



# Environmental Justice Task Force Newsletter

## December 2020

[covering 10/26/2020 – 11/24/2020] <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.**

**BIG, BIG WIN!! Gov. Murphy signed the strongest ban in the country on single-use plastic bags, polystyrene food containers, plastic straws and paper bags! (see p. 16)**



### EJTF has NEW Legislative Priorities and Advocacy/Education Goals for 2021!

As a result of discussions at the UUFANJ Fall Issues Conference held on November 7, 2020, and subsequent voting by EJTF members, the following three priorities were selected for 2021\*:

#### 1) Reduce fossil fuel emissions, especially in EJ neighborhoods, with focus on transportation

Follow the lead of our Environmental Justice partners including the NJ Environmental Justice Alliance, the Ironbound Community Corporation, and Clean Water Action. This will have direct impact on health of residents in EJ neighborhoods. See EJTF Activities on p. 2.



#### 2) Reduce lead in households, both in drinking water and lead paint

Following the lead of our EJ partners (see #1, above), help promote outreach to residents about avoiding or reducing lead in drinking water and lead paint in their households.



#### 3) Promote the Green Amendment

Support the Green Amendment: conduct outreach, especially through UU Congregations, to build understanding and support for the NJ pending legislative resolutions (SCR30/ACR80), which promote the right to clean air, clean water and a healthy environment. Follow the lead of "Green Amendments for the Generations." The Green Amendment is supported by our EJ partners.



\*Note: we'll discuss in-depth at the December 3, 2020 EJTF virtual meeting; see <https://www.uufaithaction.org/event/ejtf/2020-12-03/> for contact information.

## ***EJTF ACTIVITIES***

- Several **EJTF members** attended the (virtual) first Public Information Meeting held by the NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) for the **Rulemaking for the new NJ EJ Cumulative Impacts Law** (see below), and **EJTF member Nancy Griffith** participated in the comment period. The law doesn't go into effect until the rulemaking is completed.

### **First Public Information Meeting on Rulemaking for NJ EJ Cumulative Impacts Law**

On October 22, 2020, the NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) held the first public information meeting on NJ's new, groundbreaking EJ Cumulative Impacts Law. The meeting included a description of the law and requirements for the rulemaking, which are summarized well in the presentation slides, available here: <https://www.nj.gov/dep/ej/docs/ej-pres-20201022.pdf>.

**DEP is requesting comments by December 14, 2020** via survey at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/WVPTXRG>. If you are unable to submit a survey, you can email comments to [ejrulemaking@dep.nj.gov](mailto:ejrulemaking@dep.nj.gov).

The meeting recording can be viewed here: <https://youtu.be/yLgJUQcKwKQ>.

The DEP has a website for the EJ law (<https://www.nj.gov/dep/ej/policy.html>) and you can subscribe to the EJ Rulemaking Mailing List here: [https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/NJDEP/subscriber/new?topic\\_id=NJDEP\\_251](https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/NJDEP/subscriber/new?topic_id=NJDEP_251).

- Several **EJTF members** attended the (virtual) **NJ Spotlight Roundtable "New Jersey's Landmark Environmental Justice Law: How Will It Work?"**

The Roundtable included environmental justice advocates, business lobbyists and a state DEP executive, who discussed the need for the law and what challenges each of them see in implementing the program. Gov. Phil Murphy and Senator Cory Booker made introductory remarks. Participants for the discussion (moderated by Tom Johnson, NJ Spotlight News Energy and Environment writer) were:

- Raymond Cantor, Vice President, NJ Business & Industry Association (NJBIA);
- Shawn M. LaTourette, Deputy Commissioner, NJ Department of Environmental Protection;
- Melissa Miles, Executive Director, NJ Environmental Justice Alliance (NJEJA);
- Maria Lopez-Nuñez, Deputy Director, Ironbound Community Corporation (ICC); and
- Kate Gibbs, Deputy Director of 825 of the Engineers Labor-Employer Cooperative.

A video of the Roundtable is available here: [https://youtu.be/uAIoT-8L\\_Tw](https://youtu.be/uAIoT-8L_Tw), and edited excerpts from the discussion are here: <https://www.njspotlight.com/2020/11/why-new-jersey-needs-this-landmark-environmental-justice-law/>.

## ***UU CONGREGATIONAL ACTIVITIES***

### ***MORRISTOWN UNITARIAN FELLOWSHIP (MUF)***

# **MOVIE DISCUSSION: "A Life On Our Planet"**

Ellen Wilkove invites you to visit all ends of the Earth as seen through the eyes of naturalist *David Attenborough*. Witness wildlife and the effects of climate change up close and personal right from your living room on Netflix. Curl up with some hot cocoa and prepare to be awed and brought to the edge of your sofa, then meet up with the Green Earth Ministry for a post-movie discussion.

**12/17 7-8PM**

Zoom meeting ID: 912 5244 8256  
Passcode: 1955

Email [adultlearning@muuf.org](mailto:adultlearning@muuf.org) to reserve your spot



---

## ***ONLINE EVENTS***

***Some upcoming, and some past but viewable as videos  
Note: advance registration for events is often required***

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

---

### **Delaware River Basin Commission 4Q Public Business Meeting - **Virtual** Wednesday, December 9, 2020, 10:30 a.m.**

The agenda includes "Consideration of any items for which a hearing has been completed or is not required" and states that "at the December 9, 2020 Business Meeting, this may include but not limited to: Possible Commission action on the findings and recommendations of the Hearing Officer in the matter of Docket D-2017-009-2 for the **Gibbstown Logistics Center Dock 2** (a summary of steps taken on this Docket to date is here: [https://www.state.nj.us/drbc/meetings/adjudicatory-hearing\\_DRP.html](https://www.state.nj.us/drbc/meetings/adjudicatory-hearing_DRP.html)). This relates to approval for construction of NJ's first liquified natural gas (LNG) export terminal, proposed for Gibbstown, NJ. Individuals who wish to address the Commissioners informally during the Open Public Comment portion of the meeting are asked to sign-up in advance through Eventbrite **by 5 p.m., December 8, 2020** at: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/business-meeting-of-the-delaware-river-basin-commission-tickets-127012843835>. Only individuals that are signed up in advance will be afforded the opportunity to participate in Open Public Comment. Additional information is here: <https://www.state.nj.us/drbc/meetings/upcoming/index.html>.

**Delaware River Basin Commission Advisory Committee Meetings - **Virtual****

**Water Quality Advisory Committee**  
**Thursday, December 3, 2020, 9:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.**

**Climate Change Advisory Committee**  
**Thursday, December 17, 2020, 9 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.**

Details about the meetings are here: <https://nj.gov/drbc/meetings/advisory/index.html>

---

**Virtual Week of Action to Stop LNG Export Terminal**

**Virtual Rally on Monday, November 30th at 7:30 pm. Register here:**  
[https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZArdyuyqD8qE9CJQI\\_ycJz50tx61x47pPcA](https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZArdyuyqD8qE9CJQI_ycJz50tx61x47pPcA)

**Monday, November 30, 2020: Call-in Day to your state Governor**  
**Tuesday, December 1, 2020: Twitter Day**  
**Wednesday, December 2, 2020: Snail Mail Day**  
**Thursday, December 3, 2020: Instagram Day**  
**Friday, December 4, 2020: Petition and Submission Day**

**Sign the petition here:** <https://cleanwater.salsalabs.org/nj-lng-petition/>

The proposal to export fracked Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) from the Gibbstown Export Terminal will probably be decided on December 9, 2020 at the Delaware River Basin Commission (DRBC) meeting (see item on p. 3). In order to let the Commissioners who will vote on whether to approve the export of LNG from this Delaware River port know what the people think about this reckless proposal, you are invited to take part in "A Week of Action to Stop LNG Export."

The Week of Action provides a different action each day from November 30 to December 4, to speak to the DRBC to oppose the Gibbstown LNG Export terminal and tell them to VOTE NO to stop the project. On Friday, December 4, we will submit to the Commissioners – the Governors of New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania and Delaware, the voting members of the DRBC - our collective submission voicing why we oppose the proposed LNG export.

**Links to tool kits for the Week of Action** will be provided (here: <https://www.delawareriverkeeper.org/week-action-stop-lng-export>) for each day as we approach the dates.

---



# JERSEY WATERWORKS CONFERENCE 2020

DECEMBER 9-11, 2020 | CONNECTING VIRTUALLY

**Wednesday, December 9, 2020, 1:00 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.**

**Thursday, December 10, 2020, 6:00 p.m. – 7:15 p.m.**

**Friday, December 11, 2020, 9:00 a.m. – 10:30 a.m., 11:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m., 1:00 p.m. – 2:30 p.m. all Virtual, and free this year**

The sixth annual Jersey Water Works Conference is a multi-day virtual event that will bring together more than 300 state and local decision-makers, practitioners and stakeholders to amplify the importance of addressing NJ's water infrastructure, explore innovative solutions and celebrate the Jersey Water Works collaborative as an effective, comprehensive approach to achieving statewide impact. We will consider critical questions about NJ water infrastructure: How can we shift our water infrastructure policies and practices to ensure adequate investment so that utilities and the communities they serve are resilient? How can we ensure that everyone has access to reliable service?

The conference is presented by Jersey Water Works, a collaborative of diverse individuals and organizations (UU FaithAction NJ is a member) working to transform NJ's inadequate water infrastructure through sustainable, cost-effective solutions that provide communities with clean water and waterways; healthier, safer neighborhoods; local jobs; flood and climate resilience; and economic growth. The keynote speaker at the conference (on December 9) is to be Dr. Jalonne L. White-Newsome, Senior Program Officer at The Kresge Foundation. Dr. White-Newsome is responsible for the Environment Program's grant portfolio on Climate Resilient and Equitable Water Systems (CREWS) and serves as a member of Kresge's Operationalizing Racial Equity team. Her extensive knowledge in urban water, health, policy, climate resilience, and equity has allowed her to lead programs that yield economic and social change.

**See more information, including detailed draft agenda and registration (this year's conference is virtual and free) here: <https://conference.jerseywaterworks.org/>.**

---

## **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 is a small sampling of webinars taking place in December 2020. Further information about these seminars, **including registration information**, and a complete listing of the seminars, both virtual and in-person, for December 2020 is here:

<https://climatechange.rutgers.edu/events/all-climate-events/month.calendar/2020/12/22/->

**"New Jersey's Global Warming Response Act 80X50 Report"**  
**Tuesday, December 1, 2020, 12:00 p.m.**

Join Paul Orlando, Director of the NJ Department of Environmental Protection's (DEP) Division of Climate, Energy and Radiation Protection and Helaine Barr, Supervisor of the DEP's Climate Change Section, Bureau of Climate Change and Clean Energy, for a sector-by-sector look at NJ's greenhouse gas emissions inventory and the State's recent evaluation of progress and identification of pathways to meeting NJ's 2050 greenhouse gas emissions limit. More information is here: <https://climatechange.rutgers.edu/events/all-climate-events/icalrepeat.detail/2020/12/01/6129/-/webinar-new-jersey-s-global-warming-response-act-80x50-report>

**"Understanding Species Responses to Climate Change: The Role of Population and Community Ecology"**  
**Tuesday, December 1, 2020, 12:30 p.m. - 1:30 p.m.**

In this webinar, sponsored by Princeton University's High Mountain Environmental Institute, Jonathan Levine will illustrate the importance of basic population and community ecology for understanding — and predicting — how changing species interactions influence how ecosystems respond to climate change. Levine will draw from field experiments exposing plants to novel competitors under warmer climate conditions — as well as laboratory experiments on how evolutionary processes influence plant migration — to argue for the interconnected nature of basic ecological research and research motivated by the need to solve pressing environmental challenges. A discussion and Q&A will follow the presentation. More information is here: <https://environment.princeton.edu/event/hmei-faculty-seminar-understanding-species-responses-to-climate-change-the-role-of-population-and-community-ecology/>

**"Enhancing Federal Clean Energy Innovation: Looking Forward"**  
**Tuesday, December 1, 2020, 3:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.**

There is a pressing need to accelerate and strengthen the innovation process for clean energy technologies. The federal government can play a pivotal role in supporting innovation and in developing a clean energy innovation ecosystem. During this webinar, sponsored by The National Academies of Science, Engineering and Medicine, presentations will highlight strategies for developing a clean energy innovation ecosystem as well as promising regional strategies. A bipartisan conversation on how the federal government can best support clean energy innovation, and a discussion on the role for private entities will follow. The event will conclude with a panel discussion on practical considerations for implementing the ideas presented. More information, including a link to the agenda, is here: <https://www.nationalacademies.org/event/12-01-2020/enhancing-federal-clean-energy-innovation-looking-forward>

**"The Impact of Policies and Business Models on Income Equity in Rooftop Solar Adoption"**  
**Thursday, December 3, 2020, 1:00 p.m. - 2:00 p.m.**

Low- and moderate-income (LMI) households are less likely to adopt rooftop solar than higher income households in the US. Some state policy interventions and business models have expanded

solar adoption among LMI households, however. New research by Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory (LBNL) finds evidence that LMI-specific financial incentives, solar leasing, and property-assessed financing have increased the diffusion of solar adoption among LMI households in existing markets and have driven more installations into previously under-served low-income communities. More information is here: <https://www.cesa.org/event/the-impact-of-policies-and-business-models-on-income-equity-in-rooftop-solar-adoption/>

**"Marketing Soil Carbon Storage on a 2,000-Acre Regenerative Organic Grain Farm in NY"**

**Thursday, December 3, 2020, 1:00 p.m. - 2:00 p.m.**

Join this webinar to learn about how a 2,000-acre regenerative organic grain farm in the Hudson Valley in NY is reducing greenhouse gas emissions and sequestering carbon. The presentation will also address how a farm can earn income for its carbon offsets. In addition, the farm is the home of a non-profit that focuses on farm agricultural research and development of carbon measurement tools. Learn about its efforts to: expand research, create better carbon market infrastructure, improve farmer access to carbon offset markets, and maximize revenue to support the practice of regenerative agriculture in the long-term. More information is here:

<http://www.climatewebinars.net/webinars/reducing-greenhouse-gases-on-a-2-000-acre-regenerative-organic-grain-farm-in-ny>

**"Greenlink Equity Map: Visualizing Equity Issues to Build Stronger Climate Solutions"**

**Tuesday, December 8, 2020, 2:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.**

Cities across the country have begun to recognize the importance of prioritizing equity and environmental justice when designing and implementing climate and sustainability strategies. However, a lack of access to accurate and understandable equity data has presented a challenge to policy makers and community advocates alike. To help bridge this critical information gap, Greenlink Analytics and Upright Consulting Services partnered to launch the Greenlink Equity Map (GEM) and Process Guide. GEM is an online map designed to help visualize equity-related issues and how burdens are spread across communities. The GEM platform includes more than 15 equity indicators, including energy burdens, the portion of income community members are spending on energy bills, demographics, housing, health, transportation, technology, and more. The GEM Process Guide for City-Community Partnerships details emerging best practices and guidance for cities working in partnership with community organizations to develop a shared analysis of equity data. More information is here: <https://www.cesa.org/event/greenlink-equity-map-visualizing-equity-issues-to-build-stronger-climate-solutions/>

---

**Security and Sustainability Forum Webinar**

Several EJTF members recommend the webinars of the Security and Sustainability Forum (SSF). The SSF "convenes global experts to address the impacts to society from climate and other disruptions to natural systems." The main SSF products are free webinars on energy, food and water security, public health, urban resilience, economic vitality, infrastructure, governance and other impacts that must be solved in meeting climate security challenges. The following webinar may be of interest:

**"All We Can Save: Truth, Courage, and Solutions for the Climate Crisis"  
Thursday, December 3, 2020, 6:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.**

Join the nationally-syndicated public radio show Living on Earth (from PRX) and the Sustainable Solutions Lab at UMass Boston for a virtual conversation with contributors of "All We Can Save," a new anthology featuring expertise and insights of dozens of diverse women leaders on climate in the United States. The book aims to advance a more representative, nuanced, and solution-oriented public conversation on the climate crisis. "All We Can Save" illuminates the need for transformational climate leadership that is more characteristically feminine and more faithfully feminist and rooted in compassion, connection, creativity, and collaboration. This webinar will focus on climate adaptation, climate justice, and resilience.

Living on Earth's Steve Curwood will speak with co-editor Katharine K. Wilkinson and contributors Colette Pichon Battle, Jainey K. Bavishi, and Susanne C. Moser, "renowned leaders in the climate adaptation field." Register here:

[https://umassboston.zoom.us/webinar/register/4916051147011/WN\\_dBjT6RtpS2e1cp3qpc7cqQ](https://umassboston.zoom.us/webinar/register/4916051147011/WN_dBjT6RtpS2e1cp3qpc7cqQ)

---

**"Addressing Climate Change as a Deeply Uncertain Risk Management Challenge:  
Opportunities and Barriers" via Zoom**

**Princeton University Andlinger Center for Energy and the Environment  
Thursday, December 3, 2020 - 12:30 p.m. - 1:30 p.m. (rescheduled from September 24)**

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 geoengineering advisory panel, and was a member of California's Climate-Safe Infrastructure Working Group. More information and registration link are here: <https://acee.princeton.edu/events/robert-lempert-2/>

---

**Union of Concerned Scientists Conversation: "Connecting Faith, Climate, and Justice"  
Tuesday, December 8, 2020, 7:00 p.m. Virtual**

Climate change does not exist as its own calamity - it is deeply interconnected with the inequities and injustices that pervade our society, both in the United States and globally. The Union of Concerned Scientists invites you to a virtual conversation among faith leaders to learn how they have come to connect the call of faith with the need for action on climate change and racial justice. More information and registration link are here: <https://secure.ucsusa.org/onlineactions/XZILm3qCskCkTlUtbnrFwA2>.

---



# SAVE the DATES

**UUFANJ Virtual GALA**  
**March 5, 2021, 7:00 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.**

**This year's Gala will be particularly special to EJTF, because OUR nominee for UUFANJ's award won! She's one of our EJ partners, Kim Gaddy!** Kim is the environmental justice organizer for Clean Water Action of NJ, vice chair of the NJ Department of Environmental Protection's Environmental Justice Advisory Council, and coordinator of the South Ward Environmental Alliance in Newark.

---

**UU@UN Spring 2021 Seminar**  
**"All In for Climate Justice: Food Equity and Sustainability"**  
**Online April 9 - 11, 2021**

Are you passionate about food justice, global justice and climate justice? Next year's seminar builds off of last year's climate justice theme to focus on the connections between food and climate justice. More information is here: <https://www.uua.org/international-justice/un/spring-seminar>.

---

**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>

---

**Video of Webinar Climate Change Education in NJ Panel Discussion**  
**Moderated by NJ First Lady Tammy Murphy**

NJ is the first state in the nation to integrate Climate Change Education standards across the curriculum in a bold effort to address the looming climate change crisis. Legislation has passed and been signed by the Governor. Broad education standards have been set in motion. Our State is now moving on to specifics as to how to implement this law and these education standards throughout NJ.

Panelists for this discussion, moderated by NJ First Lady Tammy Murphy, provided an overview of climate education opportunities through the lens of their work in environmental and sustainability education, natural resource management, environmental justice and more. Panelists were: Olivia C. Glenn Deputy Commissioner, NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP); Mike Chodroff Teacher; Co-President of the Alliance for New Jersey Environmental Education (ANJEE); Missy Holzer Retired teacher; NJ Learning Standards Consultant; and Dale Rosselet Vice President for Education, NJ Audubon.

You can view the video here: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Sk5YHunxWws&feature=emb\\_title](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Sk5YHunxWws&feature=emb_title)

## ***NEWS RELATED TO EJTF ISSUES***

### **ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE**

- **NJDEP Begins Process to Draft Environmental Justice Regulations** - Gov. Murphy recently signed into law the first cumulative impacts EJ bill in the nation. It doesn't go into effect until regulations are developed by the NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP). DEP's first public information session took place on October 22, 2020 (see additional information on p. 2). <https://enviropolitics.com/njdep-begins-process-to-draft-environmental-justice-regulations/>
- **Making the Case for Why New Jersey Needs This Landmark Environmental Justice Law** - NJ Spotlight News held an online roundtable "New Jersey's Landmark Environmental Justice Law: How Will It Work?" A link to a **video** of the roundtable, as well as excerpts from it, are available here: <https://www.njspotlight.com/2020/11/why-new-jersey-needs-this-landmark-environmental-justice-law/> See p. 2 for additional information.
- **NJ Clean Energy Equity Act Passes State Senate** - The Clean Energy Equity Act (S2484) passed the NJ Senate on 11/16/2020. (Note **EJTF member Nancy Griffeth** in the "Update" photo here: <https://votesolar.org/usa/new-jersey/updates/nj-clean-energy-equity-act-passes-state-senate/>). The bill would create the Office of Clean Energy Equity in the NJ Board of Public Utilities (BPU), and is strongly supported by EJTF. 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 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 1,600 megawatt hours of energy storage to benefit 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. The next step is to get the bill passed by the Assembly and then to the governor's desk. <https://www.njshines.org/nj-clean-energy-equity-act-passes-state-senate/>
- **NJBPU Hires Deputy Director to Lead Clean Energy Equity Work** - Last June, the NJ Board of Public Utilities (BPU) president Fiordaliso pledged to create a new "Office of Clean Energy Equity" within the BPU (such an office is also included in the legislative bill S2484 that just passed the NJ Senate - see the article above). As the first step in developing that office, the BPU announced the hiring of Crystal Pruitt as the Deputy Director for Clean Energy Equity, "where she will be charged with ensuring that New Jersey's clean energy future is accessible to all residents," beginning November 23, 2020. The press release detailing her background and role is here: <https://www.bpu.state.nj.us/bpu/newsroom/2020/approved/20201030.html>
- **Here's What It Will Take for Biden and Harris to Deliver on Environmental Justice** - This article applauds the focus on environmental justice in this year's election, and expresses hope that the Biden administration will be able to follow through on its environmental justice proposals, which include passing national environmental justice legislation. The article extensively quotes Kim Thompson-Gaddy, an environmental justice organizer for Clean Water Action of NJ, vice chair of the NJ Department of Environmental Protection's Environmental Justice Advisory Council, and coordinator of the South Ward Environmental Alliance in Newark. "If we have a federal government that's also doing what we're doing locally and statewide, it sends a clear message [to polluters] that you're not going to be allowed to come

in and do business as you always have done in the past ... When we begin to have honest conversations about cumulative impacts and making sure the polluters are going to be held accountable, that's the change that we need to see. That could be transformative in our neighborhoods and in our cities," said Gaddy. <https://grist.org/justice/heres-what-it-will-take-for-joe-biden-and-kamala-harris-to-deliver-on-environmental-justice/>

- **Op-Ed: Environmentally Responsible and Economically Savvy in 2020** (by Lauren M. Boles, a civil engineer and city planner, founder of E4Progress, LLC, and former executive director of the NJ Environmental Justice Alliance) - The author touts the renewable energy goals included in the NJ Energy Master Plan, particularly the inclusion of community solar projects that benefit low- and moderate-income communities. <https://www.njspotlight.com/2020/11/alternative-energy-clean-energy-low-income-middle-income-solar-jobs-training/>

## ELECTRIC VEHICLES



- **NJ Senate Passes Bill Making It Easier for Gas Stations to Add EV Charging Units** - On 10/29/2020, the NJ Senate approved a bill (S938) that would exempt the installation of electric vehicle charging stations at gasoline service stations from site plan and other land use board review and variance relief requirements under the "Municipal Land Use Law," or any other law, rule, or regulation. The bill would also require the appropriate administrative officer to approve the application for the proposed installation if certain requirements are met, such as construction codes, safety standards, and any NJ rules specific to electric charging stations. <https://enviropolitics.com/nj-senate-passes-bill-making-it-easier-for-gas-stations-to-add-e-vehicle-charging-stations/>

## FOSSIL FUEL INFRASTRUCTURE

- **Highlands Council Ruling Paves Way for West Milford Compressor Station** - The NJ Highlands Council has found that a proposed compressor station in a spent quarry near Monksville Reservoir "is consistent with the Highlands Act." The Tennessee Gas Pipeline Co. plans to couple the project with two compressor station upgrades along the 300 Line, including one in Wantage NJ and one in PA. The pipeline runs from Pennsylvania through Sussex, Passaic and Bergen counties and into NY.

Tennessee Gas Pipeline Co. officials applied June 30, 2020 to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission for construction authorization. The project remains under review, records show. Applications for both compressor station sites in NJ are also under NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) review. A final decision on both is expected in December. <https://www.njherald.com/story/news/passaic/west-milford/2020/11/02/highlands-council-ruling-paves-way-west-milford-nj-compressor-station/6129344002/>

- **Environmental Groups Denounce SRL Drilling Continuation** - The NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) has reinstated the permit to New Jersey Natural Gas (NJNG) that allows the company to resume drilling in the construction of the Southern Reliability Link (SRL) pipeline. DEP had suspended the permit in July after a series of construction accidents led to the condemnation of a home along the pipeline route. The permit was reinstated despite NJNG not having definitively identified the causes of this and another accident, as DEP had required. The Pinelands Preservation Alliance and the NJ Sierra Club have condemned DEP's action, with Jeff Tittel, Director of the NJ Sierra Club, stating that "We should be granted a stay so that we can have our day in court. DEP is pushing this pipeline through without thinking about the community and the people living along the route. Instead of protecting the Pinelands, DEP is promoting pipelines." <https://www.insidernj.com/press-release/environmental-groups-denounce-srl-drilling-continuation/>
- **Op-Ed: Here's How NJ Can Protect Consumers and State Clean-Energy Policy From Feds' Fossil Fuel Favors** (by Barbara Blumenthal, research director with the New Jersey Conservation Foundation, and Casey Roberts, a senior attorney for the Sierra Club who advocates for transforming wholesale markets to better protect consumers and integrate clean energy resources) - 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 seen as a threat to NJ's meeting its clean energy goals. The NJ Board of Public Utilities (BPU) has been considering several approaches to address this, with a decision expected by the end of the year. The authors recommend that, before the BPU makes a decision, it solicits bids on its own from energy generators in the region to supply the required capacity needs. If the prices offered are low enough to protect consumers, then NJ can sign bilateral contracts for the power based on the bids and leave the PJM capacity market. <https://www.njspotlight.com/2020/10/op-ed-heres-how-nj-can-protect-consumers-and-state-clean-energy-policy-from-feds-fossil-fuel-favors>
- **Op-Ed: The Big and Costly Flaw in Gov. Murphy's Energy Master Plan** (by Eric DeGesero, executive vice president of the Fuel Merchants Association of New Jersey) - The author (proceeding from an assumption that following the NJ Energy Master Plan may result in "forcing the 87% of New Jerseyans who use natural gas, oil or propane to surrender our existing central heating systems for electric heat") examines the drawbacks of using electric heat pumps as the only heat source, obstacles to their installation in older homes such as those with boilers, and costs to consumers. <https://www.njspotlight.com/2020/11/nj-energy-master-plan-gov-phil-murphy-major-flaw-forcing-residents-switch-all-electric/>

## LEAD REDUCTION IN HOUSEHOLDS

- **4,800 New Cases Of Childhood Lead Poisoning Reported in New Jersey Annually** - The article quotes a press release from Isles, Inc., a community development and environmental organization based in Trenton, NJ stating that New Jersey registers more than 4,800 new cases of lead poisoning in children annually, and that most cases come not from lead in water but from exposure to lead dust in homes — "from cracked, chipped or deteriorated paint." Cases of lead poisoning are rising as children spend more time at home due to COVID-19. <https://www.njspotlight.com/2020/11/4800/>



## THE GREEN AMENDMENT

- **What Does the Presidential Election Mean for Our Green Amendment Movement?** - Maya van Rossum, Founder of Green Amendments For The Generations describes the transformational change that states could make by passing green amendments to their constitutions, no matter who is in power in Washington, D.C. <https://forthegenerations.org/november-2020-newsletter/>

## RENEWABLE RESOURCES

- **Publication of Community Solar Proposed Rule Amendments – Comments Due Jan. 15, 2021** - Two proposed rule amendments to the Community Solar Energy Pilot Program have been published in the NJ Register. Comments on each proposed rule amendment will be accepted until January 15, 2021. Lessons learned from the first year of the program, as well as from stakeholder feedback, have informed the development of the proposed amendments. In particular, stakeholders and NJ Board of Public Utilities (BPU) staff highlighted concerns with project development timelines, annual capacity allocation, low- and moderate-income eligibility criteria, and the timing requirements for notification of changes to customer subscriber management organizations. The first proposed rule amendment, Docket Number QX20090577 is available here: [https://njcleanenergy.com/files/file/CommunitySolar/PRN%202020-108%20\(52%20N J R %202039\(a\)\).pdf](https://njcleanenergy.com/files/file/CommunitySolar/PRN%202020-108%20(52%20N J R %202039(a)).pdf). The second proposed rule amendment, Docket Number QX20090594 is available here: [https://njcleanenergy.com/files/file/CommunitySolar/PRN%202020-109%20\(52%20N J R %202041\(a\)\).pdf](https://njcleanenergy.com/files/file/CommunitySolar/PRN%202020-109%20(52%20N J R %202041(a)).pdf). **Additional information and the link to submit comments are here:** <https://myemail.constantcontact.com/Publication-of-Community-Solar-Proposed-Rule-Amendments---Comments-Due-Jan--15--2021.html?soid=1102115586534&aid=VQ7hJT-eDIY>



- **East Brunswick Voters Back Bold Clean Energy Ballot Question** - This past election, 70% of voters in East Brunswick voted to create a township-wide renewable energy aggregation program. Such energy aggregation programs allow residents in a community to take control of the electricity purchased by their local utility, while leaving ownership of power plants and the grid in the hands of utilities. A fact sheet about such programs is here: [https://www.foodandwaterwatch.org/sites/default/files/fs\\_1910\\_commchoiceagg-web.pdf](https://www.foodandwaterwatch.org/sites/default/files/fs_1910_commchoiceagg-web.pdf). Nine states currently allow them, and NJ now has 15 of them serving over 50 municipalities. East Brunswick's municipal energy aggregation program has a goal of reaching 100 percent renewable energy by 2030. <https://www.insidernj.com/press-release/east-brunswick-voters-back-bold-clean-energy-ballot-question/>

- State, Regional Grid Operator Hook Up to Brainstorm Bringing Wind Power Ashore** - In anticipation of the NJ Board of Public Utilities (BPU) starting a competitive bidding process next year for transmission facilities for future wind farms, it has entered into an agreement with PGM Interconnection to search for potential solutions for issues of transmission of wind-generated power to shore. This makes NJ the first state to fully align its offshore wind transmission goals with its regional grid operator's planning process, which the BPU states will allow NJ to explore options for an optimal long-term solution for offshore wind transmission that otherwise may not have been available at this stage of development. The process will also allow the BPU to determine how a coordinated approach can lead to more cost-effective, efficient transmission solutions that minimize the environmental impacts of bringing wind energy ashore. The BPU's press release is here: <https://www.state.nj.us/bpu/newsroom/2020/approved/20201118a.html>. Focus will be on the issues of onshore upgrades, beach crossings with offshore platforms to collect energy from multiple wind farms, and an ocean wind-transmission backbone. <https://www.njspotlight.com/2020/11/offshore-wind-transmission-backbone-bpu-pjm-interconnection-partner-work-together/>
- Hunterdon, NJ Food Bank Receives Donation of 33-KW Rooftop Solar** - Thanks to a high school student who volunteers at the Flemington Area Food Pantry, and whose father works in the solar industry, a collaboration of solar industry leaders and community volunteers donated components for an entire solar installation. The annual amount saved from the pantry's electricity bill - over \$10k in 2019 - is enough to prepare 6,360 meals. <https://enviropolitics.com/hunterdon-nj-food-bank-receives-donation-of-33-kw-rooftop-solar/>
- Op-Ed: 'Blue Holes' Offer New Jersey Unique Opportunity for Solar Development** (by Renee Blizzard, a former mayor of Downe Township) - The author proposes "Blue Holes," which are former sand and gravel mining sites now filled with water, as uniquely suited for large-scale solar development. They are large, have existing electrical infrastructure and industrial zoning, would not encroach on pristine open space, would provide jobs, and would potentially result in community solar projects for surrounding communities. <https://www.njspotlight.com/2020/10/njs-unique-solar-energy-opportunity-blue-holes-sand-gravel-mining-industry/>

## CLIMATE CHANGE

- Environmental Groups Press Murphy to Reject Regional Anti-Pollution Pact. They Say It's Not Bold Enough** - Clean Water Action (CWA) has joined the NJ Environmental Justice Alliance (NJEJA) and Ironbound Community Corporation (ICC) to urge NJ not to participate in the regional Transportation & Climate Initiative (TCI). TCI is a regional collaboration among 12 Northeastern states and the District of Columbia, in which each would tax transportation fuels with the intention of funding programs to reduce carbon emissions in the transportation sector, with proposed "minimum investments" of 35% of proceeds earmarked for "underserved and overburdened communities." CWA's concerns include the possibility that such a cap-and-trading program is likely to disproportionately impact environmental justice communities and that funds raised could be diverted for other purposes, as has occurred in NJ in the past. TCI also represents a regressive tax on low- and moderate-income households. Individual states will decide whether to join the program over the next few months, and the NJ legislature would have to approve it. Some clean-energy advocates are in favor of it, so NJ's decision may spark controversy, particularly in the upcoming gubernatorial election year. <https://www.njspotlight.com/2020/11/transportation-climate-initiative-tci-some-nj-environmental-groups-urge-gov-phil-murphy-reject/>

- **DEP Warns Environmentalists Not to Prejudge Climate Regulation Review** - Preliminary remarks by the NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) Deputy Commissioner Shawn LaTourette about the regulations being developed under the NJ PACT (Protecting Against Climate Threats) review process have drawn adverse reactions from NJ environmental groups. In response, LaTourette explained that it is premature to draw conclusions about what the regulations will include: an outline of the proposed regulations will be available in a road map to be issued before the end of the year, for public comment. In addition, public comments will be solicited when the proposed regulations are published early next year. <https://www.njspotlight.com/2020/10/flooding-rules-review-climate-change-nj-sea-level-rise-environmentalists-dep/>
- **Remembering Sandy, State Works to Prepare for More Frequent and Intense Storms** - This article describes some of the projected NJ climate change impacts, including more frequent and intense storms, and provides a summary of steps NJ is taking to address them. <https://www.thesandpaper.net/articles/remembering-sandy-state-works-to-prepare-for-more-frequent-and-intense-storms/>

## DRINKING WATER-RELATED ISSUES (other than lead)



- **State Lawsuit Targets South Jersey Chemical Company and Its Predecessor** - The NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) and the NJ Attorney General filed a lawsuit to compel the clean-up of contamination, and recover Natural Resource Damages (NRDs), related to PFAS (per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances, also known as "forever chemicals") contamination by the Solvay Specialty Polymers company and its predecessor Arkema, Inc. Specifically, a 2007-2009 survey found PFNA (a PFAS chemical) in the Delaware River water near the Solvay site at a concentration that was the highest reported concentration in surface water in the world at that time. Similarly, the levels of PFNA found in the nearby Borough of Paulsboro's water supply in 2014 were higher than had ever been reported in drinking water elsewhere in the United States or the world. These findings and the Department's allegations are also backed by U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) studies. The State's complaint alleges that despite evidence linking the Solvay property to extensive PFAS contamination across Gloucester, Camden, and Salem Counties, Solvay "has refused to take full responsibility for the necessary investigation and remediation" and "failed to disclose the impact of their use and releases of PFAS into the environment" to DEP and surrounding communities. <https://www.njspotlight.com/2020/11/nj-state-lawsuit-dep-attorney-general-solvay-specialty-polymers-gloucester-county-pfas-forever-chemicals-plus-new/>

- **Rutgers Launches Paulsboro PFAS Study With Public Information Session** - Rutgers University's School of Public Health has partnered with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry on a national study investigating possible links between PFAS (per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances, also known as "forever chemicals") and a range of health conditions. In NJ, the site chosen for the study is Paulsboro, because of past occurrence of a PFAS chemical in one of the town's drinking water wells (see related lawsuit described in the article on p. 15). <https://www.njspotlight.com/2020/10/pfas-forever-chemicals-study-health-effects-drinking-water-paulsboro-nj/>
- **Clock Ticking on 'Forever Chemicals'? Biden Win Spurs Revival of Plans for Federal Regulation** - Representative Frank Pallone of NJ, chairman of the U.S. House of Representatives Energy and Commerce Committee, spearheaded passage of the "PFAS Action Act" ("PFAS": per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances) in January 2020, but it did not make it out of committee in the Senate. The Act would require the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to list these chemicals as hazardous substances under Superfund. In the absence of national regulation, states including NJ have set their own health standards. "The Biden Plan to Secure Environmental Justice and Equitable Economic Opportunity" states that "Instead of making empty promises with no follow-through, Biden will tackle PFAS pollution by designating PFAS as a hazardous substance, setting enforceable limits for PFAS in the Safe Drinking Water Act, prioritizing substitutes through procurement, and accelerating toxicity studies and research on PFAS." <https://www.njspotlight.com/2020/11/biden-win-spurs-hopes-pfas-federal-regulation-forever-chemicals-rep-frank-pallone-key/>

## POLLUTION

- **Say 'So Long' to Plastic Bags. NJ Ban Now Law** - On 11/5/2020, after vetoing a bill two years ago that "didn't go far enough," Gov. Murphy signed into NJ law the bill banning businesses from handing out single-use plastic bags, polystyrene food containers, plastic straws and paper bags that environmental activists have been advocating for years. While some food industry groups had originally opposed the bill, they ultimately realized that it was better to have a statewide law than to have to comply with a myriad of requirements that were being implemented by individual jurisdictions. "Gov. Murphy signed the strongest single-use ban on plastics in the country to prioritize our wildlife and our communities over endless plastic waste polluting our waterways," said Doug O'Malley, Director of Environment New Jersey. <https://www.njspotlight.com/2020/11/ban-law-single-use-paper-bags-plastic-bags-polystyrene-foam-containers/>
- **Plastic Bags Banned in N.J. as Murphy Signs New Law** - This article gives additional details on implementation of the new NJ law banning businesses from handing out single-use plastic bags, polystyrene food containers, plastic straws and paper bags. <https://www.msn.com/en-us/lifestyle/lifestyle-buzz/plastic-bags-banned-in-nj-as-murphy-signs-new-law/ar-BB1aH7gi>
- **Governor Murphy Signs Legislation Banning Single-Use Paper and Plastic Bags in New Jersey** - Gov. Murphy's press release includes his statement that "With today's historic bill signing, we are addressing the problem of plastic pollution head-on with solutions that will help mitigate climate change and strengthen our environment for future generations." The press release describes the bill and provides laudatory reactions from a number of environmental advocates and NJ government officials. <https://www.state.nj.us/governor/news/news/562020/approved/20201104a.shtml>



## OTHER

- **Groups Line Up to Challenge Nuclear Subsidies** - A coalition including advocates, business interests and energy suppliers ("NJ Ratepayers United," including such diverse groups as NJ Citizen Action, AARP NJ, and Americans for Prosperity - NJ) is coordinating a campaign to oppose a "Fixed Resource Requirement" (FRR) proposal for NJ. Public Service Enterprise Group (PSEG) and Exelon Generation Company (Exelon) previously submitted a complicated proposal to the NJ Board of Public Utilities (BPU) for the FRR approach, which would allow utilities to submit their own capacity procurement plans instead of participating in the centralized PJM capacity market. In that proposal, they stated that they would give up the previously approved \$300 million annual subsidy for South Jersey nuclear power plants. However, PSEG has since also submitted a new application to extend the nuclear subsidies. The NJ Ratepayers United coalition is also opposing that application. <https://www.njspotlight.com/2020/11/nuclear-subsidy-nj-ratepayers-united-pseg-300-million-zecs-moving-off-grid-pjm/>
- **More Aggressive Tree-Trimming by Utilities? That's What Officials at One State Agency Want** - The NJ Board of Public Utilities (BPU) has issued a report reviewing electric utilities' performance during and after Tropical Storm Isaias (available here: <https://www.nj.gov/bpu/pdf/boardorders/2020/20201118/6A%20%202020%20Tropical%20Storm%20Isaias%20BPU%20Staff%20Report.pdf>). One of the recommendations in the report is for legislation that would allow utilities to trim or remove trees that threaten power lines, even if the trees are not in the utilities' rights of way (with permission from the property owner). This goes farther than the language in currently-pending legislation (S434) (summarized here: [https://www.njleg.state.nj.us/2020/Bills/S0500/434\\_R1.PDF](https://www.njleg.state.nj.us/2020/Bills/S0500/434_R1.PDF)), the "Vegetation Management Response Act." <https://www.njspotlight.com/2020/11/nj-electric-utilities-trimming-trees-advocated-aggressive-tighter-rules-board-public-utilities-lawmakers/>



- **Over 700 Trees Planted at the Community Tree Planting Event** - The Howell, NJ Environmental Commission received a grant earlier this year, from Sustainable Jersey and the Nature Conservancy, as part of a grant program designed to fund the planting of 100,000 trees for floodplain restoration in NJ. Local residents planted over 700 trees across Winston Park in Howell at the "Roots For Rivers Community Tree Planting Event." <https://www.jerseyshoreonline.com/howell/over-700-trees-planted-at-the-community-tree-planting-event/>
- **Op-Ed: Liberty State Park Restoration Plan Still Open to Feedback from the Public** (by Michele S. Byers, New Jersey Conservation Foundation Executive Director) - On 10/20/2020, the NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) held its first Virtual Public Hearing on plans to restore

234 contaminated acres in the interior of Liberty State Park. The public hearing, on the "Restoration 30% Design Concept," may be viewed here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QtMzOASx5bs>. The time period for feedback has passed, but DEP plans to incorporate the feedback already received into its restoration plan, and present a "60% Design" in late winter - early spring 2021, with the goal of a 100% complete design by summer 2021 and start of construction in the fall of 2021.

<https://hudsoncountyview.com/op-ed-liberty-state-park-restoration-plan-still-open-to-feedback-from-the-public/>

- **Congressman Frank Pallone And Senator Cory Booker Discuss Environmental Outlook For New Biden Administration** - The NJ League of Conservation Voters (LCV) hosted a post-election webinar featuring U.S. Senator Cory Booker, member of the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works, and U.S. Congressman Frank Pallone, Chair of the House Energy and Commerce Committee. Video of the discussion is here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2wRlBG6So2c>. The Senator and Congressman discussed the recent election results and what they mean for action needed to protect the environment, address climate change, and safeguard clean drinking water.

<https://www.insidernj.com/press-release/congressman-frank-pallone-senator-cory-booker-discuss-environmental-outlook-new-biden-administration/>

### **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

---