Task Force Newsletter

September 2020

[covering 7/26/2020 – 8/27/2020] <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.

WONDERFUL NEWS - THE EJ CUMULATIVE IMPACTS BILL PASSED!!!

This is a huge victory - thanks to all who called, emailed, and messaged the legislature to get this across the line. We should all take heed that action and persistence work!!

Announcing a Guest Speaker - Kim Gaddy - for the EJTF Monthly Zoom Meeting September 3, 2020, Noon to 1:30 p.m.*



Kim Gaddy is the Environmental Justice Organizer for Clean Water Action. She will discuss the legislative priorities for members of EJ Communities, followed by a Q & A.



Kim Gaddy has been advocating for communities impacted by industrial pollution and the goods movement system in Newark and across the country for 18 years. She develops and implements Clean Water Action/Clean Water Fund's grassroots environmental justice campaigns and coalition-building efforts in NJ. She is a former Newark School Board Member, NY/NJ Regional Representative for the Moving Forward Network, Port Commissioner for the City of Newark, appointed by Gov. Murphy to serve as Vice-Chair of the NJ Department of Environmental Protection's Environmental Justice Advisory Council, former Chair of both the Newark Environmental Commission and the Essex County Environmental Commission, a founding member of the NJ Environmental Justice Alliance, and NJ President of the International Black Women's Congress.

Previously, Kim worked in Municipal government in Newark for 12 years and served as the first female Chief of Staff for Councilwoman Mildred Crump. She was recognized for her Community Service in the 2018 book "Newark Women: from Suffragettes to the Statehouse," in 2017 was selected as a "100 People of Newark, Women on the Move" Award recipient and was a 2007 recipient of the Environmental Protection Agency Region 2 Environmental Community award.

EJTF is also inviting submission of ideas for the EJTF's Goals for 2021, to be decided at the UUFANJ Issues Conference on November 7, 2020 (see p. 8).

*For non-EJTF members, to receive meeting notices and Zoom information, email: environment@uufaithaction.org.

UU CONGREGATIONAL ACTIVITIES

UNITARIAN SOCIETY OF RIDGEWOOD

On Sunday, August 9th, 2020, the Unitarian Society of Ridgewood (USR) presented a very thought-provoking lay service led by EJTF member Marilyn Maney, titled "The Adventure Gap." The service highlighted the lack of opportunity for people of color and other disadvantaged groups to partake in the wonders of nature. It explored some of the underlying reasons for the gap, both historical and present day, and included a peaceful mountain meditation and lovely music. One of the congregation's youth members provided facts about the intricate community that trees create in the forest. The USR was thrilled to have Derick Lugo, the author of *The Unlikely Thru-Hiker, An Appalachian Trail Journey* as guest speaker, who presented a lively and entertaining view of his thru-hike as an African American hiker. **This compelling service can be viewed here in its entirety:** https://youtu.be/xLI_Gu-PL8Y.



Derick Lugo

UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST OCEAN COUNTY CONGREGATION



EJTF Co-Chair Peggy Middaugh and nine other members of the Unitarian Universalist Ocean County Congregation (UUOCC) attended a rally in Toms River on Friday, August 21, 2020 to support the U.S. Post Office. The ten members included: Rev. Julie Newhall (at the far right in the photo) , Barbara Diamantopoulos (photo, far left) , Barbara Newman (photo center), Deb Lawrence (photo, 2nd from right), Pat Daly (great on the drums!), Joanie Parks, Roseann Depasquale, Peggy Middaugh (photo, 2nd from left) James Ellis, and Kiki Stalkke. The rally in Toms River was one of more than 20 scheduled statewide; the full story, and a video, is available here: <https://www.msn.com/en-us/news/politics/protesters-hold-rally-at-toms-river-post-office-dont-mess-with-our-mail-or-votes/ar-BB18exHJ>

MORRISTOWN UNITARIAN FELLOWSHIP

The recently-formed Climate Crisis Task Force of the Morristown Unitarian Fellowship (MUF) has created a private Facebook group, entitled "Fellowship Green Corner," for its members. The Task Force was formed as a result of a Resolution passed unanimously by the Congregation earlier in the summer, when they made a "full commitment to do whatever we can to help alleviate the causes of the



climate crisis and reduce its impact" (see p. 2 of the July 2020 EJTF Newsletter for text of the Resolution - <https://www.uufaithaction.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/EJTF-Newsletter-July-2020-FINAL-1.pdf>). The Task Force, as well as the Green Earth Ministry, will utilize the Facebook group to post environment-related events, actions, ideas, recommendations and success stories, and will encourage the MUF membership to do the same.

EJTF ACTIVITIES

- **EJTF Co-Chair Ray Nichols**, a member of the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Princeton's (UUCP) Ministry of the Earth, has - with participation from EJTF member Nancy Griffith - developed a very useful and timely Fact Sheet on steps all of us can take to address concerns about lead in our drinking water. The Fact Sheet (see below) is well-suited for use by congregations, as information for inclusion in newsletters or disseminated as part of a youth group project.

*A health message from UUCP's Ministry of the Earth and
UUFANJ's Environmental Justice Task Force*

Wondering About Lead in Your Drinking Water?

Lead can cause serious health problems, especially for pregnant women and young children. If your home/building was constructed prior to 1988, it is important to determine if interior lead solder or lead pipes are present.

What Can You Do?

- If you have concerns about your pipes, run water from your tap to flush out your pipe before you drink it, especially in the morning. Water that has been sitting around for several hours in your house pipes is more likely to pick up lead.
 - Water filters can remove most lead from your drinking water. However, the filter has to be specifically designed for lead removal – check whether it is certified for that purpose by an independent organization (for example, by the <http://info.nsf.org/Certified/DWTU/>).
 - Hot water is also more likely to dissolve lead and carry it to your faucet. Do not use hot water directly from the faucet to cook or make hot drinks.
 - Have your water tested for lead. While your municipality may have changed all of its delivery conduits to non-lead materials, the pipes inside your older home (or connecting to the municipal system under your front lawn) may not have been replaced. To confirm your water is safe to drink, contact a reputable, certified water testing lab and have them do an analysis. It is more costly, but it's better to choose an independent company that will not try to sell you a treatment system.
 - Your child's blood level can also easily be tested for lead by a pediatrician. Detecting an elevated lead blood level early is important and would give you time to determine where it's coming from.
 - Children spend a lot of time in school – how's the water there? Request water quality tests from your school district. If they do not have them done periodically, require that they do so.
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- **EJTF member Christine Dunbar** has been working with the NJ Sierra Club Conservation Chair Greg Gorman on the Tennessee Gas Pipeline Company's proposed expansion of the Wantage compressor station and a new West Milford compressor station. A letter has been drafted to mayors of adjacent townships, making local governments aware and offering them resources and educational opportunities. The Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Sussex County's Social Action Team will also be involved. **Public comments on issues with these projects have a current deadline of 9/14/2020 (see article under "Fossil Fuel Infrastructure" on p. 11 for details and instructions).**

- **EJTF and Greenfaith member Nancy Griffeth** was asked by Rev. Ronald Tuff of GreenFaith to appear on a gospel radio show, the George Gore Show, WKMB 1070 AM on 8/18/2020. The show was featuring Greenfaith's "Righteous Voter" initiative. Her statement (below) provided background information to a new audience about the EJ cumulative impacts bill (S232/A2212) in the NJ Legislature. **The bill has now passed in both the Senate and the Assembly.**

EJTF Member Nancy Griffeth's Statement on WKMB Radio 1070 AM

There are parts of New Jersey that are sinkholes for pollution -- pollution in the air with particulate matter that damages the lungs and dangerous chemicals like methane, sulfur dioxide, and nitrogen oxides. This pollution kills people. It worsens asthma, which is at epidemic levels in New Jersey cities and towns, and is linked to both cancer and heart disease.

These areas of New Jersey -- some call them sacrifice zones -- are home to power plants, waste incinerators, and sewage-treatment plants. It shouldn't be this way, because once a community reaches a level of pollution that's unhealthy to its members, we should prohibit building more industrial facilities so they can't put more toxins in the air and water. These pollutants have damaged the health of community members and according to a Harvard study, the level of particulate matter in the air is directly related to the likelihood of dying from COVID.

Right now there are no laws that make it possible to protect a community that's already burdened by pollution from having to put up with a new polluting facility. Instead, limits on pollutants apply only to individual facilities. So 10 facilities that are just barely under the limit for a healthy environment can be built in one community, and create almost 10 times more pollution than should be allowed. Because of this loophole in our legal structure, certain communities - mostly urban, poor, and communities of color - are repeatedly sacrificed on the altar of industrial greed. The Ironbound community is one of these. I quote Melissa Miles, the Executive Director of the NJ Environmental Justice Alliance, who has talked about bringing up children in the Ironbound area of Newark:

"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."

That quote is from a statement that Melissa Miles made before the New Jersey legislature.

This environmental destruction is not fair, this is not just, this is not righteous. Compassion and love require us to think of the members of these "sacrifice zones" when we vote and also when we talk to our legislators.

There's a bill right now in the NJ Legislature that gives us a chance to fix the problem of accumulating pollution - it's called the cumulative impacts bill, the numbers are Senate bill 232 and Assembly Bill 2212. The bill requires a different approach to considering permits for polluting facilities. If the bill passes, the NJ Department of Environmental Protection will be required to consider not just the immediate impacts of a new facility but the combined impact of all the facilities on the community. This is one of the most important things we can do to improve the health in these so-called sacrifice zones, and turn them instead into sacred zones.

The bill has widespread support. Governor Murphy supports it. The Department of Environmental Protection supports the bill -- the staff at the DEP want to be able to clean up NJ communities. The bill passed the Senate, and seemed to have the votes in the Assembly. But then it was held up by Speaker Coughlin in the Assembly after some business and labor interests talked to him. This, even though there are also unions and business interests that actually support the bill - even Covanta supports it, and Covanta has a controversial waste incinerator in Newark.

What does all this have to do with a righteous voter? A righteous voter needs to help his or her legislator vote righteously, so please contact your state legislators to vote for this bill, and also call Assembly Speaker Craig Coughlin, who has the responsibility of bringing it up for a vote. You should also share information about this bill with others and encourage your friends and family to contact their legislators as well. Again, it's called the cumulative impacts bill, and the bill number is 232 in the Senate and 2212 in the Assembly. Thank you for your support!

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

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

Sustainability Now - **Online Screening of "Here's the Story: The Green Amendment"**
Thursday, September 3, 2020, 7:00 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.

Join "For the Generations" for a screening of the film "Here's The Story: The Green Amendment," hosted by Sustainability Now. Check here for more details to come:

<https://forthe generations.org/events/sustainability-now-screening-of-heres-the-story-the-green-amendment/>

Delaware River Basin Commission Quarterly Business Meeting (Virtual)
Thursday, September 10, 2020 - 10:30 a.m.

The agenda for the meeting will be available here: <https://www.state.nj.us/drbc/meetings/upcoming/>. After all scheduled business has been completed and as time allows, the Business Meeting will also include up to one hour of Open Public Comment. Individuals who wish to address the Commissioners informally during the Open Public Comment portion of the meeting need to sign-up in advance by 5:00 p.m., September 9, 2020, here: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/business-meeting-of-the-delaware-river-basin-commission-tickets-114889375214>. Only individuals that are signed up in advance will be afforded the opportunity to participate in Open Public Comment. Please note that comments made during Open Public Comment Sessions are not included in any decision-making record. "The Commission affords this opportunity in order to be better informed about the concerns of basin water users."

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 many sessions (some concurrent) that include engaging speakers, facilitated discussions, workshops, and "virtual field trips." Links to the detailed schedule, list of sessions, and registration (\$100) are available at

<http://www.delriverwatershed.org/2020-forum>.



Online Discussion of "The Story of Plastic" Documentary*

Monday, September 21, 2020, 7:00 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.

***[see details below about streaming the documentary in advance of the discussion]**

The Morristown Unitarian Fellowship's Green Earth Ministry invites everyone to an online discussion of the documentary "The Story of Plastic." This 2019 documentary takes a sweeping look at the man-made crisis of plastic pollution and its worldwide effects on the health of the Earth and its people. (A 2-minute trailer is available here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=37PDwWoc1so>) The documentary is 89 minutes long, and after registering, you will receive a link for streaming it at no charge when it is convenient for you. You will also receive an action/discussion guide and a Zoom link for joining the discussion of the film on Monday, September 21, 2020, 7:00 p.m. - 8:30 p.m. Please register a few weeks in advance of September 21, if possible, and on or about September 7, registrants will receive the required links - register at <http://bit.ly/plasticstoryof>.



Maya van Rossum Facebook Live (Virtual) Interview with NJ Senator Bateman
Tuesday, September 22, 2020, 6:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.

Join in on Facebook for a live interview with Green Amendments For The Generations (GAFTG) Founder Maya van Rossum and NJ Senator Kip Bateman. Senator Bateman is a primary sponsor of NJ's proposed Green Amendment, a provision to constitutionally protect the rights of all New Jerseyans to pure water, clean air, a stable climate and healthy environments. Check here for more details to come: <https://forthegenerations.org/events/facebook-live-interview-with-nj-senator-bateman/>

"Prioritizing Social Equity in Infrastructure Transitions to Achieve Net Zero Emissions" - Virtual

Wednesday, September 23, 2020 - 12:00 p.m.

A presentation by Erin Mayfield, Postdoctoral Research Associate at Princeton University, as part of the series "New Energy: Conversations with Early-Career Energy Researchers" (see p. 7 for more information about the series). Social equity has historically been treated as ancillary or an outcome rather than an objective of infrastructure system planning and policy in the U.S. This presentation first reviews the historical, persistent, and multidimensional inequities embedded in coal and natural gas infrastructure as well as chemical, iron and steel, cement, and lime industrial facilities. Then, an approach for prioritizing social equity in future infrastructure planning, while achieving a net zero emissions target, is outlined. As an example, transition pathways are presented in which air quality benefits to environmental justice communities are optimized, with respect to decisions regarding the timing and location of investments in the retirement and conversion of coal, natural gas, and industrial facilities in the U.S. Check here for more details to come

<https://irving.dartmouth.edu/engagement/new-energy-conversations-early-career-energy-researchers>.

New Energy: Conversations with Early-Career Energy Researchers is a new online series featuring graduate, post-doctoral, and other early-career researchers sharing their discoveries and perspectives on energy-related topics. From policy to analysis to emerging research, this bi-weekly series will give anyone interested in energy the opportunity to learn from the rising stars in the field. For more information about the program, future talks, and for links to past talks, see <https://irving.dartmouth.edu/engagement/new-energy-conversations-early-career-energy-researchers>.

"Addressing Climate Change as a Deeply Uncertain Risk Management Challenge: Opportunities and Barriers" Zoom Seminar
Princeton University Andlinger Center for Energy and the Environment
Thursday, September 24, 2020 - 4:30 p.m. - 5:30 p.m.

Climate change is increasingly recognized as a risk management challenge, but one in which the risks are often deeply uncertain. Deep uncertainty exists when parties to a decision do not know or do not agree on any single probability distribution over future states of the world, the system models relating action to consequences, or the weightings over objectives. This talk will describe recent advances in decision making under deep uncertainty (DMDU); survey how these approaches have been applied to both climate change mitigation and adaptation; discuss successes, barriers, and challenges; and offer suggestions for future research. It will be presented by Robert Lempert, a principal researcher at the RAND Corporation and Director of the RAND Frederick S. Pardee Center for Longer Range Global Policy and the Future Human Condition. Among other activities, he is a convening lead author for Working Group II of the United Nation's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) Sixth Assessment Report, was a chapter lead for the Fourth US National Climate Assessment, is a member of Harvard's SCoPEX geo-engineering advisory panel, and was a member of California's Climate-Safe Infrastructure Working Group. Check here for more details to come: <https://acee.princeton.edu/Events/>.

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. Listed below are a small sampling of webinars taking place in September 2020. Further information about these seminars, **including registration information**, and a complete listing of the seminars, both virtual and in-person, for September 2020 is here: <https://climatechange.rutgers.edu/events/all-climate-events/month.calendar/2020/08/01/>.

Information Systems to Advance Environmental Justice
Thursday, September 10, 2020 - 1:00 p.m.

Innovative Pathways to Developing Solar+Storage in Low-Income Communities: Norfolk Solar's Qualified Opportunity Zone Fund
Thursday, September 10, 2020 - 1:00 p.m.

Environmental Justice Communities: Best Practices to Deal With Natural Disasters
Tuesday, September 15, 2020 - 1:15 p.m.

Coastal Habit Learning Series: State CZM Programs, Equity and Inclusion
Wednesday, September 23, 2020 - 12:30 p.m.

UUFANJ Fall Issues Conference (Zoom)
Saturday, November 7, 2020, 10:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.



SAVE THE DATE! -

This is the Conference where we will select the EJTF's goals that we will concentrate on for the next year!

Additional information will be available here:
<https://www.uufaithaction.org>

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>

Virtual Assembly: "A Just, Green Recovery for NJ"
YouTube Video of Webinar

On August 20, 2020, Jersey Renews - a coalition of labor, faith, community, and environmental organizations of which UUFANJ is a partner - presented a "Virtual Assembly" of political, labor, environmental and faith leaders speaking about the urgent need for a NJ recovery that centers communities, workers and climate. Speakers included: State Assemblyman Andrew Zwicker; Rev. James Bailey, President, Newark Black Ministers Conference; Doug O'Malley, Director, Environment NJ; Sheila Reynertson, Senior Policy Analyst, NJ Policy Perspective (who provided examples of possible revenue sources, some of which are included in Gov. Murphy's Revised FY2021 Budget Proposal); Andre Thomas, Isles, Inc.; Kevin Brown, Service Employees International Union, Local 32BJ; Hetty Rosenstein, NJ Director, Communications Workers of America; Jeff Tittel, Director, NJ Sierra Club; and Alexis Rean-Walker, Secretary/Treasurer, Health Professionals and Allied Employees. A video of the speakers' presentations is available here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zWxRz2EJyrw>.

"Accountability for Climate Change Harms in New Jersey: Scientific, Legal and Policy Perspectives"

Notes from webinar related to SR57 (A bill regarding pursuing legal action against fossil fuel companies for damages caused by climate change)

EJTF member Christine Dunbar attended the 8/19/2020 webinar co-hosted by Monmouth University, the Center for Climate Integrity, and the Union of Concerned Scientists, which examined climate and weather damage costs and discussed the growing trend of climate damage litigation against the fossil fuel industry. NJ Senator Joseph Cryan gave a general introduction to the Bill SR57, (text of the bill is available here: https://www.njleg.state.nj.us/2020/Bills/SR/57_I1.PDF) which "would urge the Governor and the Attorney General of the State of New Jersey to join 14 municipalities across the country and the States of Massachusetts and Rhode Island in pursuing appropriate legal action against fossil fuel companies, in order to shift the past and present costs associated with the damage caused by climate change onto the companies responsible for causing those harms." The bill passed the Senate Environment and Energy Committee 7/20/2020, but was not heard in the Senate on 7/30/2020 as had been scheduled due to opposition by the NJ Business and Industry Association.

The following summarizes the panel discussion about climate change harms in NJ:

- Panelist Professor Brenda Ekwurzel of the Union of Concerned Scientists emphasized that the NJ Flood risk within recent years has increased from 19,000 to 31,000 properties and that these costs paid by citizens are mounting as our coastline and habitats diminish.
- Panelist and Newark activist Nathaly Agosto Filion pointed out that each year the state budget provides less funding for adaptations to climate change.
- Panelist and Center for Climate Integrity member Mark Simons stated that an American Petroleum Institute-commissioned report in 1968 and a subsequent report in 1980 confirmed for fossil fuel companies, and all interested parties, that the environmental impact of continuing greenhouse gas (GHG) release would be extensive and that 1988 would be a pivotal year in emissions. Instead of investing in clean energy for the nation, at that time, the fossil fuel companies launched an extensive counterattack on science emphasizing the negligible uncertainty of studies, and opposing the Kyoto Protocol and all future climate policies from that date onward. Internal memos verify this strategy. There are now 15 lawsuits started by communities who have borne resulting climate-related costs; these are filed in other states as well as a petition to the Supreme Court.

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>. See also the

NEWS RELATED TO EJTF ISSUES

ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

In spite of opposition by the NJ business and industry sector, on 8/27/2020, **the NJ Assembly voted 49 to 28 (with 1 abstention) to advance S232, which was substituted for A2212**, the bill that EJTF and the environmental justice community have been very strongly advocating for, which would require cumulative impacts to be considered in approving permits for new power plants or major new manufacturing facilities, or expansions of such facilities, in communities already overburdened by pollution. Gov. Murphy has announced his support, and has been waiting for the bill's approval so he can sign it (see Nancy Griffeth's statement on p. 4 and the two articles below).

- **Stalled New Jersey Environmental Justice Bill With Big Permit Implications Likely to Pass** - "Attempts to create environmental justice legislation in New Jersey stretch back over a decade, with this latest bill getting farther than any prior attempt has before and set to become the strictest law of its kind nationwide according to stakeholders. Under S232, the state Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) would have to consider the impacts to 'overburdened communities' posed by certain new facilities, along with expansions of those facilities or renewals of major source permits. It would be effective 180 days from enactment." <https://www.wastedive.com/news/new-jersey-environmental-justice-bill-covanta-frontline-communities-waste-facilities-health/582940/>
- **Tool to Curb Pollution in Environmental-Justice Communities Fails to Get Votes** - This article describes the opposition to the bill S232/A2212 regarding cumulative impacts on overburdened communities, which, as of 8/27/2020, has been approved by both houses of the NJ legislature. <https://www.njspotlight.com/2020/07/tool-to-curb-pollution-in-environmental-justice-communities-fails-to-get-votes/>
- **New DEP Deputy Commissioner Fighting for the Right of New Jersey's Urban Residents to Breathe** - Olivia C. Glenn was appointed as the NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) Deputy Commissioner, Environmental Justice and Equity (Her profile is here: <https://www.nj.gov/dep/commissioner/deputy.html>). She was a member of the DEP's Environmental Justice Advisory Council, leading its efforts in outreach, education and land management, and her goal in her new position is to boost public and environmental health in low-income communities of color that have long been burdened by the pollution of industry. <https://enviropolitics.com/new-dep-deputy-commissioner-fighting-for-the-right-of-new-jerseys-urban-residents-to-breathe/>
- **Op-Ed: Office of Clean Energy Equity Will Ensure Jobs and Savings Reach All Communities in NJ** (by Charles F. Boyer, founding director of Salvation and Social Justice) - The author touts the bill (S2484) that recently cleared committee, which "establishes Office of Clean Energy Equity in BPU; directs establishment of certain clean energy and energy efficiency programs for overburdened communities." It would also provide clean-energy workforce development training to NJ's historically underserved low- and moderate-income residents. <https://www.njspotlight.com/2020/07/op-ed-office-of-clean-energy-equity-will-ensure-jobs-and-savings-reach-all-communities-in-nj/>
- **Video: A Letter from Maya K. van Rossum: Racial Justice Demands Constitutional "Green Amendments"** - Prompted by recent conversations and powerful activism nationwide, Green Amendments For The Generations (GAFTG) founder Maya K. van Rossum composed an open letter calling for environmental and racial justice, and offering a tangible pathway to change. Twenty-four diverse leaders and activists join her in delivering the letter in a moving video, titled "Racial Justice Requires Constitutional 'Green Amendments'". Included are civil rights activist Rev. Dr. Gerald Durley, White House Champion of Change recipient who marched with Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and protested alongside the late Congressman John Lewis, and New Mexico state Senator Antoinette Sedillo Lopez. <https://forthe generations.org/the-green-amendment/environmental-justice/>

ELECTRIC VEHICLES



- **NJ Planned to Help People Buy Electric Cars With a \$5,000 Rebate. Now, Not So Much -** The NJ Board of Public Utilities (BPU) reallocated funds for a number of programs, as a result of a 3-month extension of the Clean Energy Program to conform it to the revised NJ Fiscal Year that was extended due to effects of the coronavirus pandemic. Details of all BPU programs that gained/lost funds are here: <https://www.nj.gov/bpu/pdf/boardorders/2020/20200729/8A%20-%20ORDER%20Clean%20Energy%20Budget%20Extension.pdf> This reallocation resulted in \$16M of the \$30M originally allocated for the Electric Vehicles program being reallocated, citing "current forecasts" as showing that the budget can be reduced by that amount. The Electric Vehicles program includes rebates of up to \$5,000 to cushion the cost of purchasing or leasing zero emission vehicles. One result of the pandemic may be that fewer zero emission vehicles are available this year because of manufacturers' shut-downs. <https://www.njspotlight.com/2020/08/nj-planned-to-help-people-buy-electric-cars-with-a-5000-rebate-now-not-so-much/>

FOSSIL FUEL INFRASTRUCTURE

- **Gas Pipeline Company Has Plans for Former West Milford Quarry -** The Tennessee Gas Pipeline Company (TGP) recently applied to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) for an expansion of two compressor stations - one in PA and the other in Wantage NJ. This application also includes a new West Milford compressor station that would be located in the Highlands, close to a Category One (C1) tributary [note: Category One waters are protected from any measurable change to the existing water quality because of their exceptional ecological significance, or their significance as an exceptional fisheries resource] supplying the Monksville and Wanaque reservoirs. The Highlands supplies more than 70% of NJ - 6.2 million people - with clean drinking water. FERC is conducting an Environmental Assessment on the projects, and public comments have a deadline of 9/14/2020. Details on how and where to file comments, as well as how to obtain documents, are here: <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2020/07/21/2020-15735/tennessee-gas-pipeline-company-llc-notice-of-application>. A project description, with a link to a map, is here: https://www.kindermorgan.com/pages/business/gas_pipelines/east/east300upgrade/. Notably, TGP has a record of 111 "significant incidents" with their pipelines from 2006 to 2017. <https://www.msn.com/en-us/news/us/gas-pipeline-company-has-plans-for-former-west-milford-quarry/ar-BB15Qzq8>

RENEWABLE RESOURCES

- **Plans Underway for Building Massive Offshore Wind Farms Along Jersey Coast -** The NJ Board of Public Utilities (BPU) issued draft guidance for the State's offshore wind second solicitation guidance document. In September 2018, BPU issued a solicitation for 1,100 MW of offshore wind energy generation, and in June 2019 the application for a 1,100 MW offshore wind generation project submitted by Ocean Wind was approved. Subsequently, Gov. Murphy increased the State's offshore wind energy

generation goal to 7,500 MW by 2035. The guidance document for the State's second solicitation is for approximately 1,200 to 2,400 MW. A virtual public hearing was held 8/5/2020, and the current timeline envisions applications being accepted in December 2020 with a final decision by the BPU in June 2021. <https://www.njspotlight.com/2020/07/plans-underway-for-building-massive-offshore-wind-farms-along-jersey-coast/>

- **Former BPU President Challenges NJ to Bring Affordable Wind Power to Customers Here** - At a hearing on the Draft NJ Offshore Wind Strategic Plan, Jeanne Fox, former president of the NJ Board of Public Utilities (BPU) and co-founder of the Center for Renewables Integration, brought up the issue of transmission of offshore wind power, and whether an offshore wind transmission backbone is needed. According to Jeff Tittel, director of the NJ Sierra Club, "The BPU should do a study – and relatively quick," and he also advocates that the U.S. Department of the Interior Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) study the issue. <https://www.njspotlight.com/2020/08/former-bpu-president-challenges-nj-to-bring-affordable-wind-power-to-customers-here/>
- **New York, New Jersey Hesitant on Offshore Grid Planning Amid Federal Uncertainty** - The lack of clarity on where future offshore wind projects may be sited because of a protracted federal leasing process, is presenting a barrier to policymakers addressing a potential interconnected offshore transmission grid, rather than following the current process of each lessee planning an individual transmission line. Ramifications exist in a number of areas: cost, reliability, environmental impact, capacity, the technical limits of transmission, etc. The NJ Draft NJ Offshore Wind Strategic Plan requires consideration of different transmission options (see article above) and the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission will host a technical conference in October to consider how independent offshore transmission could be integrated into both independent system operators and regional transmission operators. <https://www.politico.com/states/new-york/city-hall/story/2020/08/24/new-york-new-jersey-hesitant-on-offshore-grid-planning-amid-federal-uncertainty-1311557>
- **Would a Wind Farm Threaten an Endangered Shore Bird? Satellite Tagging Project Aims to Find Out** - Atlantic Shores Offshore Wind, a joint venture between Shell New Energies and EDF Renewables that holds a lease on one of the U.S. Department of the Interior Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) NJ coast offshore wind leases, is studying whether a proposed wind farm off Atlantic City would conflict with the migration of the red knot. The red knot, which has one of the longest migrations of any bird species at up to 9,000 miles, is endangered in NJ, where it stops to feed during its migration. Satellite tags will be attached to a number of the birds so that their migration can be monitored to determine the potential impact of this proposed wind farm. <https://www.njspotlight.com/2020/08/would-a-wind-farm-threaten-an-endangered-shore-bird-satellite-tagging-project-aims-to-find-out/>
- **Solar Grids Built on NJ Farmland Get Senate Backing** - Based on the premise that NJ will never meet its clean-energy goals without additional grid-scale (at least 10 megawatts of electricity) utility projects, the Senate Environment and Energy Committee approved a bill (S2605) that could open up farmland to these projects, which is a reversal of long-standing policy to preserve open spaces. The bill, which has been subject to controversy (see articles at <https://www.njspotlight.com/2020/08/utility-scale-solar-agricultural-land-state-clean-energy-goals-ratepayer-costs/> and <https://www.njspotlight.com/2020/07/solar-farms-on-nj-farmlands-state-looks-to-boost-large-scale-projects/>, and the Op-Ed on p. 13) has gained the backing of the NJ Board of Public Utilities (BPU) and Jeff Tittel, director of the NJ Sierra Club, who stated "The most important piece is we are expanding the pie. That's critical because we need to be building a lot more than 200 megawatts a year. We are not getting there without farmland." Although the bill has been amended to exclude areas in the Pinelands, the New Jersey Highlands, preserved farmland, and freshwater wetlands, the NJ Conservation Foundation would like to see more exclusions, including for some forest areas. <https://www.njspotlight.com/2020/08/nj-massive-solar-grids-using-agricultural-land-legislation/>

- **Op-Ed: Grow Crops, Not Solar Panels, on New Jersey's Best Farmland** (by Michele S. Byers, executive director of the New Jersey Conservation Foundation) - The author, who is opposed to the bill S2605 (see article on p. 12, above), states that "The proposed legislation, S-2605, would toss out New Jersey's existing solar siting policies, including provisions to restrict solar on farmland and redirect it to sites like brownfields, landfills, rooftops and parking lots. The proposed law would not only make it easier to build large, utility-scale solar arrays on the state's best farmland, it would also allow forests to be clear-cut to make way for solar projects, which makes no sense. Forests store the equivalent of 8% of New Jersey's annual greenhouse gas emissions." <https://centraljersey.com/2020/08/22/grow-crops-not-solar-panels-on-new-jerseys-best-farmland/>



- **Big-Time Boost for Solar Energy in NJ Could Cost Utility Customers Big-Time** - Since NJ's Solar Renewable Energy Certificate (SREC) incentive system was ended as required by law, a Transition Renewable Energy Certificate (TREC) system has been put in place until a permanent new system can be implemented. The NJ Board of Public Utilities (BPU) tasked a consultant to prepare a required report with recommendations for this Successor Program to deliver improved solar performance at a reduced price. The "New Jersey Solar Successor Program Draft Capstone Report" has been issued (<https://njcleanenergy.com/files/file/NJ%20Solar%20-%20Draft%20Capstone%20Report%202020-08-11.pdf>). The report reviews and analyzes options, and gives key recommendations. Debate is expected, and NJ Division of Rate Counsel director Stefanie Brand is questioning whether there was enough focus on how much it impacts ratepayers. Brand has repeatedly asked for an analysis of what transitioning to offshore wind, solar, energy storage, and energy efficiency will cost ratepayers. <https://www.njspotlight.com/2020/08/big-time-boost-for-solar-energy-in-nj-could-cost-utility-customers-big-time/>
- **Edison Council Votes to Adopt Clean Energy Ordinance** - After a grassroots campaign orchestrated by Food & Water Watch, the Edison Township Council voted unanimously to approve an ordinance "Authorizing the establishment of a community energy aggregation program that requires 100% regionally sourced renewables." The ordinance creates a new program allowing the municipality to purchase energy at discounted bulk rates, and to set guidelines about the sources of electricity used by township residents. Such "Community Choice Aggregation" (CCA) programs are described in detail here: https://www.foodandwaterwatch.org/sites/default/files/fs_1910_commchoiceagg-web.pdf. To date, there are 15 CCA's in NJ, serving over 50 municipalities. <https://www.foodandwaterwatch.org/news/edison-council-votes-adopt-clean-energy-ordinance>
- **As Activists Push NJ to Divest from Fossil Fuels, State Turns to Green-Energy Fund** - The NJ Division of Investment, which manages the NJ \$74B public employees' Pension Investment Fund, for the first time is committing funds (up to \$100M) to the Stonepeak Global Renewables Fund. While this marks the first large investment in renewables, it does not address what a coalition of environmental groups ("Divest NJ" - <https://www.divestnj.org>) are asking, which is for the fund to divestment from all fossil fuel investments. Bills have been introduced in the NJ legislature (A2196/S330) that would prohibit investment by the State of pension and annuity funds in, and require divestment from, the 200 largest publicly traded fossil fuel companies, but the bills have not moved from their respective

committees since they were introduced. <https://www.njspotlight.com/2020/08/as-activists-push-nj-to-divest-from-fossil-fuels-state-turns-to-green-energy-fund/>

- **Op-Ed: On Clean Energy, New Jersey Can Serve as a Model for Recovery** (by Ken Berlin, President and CEO of the Climate Reality Project, founded by Al Gore) - The author describes a number of ways NJ is "taking the lead" in providing a model for "restarting our stalled economy, creating jobs, and lowering carbon emissions and pollution as we emerge from the COVID-19 crisis," and states that the rest of the country should follow NJ's lead. <https://www.nj.com/opinion/2020/08/on-the-climate-crisis-new-jersey-can-serve-as-a-model-for-recovery-opinion.html>

CLIMATE CHANGE

- **Climate Change and Human Health: A Review of Allergies, Autoimmunity and the Microbiome** - Authored by Carly Ray and Xue Ming of the Department of Neurology, Rutgers New Jersey Medical School, this study (available here: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7369820/>) examines how climate change has worsened respiratory allergic disease. It discusses how climate change has altered antigen exposure, possibly disrupting antigen-specific tolerance by the immune system, leading, in turn, to an increase in the prevalence of immunologic diseases. It also explores how the loss of biodiversity related to climate change may affect the microbiome, potentially leading to dysbiosis [microbial imbalance], inflammatory, autoimmune and neurologic diseases. An interview with Xue Ming, one of the authors, "How Climate Change Affects Allergies, Immune Response and Autism," is here: <https://patch.com/new-jersey/newbrunswick/how-climate-change-affects-allergies-immune-response-autism>).
- **DRBC's Climate-Change Advisory Panel Organizes; Selects Howard Neukrug of Penn's Water Center as Chairman** - The Delaware River Basin Commission's (DRBC) Advisory Committee on Climate Change (ACCC) held its inaugural meeting on 8/4/2020. The ACCC is comprised of 18 individuals with relevant climate expertise, representing various government, watershed, academic, business and water user perspectives. Members are listed at https://www.state.nj.us/drbc/about/advisory/ACCC_committee.html. At the first meeting, the Committee unanimously elected Howard Neukrug, P.E., Executive Director, The Water Center at Penn, University of Pennsylvania, as the Committee Chair. The ACCC's webpage (https://www.state.nj.us/drbc/about/advisory/ACCC_index.html) includes a description of its charge, as well as links to climate-related information, such as the video of a Webinar: "Climate Change and NJ Water Resource Impacts" DRBC hosted last May. <https://enviropolitics.com/drbc-climate-change-advisory-panel-organizes-selects-howard-neukrug-of-penns-water-center-as-chairman/>
- **New DRBC Climate Change Advisory Panel to Focus on Sea-Level Rise as Salt Front Threatens Drinking Water** - The Delaware River Basin Commission's (DRBC) Advisory Committee on Climate Change (ACCC) was set up in response to anticipated climate change concerns including more severe floods, droughts, storms and sea level rise, which could impact water supplies for approximately 15 million people. The first topic to be addressed is the sea level rise and potential incursion of salt water into South NJ and Philadelphia drinking-water intakes in the Delaware River's tidal section. Doug O'Malley, director of Environment New Jersey, urged the panel to advise the DRBC to incorporate climate change into all of its regulations. Such a change would require it, for example, to consider the climate impacts of the proposed Gibbstown liquefied-natural-gas terminal. The new panel's members have considerable expertise, but it isn't clear how much effect their advice will have. O'Malley stated, "It's an acknowledgement that climate change is impacting the Delaware river watershed. The question for the committee members is do they want to just summarize existing research or do they want to make concrete recommendations on how the DRBC can change its regulatory structure to tackle climate impacts." (Also see the first article under "Drinking Water-Related Issues" on p. 15.) <https://www.njspotlight.com/2020/08/new-drbc-panel-to-focus-on-sea-level-rise-as-salt-front-threatens-drinking-water/>

- **Op-Ed: How New Jersey Can Still Meet Its Clean-Transportation Goals** (by Matt Butner and Justin Gundlach, both of the Institute for Policy Integrity at the NYU School of Law) - The authors are in favor of NJ 's full participation in the Transportation and Climate Initiative (TCI), of which NJ is a member along with 11 other Northeast and Mid-Atlantic states and the District of Columbia. TCI's draft proposal is modeled somewhat after the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI), a cap-and-trade program that has helped to reduce carbon pollution from power plants. In this case, however, motorists at the pump, not utility customers, would pay the cost. Participating in TCI can provide New Jersey with the \$100 million-per-year fund it needs for crucial transit priorities.
<https://www.njspotlight.com/2020/08/funding-nj-clean-transportation-goals/>

DRINKING WATER-RELATED ISSUES (other than lead)



- **Creeping Salt Water Forces Cape May City to Consider More Desalination** - As oceans rise, resulting in contamination of surface water, private wells near the coast are at increasing risk of salt water intrusion, and salt water also continues to be found in some deep aquifers on the Cape May peninsula. Although the increase in salinity is related primarily to withdrawal from fresh-water reserves, which allows salt water to intrude into aquifers, it is made worse by sea-level rise. Other potential sources of drinking water that could be investigated include public water systems moving wells away from underground salt water, interconnecting with neighboring water systems, or installing desalination plants. But the best solution to a threatened water supply is water conservation. (Also see the last article under "Climate Change" on the bottom of p. 14.) <https://www.njspotlight.com/2020/07/creeping-salt-water-forces-cape-may-city-to-consider-more-desalination/>

POLLUTION

- **Coalition of 9 States Says EPA Delaying Landfill Emissions Rule, Asks Court to Intervene** - NJ joined California, Illinois, Maryland, New Mexico, Oregon, Rhode Island, Vermont, and Pennsylvania, along with the Environmental Defense Fund (EDF), to file a brief with the U.S. Court of Appeals, asking it to vacate the U. S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA)'s latest Emissions Guidelines final rule, which delays previous deadlines for implementing standards by several years. According to the brief, "Landfills emit significant quantities of climate-changing methane as well as health-harming volatile organic compounds and hazardous air pollutants. Consistent with its mandate under the Clean Air Act, the United States Environmental Protection Agency ('EPA') set standards in 2016 that the agency explained would 'significantly reduce' these harmful emissions. These standards required every state in the nation to have an implementation plan in place by November 2017. Since May 2017, however, and under the Trump administration, EPA has deployed a series of tactics to delay implementing the standards, without ever providing a valid reason for doing so." The latest delaying tactic was to issue a final rule, retroactively delaying the previously-missed deadlines for several years.
<https://www.wastedive.com/news/edf-nine-states-epa-lawsuit-landfill-methane-emissions-court/583720/>

- **EPA Shuts Down Rahway Incinerator Test** - The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) had been planning a test involving experimental burning at a Rahway municipal waste incinerator of a chemical (CF₄ - carbon tetrafluoride) what has a chemical bond similar to the bond in the PFAS (per- and polyfluoroalkyl) "forever" substances. The test was designed to explore the ability of such incinerators to break down these chemical bonds using "safe, nontoxic surrogate compounds." After controversy arose about the ultimate purpose of the tests and the lack of communication with the public, among other concerns, the NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), which had been cooperating with the EPA, asked that the tests be moved out-of-state, and EPA has cancelled the NJ test. <https://www.njspotlight.com/2020/08/rahoway-incinerator-chemical-disposal-test-scrapped-pfas-epa-blames-obama-official/>

OTHER

- **Governor Murphy Unveils Revised Fiscal Year 2021 Budget Proposal: “Stronger, Fairer, and More Resilient: Building New Jersey’s Post-COVID Future”** - When Gov. Murphy announced his revised FY2021 budget, covering 10/1/2020 through 6/30/2021, he voiced a strengthened "commitment to a green energy future – which will create thousands of good-paying jobs throughout the state" and stated that "we are going to keep our focus on making our state the place where new clean energy and green jobs are created, on investing in our workforce so they can compete and win in the careers of the future." The budget includes a \$60 million investment into the Clean Water and Drinking Water programs to ensure safe and modern water infrastructure statewide, stating that "These programs are critical to advancing environmental justice, addressing the threat of lead exposure in our communities, and creating good-paying construction jobs during our economic crisis." The budget proposal includes some cuts in the environmental protection area, and a \$40M line item "Transfer Clean Energy Fund Surplus (BPU)." (The full FY2021 Revised Budget Proposal is here: http://d31hzlkh6di2h5.cloudfront.net/20200825/88/b2/df/32/de79b8b5a48a7c430bdf57ed/FINAL_Report_on_the_Revised_FY21_Budget.pdf). A new budget must be in place by 10/1/2020, so state lawmakers have several weeks to review the proposal and act; so far, there are no public budget hearings on the official legislative calendar, although lawmakers say they are being planned. <https://www.state.nj.us/governor/news/news/562020/approved/20200825b.shtml>
- **NJ Budget 2020: No Hearings Scheduled as Groups Press for Open Process** - Gov. Murphy's budget proposal for the NJ nine-month fiscal “year” 2021 was announced on 8/25/2020, and the deadline for its adoption is 10/2/2020. However, so far, no public budget hearings are listed on the latest calendar posted on the Legislature’s website. The members of a coalition of interest groups called “For the Many NJ,” representing the interests of labor, low-income residents, environmentalists and others, sent a letter to the Chair of the NJ Senate Budget Committee stating that, "As of today [8/19/2020], 36 business days before the FY 2021 budget must be passed, there is no publicly available basic information on the budget process, like the schedule of key budget events and whether the New Jersey Legislature has plans to call upon state commissioners or fiscal experts to testify before finalizing the Appropriations Act." There is a petition prepared by "Jersey Renews," of which UUFANJ is a partner, (here: <https://njwec.salsalabs.org/justgreenrecovery/index.html>) that you can sign to call on the Governor and NJ Legislature to approve a budget that invests in clean renewable energy, a sustainable and safe mass transit system, and a just, green recovery that is pro-climate and pro-worker. <https://www.njspotlight.com/2020/08/nj-budget-2020-transparency-call-public-hearings/>
- **After \$60M Bribery Charges, Questions Renewed over Ratepayer Subsidies for Nuclear Power** - A federal bribery case was recently brought against the Ohio House Speaker Larry Householder, charging that Householder and his associates received \$60 million funneled through a network of secret accounts in exchange for passing a roughly \$1B nuclear plant bailout bill last year and thwarting a subsequent repeal effort. (A succinct description is here: <https://abcnews.go.com/Politics/wireStory/ap-explains-60m-bribery-probe-unfolding-ohio-72078919>.)

Ohio is one of four states, including NJ, NY and IL, that have subsidized the bailout of nuclear power plants. This case is raising some renewed criticism of NJ's bailout, and a call to insure that bailouts are decided on their merits and not because of political influence.

<https://www.njspotlight.com/2020/07/after-60m-bribery-charges-questions-renewed-over-ratepayer-subsidies-for-nuclear-power/>

- **PSEG Makes It Official: Fossil-Fuel Power Plants Are on the Way Out** - In a not unexpected move, the Public Service Enterprise Group (PSEG) announced that it expects to begin transactions, in the fourth quarter of 2020, to divest itself of its power generation division's fossil and solar generation portfolio, while retaining its nuclear power plants and exploring an expansion into offshore wind. PSEG CEO Ralph Isso stated, "Our intent is to accelerate the transformation of PSEG into a primarily regulated electric and gas utility — a plan we have been executing successfully for more than a decade. A separation of the non-nuclear assets would reduce overall business risk and earnings volatility, improve our credit profile, and enhance an already compelling ESG [environmental, social and governance] position driven by pending clean energy investments, methane reduction, and zero-carbon generation. We recognize the shift in investor preference toward owning regulated utility businesses without commodity exposure to merchant generation and related earnings volatility." According to Jeff Tittel, director of the New Jersey Sierra Club, "The big message here is they're moving away from fossil fuels — and so should New Jersey." <https://www.njspotlight.com/2020/08/pseg-makes-it-official-fossil-fuel-power-plants-are-on-the-way-out/>



- **Op-Ed: Beware of Energy Companies Bearing Gifts** (by Steven S. Goldenberg, Chair of the Energy, Climate Change and Public Utilities Practice Group of Giordano, Halleran & Ciesla, P.C., Red Bank, and Counsel to the New Jersey Large Energy Users Coalition) - [Note: A previous article described how the Public Service Enterprise Group (PSEG) and Exelon Generation Company (Exelon), 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 (<https://www.njspotlight.com/2020/06/these-power-companies-fought-for-a-300-million-nuclear-subsidy-now-they-want-a-new-deal/>). The article includes reactions on several sides of the issue, including that the Natural Resources Defense Council and the Sierra Club endorsed the Fixed Resource Requirement (FRR) approach taken by PSEG and Exelon. Jeff Tittel, director of the NJ Sierra Club said changes ordered by FERC in a new rule mean consumers pay more for fossil fuels, undercutting renewable energy, stating "The only real alternative is that BPU needs to move forward with FRR. We believe it can be done in a way that keeps competition up and can keep prices down."] This Op-Ed provides a comprehensive background and the author's analysis of why PSEG and Exelon so readily volunteered to forfeit the subsidies, stating that "The easy answer: They want a better 'deal.' To get one, the companies seek to leverage the state's frustration with a recent Federal Energy Regulatory Commission order that could inhibit the ability of clean-energy resources — solar, wind and nuclear — to clear the regional electricity grid operator PJM's capacity auction and receive capacity

payments. The concern is that the FERC order will increase the cost of renewable energy and undermine the state's clean-energy policies." <https://www.njspotlight.com/2020/08/op-ed-beware-of-energy-companies-bearing-gifts/>

- **NJ Lawmakers Want In On Fight Over Power Supplies** - In December 2019, 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, and a bill (S2804) just passed the NJ Senate Environment and Energy Committee that would give the BPU one year to study the costs and benefit impacts of various alternatives (including the FRR described in the Op-Ed at the bottom of p. 17) and submit a written report to the Governor and the Legislature. Included would be: the costs and benefit impacts to ratepayers, including residential and State and local government customers; and the costs and benefit impacts on renewable energy production, energy storage, and distributed electric generation in the State. <https://www.njspotlight.com/2020/08/nj-lawmakers-clean-energy-trump-battle-power-supplies-utilities/>
- **Lingering Outages After Isaias May Prompt BPU to Speed Rollouts of Smart Meters** - As part of an expected investigation into issues related to longer-than-expected power outages as a result of Tropical Storm Isaias, some NJ Board of Public Utilities (BPU) Commissioners are calling for a focus on smart meters and advanced metering infrastructure (AMI), including how effective this technology performed in NY, which has adopted it. The technology would allow for two-way communications between customers and utilities regarding outages, and according to Doug O'Malley, director of Environment New Jersey, "They're the key to a dynamic electric grid that can pave the way for a clean-energy future." After the BPU completes its investigation, public hearings may be scheduled. <https://www.njspotlight.com/2020/08/lingering-outages-after-isaias-may-prompt-bpu-to-speed-rollouts-of-smart-meters/>
- **What Will Help Rid NJ Lakes of Algae? State Says Cut Flow of Nutrients** - A number of approaches are being utilized by the NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) to address harmful algal blooms (HABs) in NJ lakes, ranging from short-term treatments such as aeration, harvesting of aquatic weed, the construction of wetlands platforms, and the use of ultrasonic waves. However, long-term solutions need to reduce the flow of nutrients from residential and farming sources, as well as implementing green architecture. (A video from NJTV (and transcript) describing the issue in NJ is here: <https://www.njspotlight.com/news/harmful-algal-blooms-invade-new-jersey-lakes/>). Jeff Tittel, director of the NJ Sierra Club, has stated that what is needed is that "DEP needs to go back and fix rules on stormwater and stormwater runoff that Christie weakened, and bring back the watershed protection programs that we had in the 90s. We have to put the lakes on a pollution diet." <https://www.njspotlight.com/2020/08/what-will-help-rid-nj-lakes-of-algae-state-says-cut-flow-of-nutrients/>
- **DEP Approves \$3.5 Million for Water-Quality Improvement Projects, Including Efforts to Reduce Harmful Algal Blooms** - The NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) has awarded \$3.5 million in grants for projects to reduce the impacts of nonpoint source pollution on waterways, including \$1 million for the development of lake and watershed restoration plans to mitigate harmful algal blooms (HABs). More than 30 lakes in New Jersey were affected by HABs in 2019, and some lakes have already experienced blooms this summer. Grants were approved for a number of projects throughout NJ, and range from funding studies of existing conditions, plans for mitigation, and construction of green infrastructure features. The DEP Press Release describing the projects is here: https://www.nj.gov/dep/newsrel/2020/20_0035.htm

- **Op-Ed: Return of the Summer Cyanobacteria Outbreaks** (by Bill Kibler, policy director at Raritan Headwaters Association) - Harmful Algal Blooms (HABS) caused by cyanobacteria are fed with pollution washed into the waters by rainstorms. The author advocates for communities establishing stormwater utilities, as allowed by a 2019 NJ law. "Here's how stormwater utilities would work: If commercial and residential developments that contribute to excessive stormwater runoff are forced to pay, it would be an incentive to incorporate more 'green infrastructure' into their design. The more specific sites, like big-box stores with huge parking lots, contribute to stormwater runoff, the more they would pay in utility fees. And the fees collected by stormwater utilities could pay for local projects like rain gardens, bioswales and permeable pavements that can help filter pollution from stormwater runoff... In the meantime, local residents can do their part by saying 'no' to chemical lawn and garden fertilizers, making sure their septic systems are working properly and picking up pet waste."
<https://www.njspotlight.com/2020/08/op-ed-return-of-the-summer-cyanobacteria-outbreaks/>

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
