



# Environmental Justice Task Force Newsletter - March 2022

<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.**



## OUTLINE of EJTF's GOALS for 2022

Based on EJTF discussions, and conversations with EJTF's partner organizations in the environmental justice community, the following is a preliminary outline of our goals for 2022. Many aspects of EJTF's work on networking and education on environmental justice are underpinnings of the work included in pursuing the identified goals. [Note: descriptions may change slightly upon final approval.]

1. Furthering the adoption of the Green Amendment in New Jersey through work in our congregations and as a Task Force;
2. Addressing food-related issues, including a variety of interests and actionable items, e.g., regenerative agriculture, community gardens, food deserts, and consumption; and
3. Supporting 100% clean energy, including transportation and Electric Vehicles (EV's), and the Clean Energy Equity Act.

Save the date!

UUFANJ Spring Gala - April 9, 2022 (see p. 10)

## NEWSLETTER CONTENTS

<a href="#">Outline of EJTF's Goals for 2022</a> .....	1	- <a href="#">Fossil Fuel Infrastructure</a> .....	16
<a href="#">Clean Energy Equity Act Update</a> .....	2	- <a href="#">Renewable Resources</a> .....	16
<a href="#">EJTF Activities</a> .....	2	- <a href="#">Climate Change</a> .....	17
<a href="#">Future Events</a> .....	3	- <a href="#">Pollution</a> .....	18
<a href="#">Videos of Past Events</a> .....	10	- <a href="#">Drinking Water (other than lead)</a> .....	19
<a href="#">News Related to EJTF Issues</a> .....	13	- <a href="#">Educational &amp; Youth Programs</a> .....	19
- <a href="#">Environmental Justice</a> .....	13	- <a href="#">Land Management/Agriculture/Food</a> ..	19
- <a href="#">Electric Vehicles &amp; Vehicle Emission Reduction</a> .....	13	- <a href="#">Other</a> .....	21
- <a href="#">Lead Reduction in Households</a> .....	14	<a href="#">Moratorium Mondays</a> .....	22

## CLEAN ENERGY EQUITY ACT UPDATE

The NJ Senate's Clean Energy Equity Act bill (S336), which aims to help ensure that NJ's overburdened communities benefit from clean-energy access, energy savings and job opportunities, was unanimously voted out of the Senate Environment and Energy Committee on 2/10/2022, with many attendees to the committee hearing expressing support. The bill also passed the Senate Committee and the full Senate last session, but was held up in the Assembly Telecommunications and Utilities Committee due to labor union concerns. The NJ Shines coalition, **of which UU FaithAction is a part**, is considering amendments to make it more acceptable in the Assembly. As of 2/24/2022, the current Assembly bill (A1479) is not yet scheduled to be considered by the Committee.

## EJTF ACTIVITIES

- **EJTF member Nancy Griffeth** attended the First Environmental Summit held by the South Ward Environmental Alliance (SWEA), a group founded and directed by **EJTF partner Kim Gaddy**. SWEA is an alliance of residents and community-based organizations with a focus on environmental justice issues in the three neighborhoods of the South Ward of Newark, NJ. At the Environmental Summit, panelists discussed the status of the water, the quality of the air, and food justice in the South Ward. Some of the issues that were raised included: the importance of green infrastructure and growing food in Newark; lead pipe replacement; the Newark DIG "Doing Infrastructure Great" project (see graphic at right) to address Newark's issues with flooding and water quality through green infrastructure and reducing combined sewer overflows (CSOs); a project to use inexpensive temporary monitors in Newark to check air quality (PM 2.5); the issue of warehouses at the airport; truck pollution related to the port; and major issues with incinerators.



A video of the Environmental Summit is available here:

[https://www.facebook.com/SouthWardEA?comment\\_id=Y29tbWVudDooODc3OTY2OTI2OTEoODhfNDg3ODUyNjM5MzUyNTYw](https://www.facebook.com/SouthWardEA?comment_id=Y29tbWVudDooODc3OTY2OTI2OTEoODhfNDg3ODUyNjM5MzUyNTYw)

- **UUFANJ** joined the New Jersey Wind Works Campaign, a coalition of environmental, business and faith-based groups in support of offshore wind projects in NJ. The campaign advocates for responsible offshore wind projects in order to assist in NJ's transition to clean and renewable sources of energy. The campaign will also work in communities across the Jersey Shore to inform the public, especially local communities closest to some of the planned offshore wind installations, on ways they can constructively engage with and support these proposals.
- Watch this space for possible future plans involving **EJTF** and the **UUFANJ Gun Violence Task Force**, partnering with the NJ Tree Foundation, for an urban tree planting project this spring. Research shows a connection between the presence of trees and lower gun violence in neighborhoods (e.g., see <https://academic.oup.com/aje/article/186/3/289/3800003> and <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0169204612000977>).

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

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

### MARCH 2022 -

(with [hyperlinks](#) to details on the following pages)

Sun.	Mon.	Tues.	Wed.	Thurs.	Fri.	Sat.
		<p><b>1</b>  <a href="#">NJBPJ Grid Modernization Stakeholder Meeting</a>                      - 9:00 a.m.</p> <hr/> <p><a href="#">"Sustainable Organic Material Management"</a>                      - 12:00 p.m.</p>	<p><b>2</b>  <a href="#">"Health and Food Systems in a Changing Climate"</a>                      - 11:00 a.m.</p> <hr/> <p><a href="#">"Emerging Climate-Oriented Bioeconomy Frameworks - a Central Role for Forests"</a>                      - 3:00 p.m.</p> <hr/> <p><a href="#">"Sea Level Rise in NJ"</a>                      - 7:30 p.m.</p>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>6</b>	<p><b>7</b>  <a href="#">"Perspectives on the Climate Change Challenge" Cornell series (Earth's Water Cycle in a Changing Climate)</a>                      - 2:45 p.m.</p>	<p><b>8</b>  <a href="#">LWVNJ "Conducting Lobbying Meetings"</a>                      - 6:00 p.m.</p>	<p><b>9</b>  <a href="#">DRBC First Quarter 2022 Business Meeting</a>                      - 10:30 a.m.</p>	<p><b>10</b>  <a href="#">"Climate Accountability and the Courts: Legal Perspectives on Holding Climate Polluters Accountable"</a>                      - 3:00 p.m.</p>	<b>11</b>	<p><b>12</b>  <a href="#">"33rd-annual Pinelands Short Course"</a>                      - 9:00 a.m.</p>
<b>13</b>	<p><b>14</b>  <a href="#">"Perspectives on the Climate Change Challenge" Cornell series (Carbon Dioxide Removal: The Social and Policy Landscape)</a>                      - 2:45 p.m.</p>	<p><b>15</b>  <a href="#">NJDEP Environmental Justice Advisory Committee (EJAC)</a>                      - Applications Due 5:00 p.m.</p>	<p><b>16</b>  <a href="#">NJ Clean Air Council Monthly Meeting</a>                      - 9:30 a.m.</p> <hr/> <p><a href="#">"Caring for the Earth: How to Install and Finance Green Infrastructure"</a>                      - 6:00 a.m.</p>	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>20</b>	<p><b>21</b>  <a href="#">"Perspectives on the Climate Change Challenge" Cornell series (TBD)</a>                      - 2:45 p.m.</p>	<b>22</b>	<p><b>23</b>  <a href="#">"Preparing for the Statewide Single-Use Plastic Ban"</a>                      - 7:00 p.m.</p>	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>27</b>	<p><b>28</b>  <a href="#">LWVNJ "Digital Organizing: Using Technology to Build Power Online"</a>                      - 5:30 p.m.</p> <hr/> <p><a href="#">"Perspectives on the Climate Change Challenge" Cornell series (Towards Sustainable Energy and Materials)</a>                      - 2:45 p.m.</p>	<b>29</b>	<p><b>30</b>  <a href="#">"Tackling Climate Change with Machine Learning"</a> - 12:00 p.m.</p>	<p><b>31</b>  <a href="#">"Perspectives on Separating Possible vs. Practical Sustainable Solutions for Energy and Materials"</a>                      - 12:30 p.m.</p>		

**NJ Board of Public Utilities (BPU) Grid Modernization Stakeholder Meeting - Webinar**  
**Tuesday, March 1, 2022, 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.**

This is the fourth in a series of public meetings being held by the NJ Board of Public Utilities (BPU) to collect stakeholder input on the current distribution grid interconnection policies and process, and potential improvements that will enable faster grid modernization and higher levels of distributed energy resource (DER) absorption. This session, "**Draft Report Review and Comment**" will present the Draft Report of findings and recommendations that will be made public prior to the meeting. This session is designed to elicit comments that will inform the Final Report, which is to be presented at a meeting on 5/2/2022. Register for this stakeholder meeting here: <https://register.gotowebinar.com/register/9155954799750208782>.

[The previous stakeholder sessions were:

**"Grid Modernization Context"** (a recording of the webinar including the graphics is here: <https://njcepfles.s3.amazonaws.com/NJ+BPU+Grid+Modernization+Stakeholder+Meeting+1-Project+Overview.mp4>);

**"Stakeholder Data/Comment Ingestion"** (a recording of the webinar including the graphics is here: <https://njcepfles.s3.amazonaws.com/2021-11-16+09.00+NJ+BPU+Grid+Modernization+Stakeholder+Meeting+2-Stakeholder+Input.mp4>); and

**"EDC Readout - Collaborative Alignment"** (a recording of the webinar including the graphics is here: <https://njcepfles.s3.amazonaws.com/2022-01-14+09.00+NJ+BPU+Grid+Modernization+Stakeholder+Meeting+3-Collaborative+Session+ +EDC+Readout.mp4>).]

---

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

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. Currently there are limited events listed for March 2022 (a sampling is below), but the site includes updated information over time; **check the site periodically for an updated list:** <https://climatesociety.rutgers.edu/events/all-climate-events/range.listevents/->.

**"Sustainable Organic Material Management" - Webinar**  
**Tuesday, March 1, 2022, 12:00 p.m. - 1:00 p.m.**

Sponsored by Rutgers' "New Jersey Climate Change Resource Center," this webinar will address reducing organic waste and increasing food security in NJ, where agricultural and other waste is estimated to contribute 5% of greenhouse gas emissions. This can be cut down by reducing and recovering organic waste (e.g., food waste, animal manure, and yard waste). Additional information and the registration link are available here: <https://climatesociety.rutgers.edu/events/all-climate-events/icalrepeat.detail/2022/03/01/6980/-/webinar-sustainable-organic-material-management>.

**"Emerging Climate-Oriented Bioeconomy Frameworks - a Central Role for Forests"  
- Webinar**

**Wednesday, March 2, 2022, 3:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.**

"Recent work has highlighted the potential for mass timber products to deliver a suite of environmental and economic benefits across the forestry and construction sectors. However, there is significant uncertainty surrounding whether optimal forest policy should favor minimizing wood harvest to maintain carbon storage, or development of new markets for long-lived wood products to maximize potential sequestration rates. The Nature Conservancy is leading research and outreach projects to investigate how potential increases in mass timber production could affect forests and develop safeguards to mitigate any negative impacts." Links to additional information and registration are available here: <https://climatesociety.rutgers.edu/events/all-climate-events/icalrepeat.detail/2022/03/02/6993/-/webinar-fcwg-learning-exchange-series-emerging-climate-oriented-bioeconomy-frameworks-a-central-role-for-forests>.

---

**"Health and Food Systems in a Changing Climate" - Webinar**  
**Wednesday, March 2, 2022, 11:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.**

As part of the Security and Sustainability Forum's "Leadership in Our Times" series, Sandra Gallina, European Commission Director for Health and Food Safety, will discuss "health and food systems in a changing climate, EU and US research collaborations, persistent viruses like COVID, and more." Additional information and registration are available here: <https://register.gotowebinar.com/register/4454367215576350220>.

---

**"Sea Level Rise in NJ" - Webinar**  
**Wednesday, March 2, 2022, 7:30 p.m.**

This webinar is sponsored by the NJ Sierra Club. Jennifer Walker, a postdoctoral associate in the Department of Earth and Planetary Sciences at Rutgers University with a B.S. in Earth and Ocean Sciences at Duke University and a Ph.D. in Oceanography at Rutgers University, will describe the current state of sea-level change in NJ, where sea levels are rising faster than the global average. The rate of rise is accelerating, putting coastal and low-lying areas in NJ at increased risk from coastal flooding and storms. The link to register is here: <https://act.sierraclub.org/events/details?formcampaignid=7013q000002GNTLAA4&mapLinkHref=>.

---

**DRBC First Quarter 2022 Business Meeting- Virtual**  
**Wednesday, March 9, 2022, 10:30 a.m.**

After all scheduled business has been completed and as time allows, the Business Meeting will include up to one hour of Open Public Comment (prior sign-up by 5 p.m. on March 8 is required). Additional details, agenda, Zoom link for the meeting, and information for prior sign-up for the Open Public Comment portion are available here: <https://www.state.nj.us/drbc/meetings/upcoming/#2>. The meeting will also be livestreamed here: <https://www.youtube.com/user/delrivbasincomm>.

---

**"Climate Accountability and the Courts: Legal Perspectives on Holding Climate Polluters Accountable" - Webinar**

**Thursday, March 10, 2022, 3:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.**

Part of the Leaders for Climate Accountability learning series hosted by "The Center for Climate Integrity," this webinar deals with climate litigation, which is a growing trend in the U.S. Since 2017, twenty municipalities, six states, the District of Columbia, and one industry trade association have filed lawsuits against fossil fuel companies for deceiving the public and policymakers about the climate impacts their products would cause. In this webinar, legal experts will describe the historical precedent set by the tobacco and opioid lawsuits, the legal theories behind climate liability cases, and how this litigation is unfolding in courts across the country. In addition, public officials will describe climate liability cases they have brought on behalf of their constituents.

[https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_hophEgmuR5S3h\\_RY9cdNYQ](https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_hophEgmuR5S3h_RY9cdNYQ)

---

**"33rd-annual Pinelands Short Course" - In-person**

**Saturday, March 12, 2022, 9:00 a.m. - 3:45 p.m.**

**Stockton University, 101 Vera King Farris Drive, Galloway, New Jersey 08204**

Registration is open for the "Pinelands Short Course," a much-touted daylong event featuring educational presentations that explore the unique history, ecology, and culture of the Pinelands. A brochure describing course offerings and excursions is available here:

<https://fliphtml5.com/ivrx/wgvk>; registration information including course sign-up is available here:

<https://stockton.gosignmeup.com/public/Course/browse?courseid=2928>. **The course costs \$50.00**

**(\$45.00 for Seniors and Students with coupon code).**

---

**NJ Clean Air Council Monthly Meeting - Virtual**

**Wednesday, March 16, 2022, 9:30 a.m.**

The meeting will be held on Microsoft Teams; information on joining the meeting is on the Clean Air Council website, available here: <https://nj.gov/dep/cleanair/cac-calendar.html>.

---

**"Caring for the Earth: How to Install and Finance Green Infrastructure" - Webinar**

**Wednesday, March 16, 2022, 6:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.**

This webinar is sponsored by the NJ League of Conservation Voters, among other groups. "Religious institutions have a tremendous opportunity to be good stewards to the environment, protect clean water, and help their local community by instituting smart changes on their properties. From churches to religious schools, many religious institutions are living their values by installing cost-effective green infrastructure projects that help to reduce harmful flooding and naturally filter polluted runoff before it hits our waterways. Come hear from experts to learn more about the variety of projects that can be done as well as funding programs that exist to help your congregation get started on your very own project." Additional information and the registration link are available here:

<https://www.mobilize.us/njlcv/event/441210/>.

---

**"Preparing for the Statewide Single-Use Plastic Ban" - Webinar**  
**Wednesday, March 23, 2022, 7:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.**

On 5/4/2022, the Plastic Pollution Reduction Act will go into effect. It prohibits (with limited exceptions) the provision or sale of single-use plastic carryout bags, polystyrene foam food service products, plastic straws, and paper bags in stores over 2,500 feet. In this discussion, sponsored by Sustainable Jersey, experts will address questions like: How can municipalities prepare their local businesses and community members for this transition? What resources are available for education and outreach? What role do green teams and environmental commissions play? In preparation for this event, participants are asked to first watch the recording of ANJEC's "Countdown to NJ's Full Plastic Pollution Reduction Law" (available here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CmxBw3EXCBo>) where experts discussed the new rules in depth, alternative products for businesses, and more. Additional information and the registration link are here: <https://tcnj.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJcsd-yqpzoqH9Q22RJxP-MTGMqYWCUo2SEM>.

---

**"Tackling Climate Change with Machine Learning" - Webinar**  
**Wednesday, March 30, 2022, 12:00 p.m. - 1:00 p.m.**

This webinar is presented by Priya Donti, a Ph.D. Candidate in Computer Science and Public Policy at Carnegie Mellon University and a co-founder and chair of "Climate Change AI," an initiative to catalyze impactful work in climate change and machine learning. Her work focuses on machine learning for forecasting, optimization, and control in high-renewables power grids. In this talk, she will describe how machine learning can be a potentially powerful tool for addressing climate change, when applied in coordination with policy, engineering, and other areas of action, including her work that merges data-driven approaches with physical knowledge to facilitate the transition to low-carbon electric power grids. Additional information, and the registration link, are available here: <https://irving.dartmouth.edu/engagement/new-energy-conversations-early-career-energy-researchers>.

This webinar is part of "New Energy: Conversations with Early-Career Energy Researchers" an online series presented by Dartmouth College and "featuring graduate, postdoctoral, 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 gives anyone interested in energy the opportunity to learn from the rising stars in the field."

---

**"Perspectives on Separating Possible vs. Practical Sustainable Solutions for Energy and Materials" - In-person and Virtual**  
**Thursday, March 31, 2022, 12:30 p.m. - 1:30 p.m.**  
**Maeder Hall Auditorium, 92 Olden Street, Princeton, NJ 08544**  
**and Virtual on Zoom**

"The world aspires for sources of energy and chemical feedstocks that are 100% sustainable in adequate amounts to support a high standard of living for all. Current energy policies intending to accelerate the transition to renewable sources will restrict supply and inevitably drive up, not only the price of energy, but food and most other goods. Energy can be challenging to grasp. KWh and BTU's are less familiar than units of mass or volume. This combined with a desire for quick solutions can result in overly optimistic predictions. Even worse, some proposals often neglect fundamental engineering limitations and the rationale for why high energy density fuels dominate our current systems. Energy is a regulated, commercial enterprise which must produce a return for investors. Yet the popular literature

is full of statements such as 'electricity will be free.' Engineers are critical in debunking the rhetoric. Which new pathways and technologies will emerge to transform the energy infrastructure? While many technologies are possible, far fewer are practical." In this Princeton University Andlinger Center for Energy and the Environment Highlight Seminar, Research Professor William Banholzer of the University of Wisconsin will review several examples including carbon capture using NaOH, biofuels, and green hydrogen/ammonia where fundamental engineering or financial considerations were ignored to illustrate how mass and energy balances can be used as a compass to guide society. He will also review how sustainability can have competing priorities complicating optimum solutions. Additional information the registration link are available here:

<https://acee.princeton.edu/events/highlight-seminar-william-banholzer/>.

---

### **League of Women Voters of New Jersey (LWVNJ) Activist Trainings - **Virtual** Various dates**

The League of Women Voters of New Jersey (LWVNJ) is presenting a public series of virtual activist training sessions designed to equip participants "with the knowledge and skills needed to carry out dynamic organizing strategies that can effectively influence public policy and the state of democracy in New Jersey." **The sessions scheduled for March 2022 that cover Legislative Advocacy and Grassroots Organizing are listed below; descriptions of these and additional sessions, along with the links to register for all sessions, are available here:**

<https://www.lwvnj.org/training>.

#### **LWVNJ "Conducting Lobbying Meetings" Tuesday, March 8, 2022, 6:00 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.**

"Meeting with legislators and key decision-makers to urge them to take specific action or vote in favor of a bill is an important way that constituents can express their views and influence the legislative process. During this training you will learn: best practices for scheduling and preparing for a lobbying meeting; how to structure an effective and persuasive discussion; and tips on how to use the information you learn from your meeting."

#### **LWVNJ "Digital Organizing: Using Technology to Build Power Online" Monday, March 28, 2022, 5:30 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.**

This training will address ways to employ digital organizing methods to help mobilize supporters, maximize resources, and achieve goals.

---

#### **"Perspectives on the Climate Change Challenge" (Cornell) - **Webinars** Most Mondays: January 31 – May 9, 2022, 2:45 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.**

This seminar series, sponsored by the Cornell Department of Biological and Environmental Engineering and the Cornell Atkinson Center for Sustainability, "provides important views on the critical issue of climate change, drawing from many perspectives and disciplines. Experts from Cornell University and beyond present an overview of the science of climate change and climate change models, the implications for agriculture, ecosystems, and food systems, and provide important economic, ethical, and policy insights on the issue." Webinars scheduled in March are listed on p. 9; links to additional information and zoom access are available here:

<https://atkinson.cornell.edu/news-events/climate-change-seminar/>.



**March 7, 2022: "Earth's Water Cycle in a Changing Climate"** - This talk will highlight some of the key questions about Earth's water cycle and its changes: How does precipitation vary over time, and in response to climate change? Does the latest generation of model simulations have anything new to tell us about this? What do we mean when talk about "extreme" precipitation?

**March 14, 2022: "Carbon Dioxide Removal: The Social and Policy Landscape"** - This talk discusses specific examples from research conducted in the U.S. that point towards how social science research can help identify community concerns, priorities, and potential benefits from carbon dioxide removal projects and policies. It describes what social science has learned to date about the social dimensions of carbon removal, and outlines priorities for future interdisciplinary research to inform carbon removal policy on multiple scales.

**March 21, 2022: TBD** (to be presented by Stephen J. Davis, an Associate Professor of Earth System Science, University of California, Irvine, who works to understand and find ways to meet the challenge of satisfying global demand for energy, food, and goods without emitting carbon dioxide to the atmosphere)

**March 28, 2022: "Towards Sustainable Energy and Materials: Creating a New Circular Carbon Economy via Carbon Capture, Utilization, and Storage"** - This talk is to be presented by Ah-Hyung (Alissa) Park, whose research focuses on sustainable energy and materials conversion pathways with emphasis on integrated Carbon Capture, Utilization, and Storage (CCUS) technologies addressing climate change, as well as Direct Air Capture of CO<sub>2</sub> and Negative Emission Technologies including BioEnergy with Carbon Capture and Storage (BECCS) and sustainable construction materials with low carbon intensity.

**Applications Open for DEP Environmental Justice Advisory Committee (EJAC)  
Due Date March 15, 2022, 5:00 p.m.**

The NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) is seeking applications from interested individuals to be considered for appointment to the Environmental Justice Advisory Council (EJAC). The purpose of the council is to provide advice to the Commissioner of DEP on issues involving environmental justice and public health in New Jersey and to coordinate with DEP and the Office of Environmental Justice (OEJ) in providing advice and guidance to executive branch departments and agencies. There are six vacancies for three-year terms from 2022 through 2025 in the following sectors:

- Local grassroots or community groups (1 vacancy)
- State or federally recognized tribal governments or indigenous groups (1 vacancy)
- State-wide social justice/civil rights organizations or labor (1 vacancy)
- Public health (1 vacancy)
- Business or industry (2 vacancies)

**EJTF member Nancy Griffeth is currently a member of EJAC**, in the "Faith-based organizations or State or Federally recognized tribal governments or indigenous groups sector".

Online applications must be submitted by 5:00 p.m. on 3/15/2022; non-electronic submissions must be postmarked by the application deadline. The application, FAQ, and more information can be found on the OEJ website here: <https://www.nj.gov/dep/ej/ej-council.html>.



**UU FaithAction New Jersey 2022 Spring Gala  
Saturday, April 9, 2022**

The current plan is for both in-person and virtual invitations; additional information will be available at <https://www.uufaithaction.org/>.

---

**Registration is open for:  
UU@UN Intergenerational Spring Seminar - **Online with in-person local options**  
"Displacement and Human Rights: All In for Climate Justice"  
April 22, 2022 – May 1, 2022**

"The 2022 Intergenerational Spring Seminar will address the theme Displacement and Human Rights: All In for Climate Justice." It will take place online April 22 – May 1, 2022, with an opportunity for congregations to host local in-person gatherings. The UU@UN is partnering with the Unitarian Universalist Ministry for Earth, UUSC, and Side With Love on this event. Registration is open now through April 3, 2022, with flexible rates." Additional information and the registration link are available here: <https://www.uua.org/international-justice/un/spring-seminar>.

---

---

***VIDEOS OF PAST EVENTS***

---

**"ESG in Emerging Markets: A Discussion with Leading Women from the Energy Sector"  
- **Video of Webinar****

Environmental Stewardship, Social Responsibility and Corporate Governance (ESG) have become the new standard of best corporate practices globally. The Columbia University Center on Global Energy Policy's "Women in Energy" program hosted "a panel of board directors and C-suite executives from different emerging market (EM) companies to examine the dual challenges of ESG compliance and energy transition readiness." The panel discussed "how ESG issues compare to the myriad risks that are inherent to operating in emerging markets, the challenges EM companies are facing navigating the energy transition vs. ensuring energy access, profitability and reliability, and the role women corporate leaders play in managing and addressing these challenges." The video is available here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=om4-q4i7kQ>.

---

## **"Climate Change and Food Systems: Impacts, Adaptation, and Mitigation" - Video of Webinar**

In this webinar, Mario Herrero, a professor of sustainable food systems and global change in the Cornell University Department of Global Development, focused on climate change as it relates to food systems, from food production to consumption. Dr. Herrero's research focuses on increasing the sustainability of food systems for the benefit of humans and ecosystems. He works in the areas of sustainable intensification of agriculture, climate mitigation and adaptation, livestock systems, and healthy and sustainable diets. The video is available here: <https://atkinson.cornell.edu/media/climate-change-and-food-systems-impacts-adaptation-and-mitigation/>.

---

## **"How to Get Into the Red: Cornell as a Living Laboratory and Reaching Carbon Neutral" - Video of Webinar**

The Cornell campus has pledged to cut direct emissions from our Combined Heat and Power Plant to zero by 2035, but is that enough? This webinar examined what the carbon footprint is for Cornell as a whole, including procurement and waste, what the greatest sources of emissions are, and what can be done to bring Cornell's full carbon footprint into the red (negative) by 2040. The video is available here: <https://www.atkinson.cornell.edu/media/how-to-get-into-the-red-cornell-as-a-living-laboratory-and-reaching-carbon-neutral/>.

---

## **"The Global Carbon Cycle in the Post-COVID-19 Era" - Video of Webinar**

This lecture, presented by Corinne Le Quéré, a Royal Society Research Professor of Climate Change Science at the University of East Anglia, who conducts research on the interactions between climate change and the carbon cycle, reviewed the latest trends in CO<sub>2</sub> emissions including the effect of COVID-19 measures on emissions, and showed their current partitioning in the environment. She also discussed the major sources of uncertainties in near-term CO<sub>2</sub> emissions and in the long-term capacity of the natural environment to absorb further carbon. The video is available here: <https://atkinson.cornell.edu/media/the-global-carbon-cycle-in-the-post-covid-19-era/>.

---

## **"To Be of Use: Making Our Science Relevant to Policy and Practice in a Fast-Paced, Difficult World" - Video of Webinar**

"Many students and scientists were motivated to go into science not just out of curiosity about the world, but because they wish to solve societal problems and make a difference in the world - for example on environmental issues, climate change, or societal responses to sustainability challenges. But how do we make sure science is even relevant to what decision-makers and policy-makers need? How do we do this in a world that seems to speed up from year to year? Can we stay relevant?" This webinar proposed "possible pathways for the engaged science of the future, placing these possibilities into the contentious debate between 'the accelerated academe' and 'slow science.'" The video is available here: <https://atkinson.cornell.edu/media/to-be-of-use-making-our-science-relevant-to-policy-and-practice-in-a-fast-paced-difficult-world/>.

---

## **"Power Outage Preparedness, Distribution, and Duration: Spotighting Environmental Justice" - Video of Webinar**

In this webinar, Dr. Joan A. Casey of Columbia University described power outage timing, frequency, and duration in the United States from 2018 to 2020. She also assessed equity implications of medically relevant (8+ hour) outages and concluded with a case study of the 2021 Texas Power Crisis. Dr. Casey is an environmental epidemiologist who focuses on environmental health, environmental justice, and sustainability. She investigates a range of exposures including unconventional natural gas and oil development, coal-fired power plants, wildfires, power outages, and concentrated animal feeding operations. The video is available here:

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vLZHdzh-jOw&list=PLXnV377qgwcfm\\_NhVIjX9A8ZPbuSpnl1-&index=1](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vLZHdzh-jOw&list=PLXnV377qgwcfm_NhVIjX9A8ZPbuSpnl1-&index=1).

---

## **"Financing Inclusive Clean Energy Investments in Rural America" - Video of Webinar**

The Environmental and Energy Study Institute (EESI) has begun a new briefing series on "federal programs that currently deliver a host of climate, environmental, economic, and social benefits nationwide. In the series, experts and practitioners will discuss how these programs are working on-the-ground to deliver value to constituents across geographies, in both urban and rural settings. The series covers federal programs in climate financing, energy efficiency, climate adaptation, and conservation." The first briefing in the series featured the Rural Energy Savings Program (RESP), which provides rural electric cooperatives, other rural utilities, credit unions, and green banks with zero-percent loans to launch or expand energy efficiency, beneficial electrification, and renewable energy on-bill financing programs. The video is available here:

<https://www.eesi.org/briefings/view/020822fed>.

---

## **"Regenerative Agriculture: The Catalyst for Restoring Soil Health, Combating Climate Change" - Video of Webinar**

This National Press Club event (from 10/2021) held in Washington, DC, was the inaugural event of the Coalition for Regenerative Agriculture. "Regenerative Agriculture has emerged as the common thread that can unify environmental initiatives, drive economic resilience in the farming sector, and combat climate change. Its staggering benefits include: the potential to drawdown 100% of annual carbon emissions; achieving food security; restoring and preserving soil health; reducing toxic chemicals; and increasing farmers' profits starting year one." The video of the 1-3/4 hour webinar is available here: <https://protectnaturenow.com/videos/regenerative-agriculture-the-catalyst-for-restoring-soil-health-combating-climate-change/>; the last 6 minutes present a summing-up of the potential for regenerative agriculture.

---

## **"Maternal and Child Health and Justice" Environmental Health Summit - Videos of Webinars**

Rutgers Center for Environmental Exposures and Disease (CEED), one of the Centers of the Rutgers Environmental and Occupational Health Sciences Institute (EOHSI), held its 4th Annual Environmental Health Summit. In partnership with parents, nonprofit leaders, advocates, policymakers, academics, health professionals and researchers, it explored the impact of environmental factors on Maternal and Child Health and Justice. This webinar series included eight

sessions; those that may be of particular interest to EJTF are described below. Videos of all of the sessions are available here: <https://ceed.rutgers.edu/summit2021recordings/>.

**"Emerging Issues in Lead"**

**"Stewards of Our Sacred Earth - Faith Leaders Advancing Environmental Health"**

**"What Else Is in the Air? Breathing for Two"**

**"Chemical Exposures in Consumer Products"**

**"Health Effects of Pesticide Exposures for Infants and Children: How We Can Protect Our Homes, Our Schools and Our Children"**

---

---

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

[covering 1/28/2022 – 2/24/2022]

### **ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE**

#### **Race Excluded as White House Rolls Out Climate Justice Screening Tool**

This new federal "Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool" will have direct effects on NJ environmental justice communities when it is used to help identify disadvantaged communities to ensure that 40 percent of the overall benefits of Federal climate, clean energy, and other key programs are reaching them, as required by Executive Order 14008. The screening tool **will not include race as a factor** in deciding where to devote resources. According to the Biden Administration, although they have acknowledged race as a major factor in determining negative environmental effects (and see the related article below), the exclusion of race was viewed to make projects less likely to draw legal challenges and easier to defend. Additional information is available here: <https://why.org/articles/white-house-climate-justice-screening-tool-race-excluded/>. The White House press release is here: <https://www.whitehouse.gov/ceq/news-updates/2022/02/18/ceq-publishes-draft-climate-and-economic-justice-screening-tool-key-component-in-the-implementation-of-president-bidens-justice40-initiative/>.

The Beta version of the "Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool," along with descriptions of methodology and criteria, **and links to provide feedback**, can be accessed here: <https://screeningtool.geoplatform.gov/>. Once feedback has been received, reviewed, and used to update the screening tool "as deemed necessary," Federal agencies will begin to use the tool.

- **Climate Policy Must Focus on Black and Brown Communities, Advocates Say** - In response to undeniable evidence that climate change disproportionately affects Black and brown communities, the NJ League of Conservation Voters (NJLCV) increased emphasis on these communities in its legislative priorities blueprint. In doing this, the NJLCV joined more than 25 advocacy partners across NJ. <https://www.njspotlightnews.org/2022/02/league-of-conservation-voters-communities-of-color-impact-of-climate-change-air-pollution-sewage/>

### **ELECTRIC VEHICLES & VEHICLE EMISSION REDUCTION**

- **\$3.8M = State Funding for Transit Development Projects** - \$3.8 million has been announced for FY 2022 Transit Village grants to help municipalities advance transit-oriented development projects that reduce reliance on vehicles and encourage usage of mass transportation. This is up from the \$1 million

available in previous years. Gov. Murphy stated, “Our administration is committed to reducing the effects of climate change, and one of the best ways to do that is improving public transportation to reduce our reliance on cars.” [The press release is available here:

<https://www.nj.gov/governor/news/news/562022/approved/20220131a.shtml>]. There are currently 33 municipalities in the program. <https://www.njspotlightnews.org/2022/02/notd-gov-murphy-nj-department-of-transportation-transit-village-municipal-funding/>

- **DEP Offers \$4 Million in Grants for Publicly Accessible Electric Vehicle Fast Charging Stations within Communities** - In a press release, the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) announced that it "is seeking applicants for its latest round of grant funding for public fast charging infrastructure for electric vehicles. The \$4 million competitive solicitation will award grants of up to \$200,000 per location in community settings. These incentives, from 'It Pay\$ to Plug In,' DEP's grant program for EV charging stations, can be combined with utility incentives for public fast charging infrastructure." <https://nj.gov/dep/drivegreen/communitydcfc.html>

## LEAD REDUCTION IN HOUSEHOLDS

- **Many Residents to Be Notified Their Water Is Delivered Through Lead Service Lines** (1-1/4 minute news video) - As required by a 2020 law, close to 180,000 NJ residents are to receive notice from their water utilities of the presence of lead components in their drinking water service lines. The residents will also be given information on steps they can take to minimize their risk, and how to get their water tested. This is just a first step, as many service lines have yet to be catalogued. <https://www.njspotlightnews.org/video/many-residents-to-be-notified-their-water-is-delivered-through-lead-service-lines/>



- **Jersey City Municipal Utilities Authority to Make Significant Improvements to Jersey City's Municipal Sewer and Drinking Water Systems under Agreement with US Government, Benefiting Underserved Communities** - The U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) announced an agreement with the Jersey City Municipal Utilities Authority (JCMUA) that will significantly improve the city's municipal sewer and drinking water systems, will significantly reduce the amount of pollution being discharged into the Hackensack River, Hudson River and Newark Bay, and will benefit many Jersey City neighborhoods that face environmental justice challenges. Under the agreement, JCMUA will undertake repairs and upgrades that will cost nearly \$1.1 billion dollars and take a decade to finish, including replacing 12,000 water lines with lead components that provide drinking water to environmental justice neighborhoods. A signoff by a judge is still required. <https://www.epa.gov/newsreleases/jersey-city-municipal-utilities-authority-make-significant-improvements-jersey-citys-0>

- **VP Harris Hails Newark as Role Model for Solving Lead Water Line Crisis** (5-minute news video, including EJTF partner **Kim Gaddy** of Clean Water Action) - Vice President Harris visited Newark as part of her nationwide tour touting the "Bipartisan Infrastructure Law" that will provide funds to NJ to cover part of the cost of replacing lead service lines throughout the state. The success realized by Newark in upgrading nearly all of its lead service lines in three years was held up as a role model for the rest of the country. <https://www.njspotlightnews.org/video/vp-harris-hails-newark-as-role-model-for-solving-lead-water-line-crisis/>
- **Got Lead Pipes? Montclair Wants to Know** - As a first step in implementing the requirement in a 2020 NJ law, the Township of Montclair is inventorying water service lines that may contain lead. The law requires towns to submit inventories of lead lines, galvanized lines, brass lines, copper lines and pipes of unknown material to the NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), and it also requires that all lead service lines be replaced in 10 years, However, it is still unknown who will pay for the replacements. <https://www.montclairlocal.news/2022/02/01/got-lead-pipes-montclair-wants-to-know/>
- **Borough to Notify Some Property Owners about Galvanized Steel Pipes' Drinking Water Lines, Replacement Costs Discussed at Budget Meeting** - This article goes into detail about the effect on municipalities of the requirements of the 2020 NJ law related to lead service lines, including the definition of "galvanized pipe" lines as lead service lines, as well as the requirement that the entire line all the way to the meter inside a house or building be replaced. Costs associated with the law, which requires that all lines be replaced within 10 years, are discussed in some detail. <https://www.tapinto.net/towns/flemington-slash-raritan/sections/government/articles/borough-to-notify-some-property-owners-about-galvanized-steel-pipes-drinking-water-lines-replacement-costs-discussed-at-budget-meeting>
- **Trenton Water Works Removes 25 Percent of Lead Pipes throughout its Service Area** - In 2/2020, the Trenton Water Works (TWW) started the construction phase of its Lead Service Line Replacement Program, designed to help homeowners replace water-service lines made from lead that run from the shutoff valve in the street (the curb box) to the water meter in the home. Although TWW's COVID-19 response temporarily suspended this program in 2020, it was announced that now more than 8,000 lines have been replaced. They are planning to remove another 1,200 lines in 2022. <https://www.insidernj.com/press-release/trenton-water-works-removes-25-percent-lead-pipes-throughout-service-area/>
- **Jersey City MUA Says It Will Replace 16,000 Lead Pipes in Next 10 Years** - "Jersey City Municipal Utilities Authority is projected to spend \$288 million to replace all lead service lines by 2031, at no cost to homeowners. The agency, responsible for managing the city's water and sewage systems, announced it will replace an estimated 16,000 lead service lines across the city. The JCMUA will look to cover the cost by securing funding through state and federal grants." <https://www.nj.com/hudson/2022/02/jersey-city-mua-says-it-will-replace-16000-lead-pipes-in-next-10-years.html>
- **Clean Water, Healthy Families, Good Jobs Campaign Brings Together Environment, Labor & Business Groups to Call for Expanded Investment in Water Infrastructure** - The Clean Water, Healthy Families, Good Jobs campaign has announced "a historic coalition including labor, environmental organizations and business groups to call for expanded investment in water infrastructure." It is a coalition of diverse organizations and individuals representing the environment, labor and business in NJ, and includes **EJTF partner Kim Gaddy** on its steering committee. <https://www.insidernj.com/press-release/clean-water-healthy-families-good-jobs-campaign-brings-together-environment-labor-business-groups-call-expanded-investment-water-infrastructure/>

## FOSSIL FUEL INFRASTRUCTURE

- **Critics Say NJ Transit Still ‘Tilted’ Toward Fossil Fuels for Kearny Power Plant** - In 10/2021, in response to strong environmental and community group opposition to a planned fracked gas power plant in Kearny, NJ Transit indicated that it would reconfigure plans to emphasize renewable energy. At that time, Kevin Corbett, president and CEO of NJ Transit, stated “We will be incentivizing the national and international developer community to come up with the most innovative designs that will allow us to maximize the use of renewable energy for this project.” However, as described by attendees at a recent NJ Transit board meeting, the revised Request for Proposals includes the possibility for a gas-fired power plant as long as it can transition to "carbon neutral" by 2050. (See this article for a more detailed description: <https://www.nj.com/news/2022/02/environmentalists-slam-nj-transits-plan-for-power-plant.html>.) NJ Transit maintains that it desires the designs "to maximize the use of renewables and/or clean energy components" and is "specifically calling for designs that meet the Governor’s Energy Master Plan goals." <https://www.njspotlightnews.org/video/critics-say-nj-transit-still-tilted-toward-fossil-fuels-for-kearny-power-plant/>
- **Kearny Council Passes Measure Opposing PVSC’s Proposed Fracked Gas Power Plan in Newark** - At its 1/25/2022 meeting, the Kearny Town Council approved a "Resolution Opposing Proposal to Build a Standby Power Generator Facility in the Nearby Ironbound Section of Newark and Supporting the Use of Renewable Energy to Achieve Resiliency Goals." In doing so, Kearny joined three other municipalities (i.e., Hoboken, Jersey City, and Livingston) that have also formally opposed the project. <https://hudsoncountyview.com/kearny-council-passes-measure-opposing-pvscs-proposed-fracked-gas-power-plan-in-newark/>

## RENEWABLE RESOURCES

- **Time to Cut Solar Subsidies?** - At a meeting of the NJ Board of Public Utilities (BPU), the topic was raised of reducing the subsidies provided to the solar industry, based on viewing it as a now "mature" industry. Representatives of the industry, including **EJTF member Lyle Rawlings**, President of the Mid-Atlantic Solar & Storage Industries Association, stated that "...if the incentives go away, solar goes away." The past two years have seen a drop in solar installations due to COVID-19 and supply chain issues. However, solar energy is counted upon to provide 37% of the state's energy by 2050. <https://www.njspotlightnews.org/2022/01/nj-bpu-regulators-solar-sector-growth-5-billion-are-subsidies-still-necessary-utility-customer-costs/>



- **After Solar and Wind, Is Wave Power Next up for NJ?** - NJ Assemblyman Robert Karabinchak, current Chair of the NJ Assembly Special Committee on Infrastructure and Natural Resources, in a statement made at the opening bell-ringing of the Nasdaq Stock Exchange, stated that he will be introducing legislation to include wave energy in the NJ Energy Master Plan. Wave energy has great potential for energy production, but harnessing it has been problematic. [FYI, currently, the only grid-



connected wave energy testing site in the U.S. is at the Navy's Wave Energy Test Site in the waters near the Marine base in Kaneohe Bay, Hawaii, where wave energy research has been conducted since 2002 - additional information about the program, including its challenges, is available here:

<https://www.civilbeat.org/2021/08/heres-why-the-navy-is-betting-on-wave-energy-research-in-hawaii/>.] The Nasdaq opening bell ringing ceremony at which Karabinchak spoke was for Eco Wave Power, an Israel-based company that has built two power generation pilot programs, one in Europe and one in the Middle East. <https://www.njspotlightnews.org/2022/02/wave-power-after-wind-solar-jersey-shore-israel-based-eco-power-assemblyman-robert-karabinchak/>

- **New Jersey Files for Approval of Offshore Grid Plans** - In April of 2021, the regional grid operator PJM Interconnection, LLC (PJM) opened a solicitation window on behalf of the NJ Board of Public Utilities (BPU) for qualified developers to submit potential transmission solutions that would help deliver offshore wind energy to the existing power grid. This was at the request of the BPU to incorporate NJ's offshore wind public policy goals into PJM's regional transmission planning process through a novel pathway known as the State Agreement Approach. In using this approach, NJ became the first state to fully align its offshore wind transmission goals with its regional grid operator's planning process, which the BPU stated will allow NJ to explore options for an optimal long-term solution for offshore wind transmission that otherwise may not have been available at that stage of development. Now, the BPU and PJM have filed for approval of the State Agreement Approach from the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC). "Once accepted by FERC, the agreement will allow the NJBPU to select one or more of 80 different proposals submitted by developers. Each proposal includes ready-to-build offshore wind transmission solutions to deliver offshore wind energy to the existing power grid." <https://renews.biz/75261/new-jersey-files-for-approval-of-offshore-grid-plans/>
- **Can Offshore Wind Coexist with Endangered Whales?** - The Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) announced in a press release (available here: <https://www.boem.gov/newsroom/press-releases/boem-announces-multi-agency-approach-enhance-existing-protection-efforts>) that it is partnering with multiple federal and state entities, including the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), NOAA Fisheries, and the Massachusetts Clean Energy Center, to research and strengthen the protection of the endangered North Atlantic right whales. BOEM states that it is working with NOAA to develop strategies to "protect and promote the recovery of right whales" while allowing responsible development of offshore wind farms. Work is also being done on a passive acoustic monitoring network to identify and monitor the movements and distribution of marine mammals. <https://www.njspotlightnews.org/2022/02/will-nj-offshore-wind-industry-impact-critically-endangered-north-atlantic-right-whale/>
- **Solar Landscape Activates Panels on 6 Montville Township Public Schools** - Solar arrays were activated on six schools, in a project made possible through a 15-year solar power purchase agreement that enabled the Montville Township school district to install the solar panels at no cost and purchase the electricity generated at guaranteed discounts every month. The district's utility cost savings are expected to be more than \$980,000 over the term of the agreement. <https://www.roi-nj.com/2022/02/04/industry/energy-utilities/solar-landscape-activates-panels-on-6-montville-township-public-schools/>

## CLIMATE CHANGE

- **Plan to Cut Emissions Falls Far Short, Activists Say** The NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) held a public hearing on its proposed new air pollution control rules for "Control and Prohibition of Carbon Dioxide Emissions." According to many environmental advocates who testified at the hearing, this rule is a missed opportunity to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in NJ and move away from new fossil fuel infrastructure, because the rule fails to ban future fossil-fuel power plants, leaves loopholes for existing generating stations, does not include concrete and enforceable requirements, and

does not address environmental justice impacts. On the business interest side, the rule was criticized as increasing costs to tenants of buildings in which boilers would need to be replaced as well as possible increases in property taxes related to school boiler replacement.

<https://www.njspotlightnews.org/2022/02/activists-outraged-nj-dep-first-hearing-plan-cut-carbon-go-electric/>

- **Act Fast to Avert Climate Disaster, Lawmakers Warned** - At a NJ Senate Environment and Energy Committee hearing, the Commissioner of the NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) and the Director of the NJ Bureau of Public Utilities (BPU) emphasized that more and faster action is needed to avert increased climate change-related adverse impacts in the future. Recently, business and other interests have been increasing their pushback on the transition to 100% clean energy by 2050. <https://www.njspotlightnews.org/2022/02/act-fast-to-avert-climate-disaster-lawmakers-warned/>
- **'Wake-up Call' Report Details Looming Floods** - The "2022 Sea Level Rise Technical Report" (available here: <https://oceanservice.noaa.gov/hazards/sealevelrise/sealevelrise-tech-report.html>) has been issued by the U.S. Sea Level Rise and Coastal Flood Hazard Scenarios and Tools Interagency Task Force, which includes a number of federal agencies led by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). The report provides 1) sea level rise scenarios to 2150 by decade, that include estimates of vertical land motion, and 2) a set of extreme water level probabilities for various heights along the U.S. coastline. An associated NOAA Sea Level Rise Viewer (available here: <https://coast.noaa.gov/slr/>) allows interactive viewing of potential coastal flooding areas at different degrees of sea level rise. The report predicts sea level rise on the East Coast of as much as a foot by 2050, which will significantly threaten the economies of the coastal areas and increase the impact of storms and "calm weather flooding." <https://www.njspotlightnews.org/2022/02/climate-change-wake-up-call-coastal-flooding-sea-level-rise/>

## POLLUTION



- **Environmental Justice Groups Sue over Incinerator Pollution** - The Newark, NJ-based Ironbound Community Corporation (**an EJTF partner organization**) has joined a California environmental justice group and the nationwide Sierra Club in two separate but related lawsuits asking for court orders to direct the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to update its standards for large incinerators, which were to be updated at least ten years ago. According to Jonathan Smith, an attorney for the environmental group Earthjustice in NY, "Eighty percent of these large incinerators are in environmental justice communities." <https://why.org/articles/environmental-justice-groups-sue-over-incinerator-pollution/>
- **Murphy Administration Awards \$16+ Million to Reduce Waste and Promote Recycling Across New Jersey** - "The Murphy Administration is awarding nearly \$16.2 million in grants to communities across the state to help them enhance waste reduction and recycling programs, a slight increase over the previous year's total...New Jersey's municipal solid waste recycling rate exceeds the national recycling rate average of 32 percent but is below the state's municipal solid waste recycling goal of 50 percent...Additionally, the payout amount for food waste was increased this year to encourage food waste recycling in conjunction with the Food Waste Recycling and Food Waste-to-Energy Production Law." [https://www.nj.gov/dep/newsrel/2022/22\\_0006.htm](https://www.nj.gov/dep/newsrel/2022/22_0006.htm)

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

- **Delayed by COVID-19, Paulsboro Residents Being Tested for ‘Forever Chemicals’**- In late 2019, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) awarded eight grants, of \$1 million each, for a multi-site health study to investigate the relationship between drinking water contaminated with per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS - "forever chemicals") and health outcomes. In NJ, Gloucester County was chosen, and the Rutgers University School of Public Health was to perform the study with voluntary participants (1,000 adults and 300 children) from Paulsboro and West Deptford. The study was delayed by COVID-19, but now is scheduled to get underway. <https://www.njspotlightnews.org/2022/02/forever-chemicals-pfas-paulsboro-national-study-seeks-participants-blood-tests-drinking-water-exposure/>

## **EDUCATIONAL and YOUTH-RELATED**

- **West Orange Students Organize Rally to Demand Town Climate Action Now** - West Orange, NJ teenagers, including members of the NJ Student Sustainability Coalition (see box below), planned a "Climate Action Now" rally to demand that the Town Council and the mayor enact comprehensive legislation in response to threats made more imminent by climate change. They cite the location of West Orange as "a mountain town with steep slopes and a flood-prone valley" where overdevelopment is a concern for mountain erosion, while "existing environmental ordinances, such as protecting all forests and not building on ridgelines, are not being enforced."  
<https://essexnewsdaily.com/news/westorange/west-orange-students-organize-rally-to-demand-town-climate-action-now>

### **NJ Student Sustainability Coalition (NJSSC)**

"NJSSC is a youth-run network of college, high school, and younger students across the state of New Jersey. This collaborative network shares experience, resources, and expertise to build student power across the state, and push forward sustainability initiatives that benefit us all." The network has three primary strategies:

- Programming - organizing collaborative events, from trainings to conferences, to help coalition members network and learn how to carry out their work more effectively;
- Resource Building - connecting schools and environmental groups engaged in similar issues to share best practices, and developing centralized lists of opportunities and tools; and
- Political Action - establishing policy positions and initiating joint projects to elevate youth voices in environmental decision-making.

They also have a number of Teams, including a Clean Energy Equity Act Team, a Plastics Team, and a Green Amendment Team. Additional information is available here: <https://www.njstudentsustainability.com>.

## **LAND MANAGEMENT/AGRICULTURE/FOOD**

- **NJEDA Board Approves NJ Food Desert Communities Designations List** - The NJ Food Desert Relief Act (FDRA), part of the NJ Economic Recovery Act of 2020, directs the NJ Economic Development Authority (EDA) to provide up to \$40 million per year for six years in tax credits, grants, loans, and technical assistance to increase access to nutritious foods and develop new approaches to alleviate food deserts in NJ. The Act required that the EDA, in consultation with the NJ Departments of Community

Affairs (DCA) and Agriculture (DA), develop criteria and designate up to 50 contiguous Food Desert Communities (FDCs) that have limited access to nutritious foods, and which will be eligible for the assistance. A list of the 50 "food desert" locations - in all 21 NJ counties ranging from sections of some of the biggest cities to individual communities - has been released. The 50 communities comprise more than 1.5 million people. The EDA states that the Census Bureau recently found that nearly 8% of NJ households reported not having enough to eat during a span of seven days.

<https://www.njeda.com/njeda-board-approves-nj-food-desert-communities-designations-list/>

- **Governor Phil Murphy Announces \$10 Million in Funding for Phase 3 of Sustain & Serve NJ Program** - The "Sustain & Serve NJ" program, which was launched by the NJ Economic Development Authority (EDA) in 12/2020, provides eligible entities with grants to support the purchase of meals from NJ-based restaurants that have been negatively impacted by COVID-19. The meals are then distributed at no cost to NJ families in need. The EDA made several enhancements to the program between Phase 2 and Phase 3, based on feedback from Sustain & Serve NJ grantees and from the community. <https://www.insidernj.com/press-release/governor-phil-murphy-announces-10-million-funding-phase-3-sustain-serve-nj-program/>
- **Coughlin Spearheads Legislation to Fight Food Insecurity** (4-1/2 minute news video) - NJ Assembly Speaker Craig Coughlin has introduced a package of ten bills which would address hunger and food insecurity in NJ (a description and listing of the bills is available in this article: <https://www.nj.com/politics/2022/02/nj-would-expand-free-breakfast-lunch-for-students-under-new-plan-pushed-by-assembly-speaker.html>). The centerpiece is the "Working Class Families' Anti-Hunger Act" (A2368). The bills primarily focus on increasing accessibility to the federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). <https://www.njspotlightnews.org/video/coughlin-spearheads-legislation-to-fight-food-insecurity/>



- **USDA Announces Inaugural Federal Advisory Committee on Urban Agriculture** - The newly-appointed 12-member U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Secretary's Advisory Committee on Urban Agriculture "is part of USDA's efforts to support urban agriculture, creating a network for feedback. Urban agriculture plays an important role in producing fresh, healthy food in areas where grocery stores are scarce, and also provides jobs and beautifies neighborhoods." <https://www.usda.gov/media/press-releases/2022/02/01/usda-announces-inaugural-federal-advisory-committee-urban>
- **Bank of America Gifts \$700K to Hunger Relief Organizations to Address Food Insecurity** - "In New Jersey, an estimated 762,530 people are facing hunger, according to Feeding America...Bank of America announced a \$700,000 investment to Community FoodBank of New Jersey, Fulfill [the FoodBank of Monmouth and Ocean Counties] and Trenton Area Soup Kitchen to address food insecurity in the region. The investment is expected to provide approximately 1.75 million meals." <https://www.roi-nj.com/2022/02/16/finance/bank-of-america-gifts-700k-to-hunger-relief-organizations-to-address-food-insecurity/>

- **A Digital Map Leads to Reparations for Black and Indigenous Farmers** - This article focuses on a new online map, the "Black-Indigenous Farmers Reparations Map" (available here: [https://www.google.com/maps/d/viewer?ll=30.217706646655156%2C-153.485963&z=8&mid=1YvB3PuH8jeR\\_yoFCLvrKOTQQ3p\\_5NmKk](https://www.google.com/maps/d/viewer?ll=30.217706646655156%2C-153.485963&z=8&mid=1YvB3PuH8jeR_yoFCLvrKOTQQ3p_5NmKk)), which aims to help transfer land, money, training, and resources to frontline farmer-activists. In order to be considered for inclusion on the map, the applicant's project must be led by majority Black, Latinx, Indigenous, Asian, and/or People of Color and must be directly related to land, agriculture, and/or food justice, and the applicant must provide a reference from a People of Color-led farming organization. Any people who have resources they want to share are to contact the project's organizer (included on the map) directly. The types of projects included on the map might provide ideas related to EJTF's 2022 goal of looking for ways to address food-related issues; also, seven of the projects currently on the map are in NJ. <https://www.yesmagazine.org/social-justice/2018/02/21/a-digital-map-leads-to-reparations-for-black-and-indigenous-farmers>
- **Move On to Save NJ Forests** - A Task Force, headed by four forestry experts, has been established by the NJ Senate Environment and Energy Committee to propose forest management reforms that can form the basis for future legislation. Forest management is seen as one of the keys to reducing greenhouse gases through carbon sequestration. <https://www.njspotlightnews.org/2022/02/woodlands-nj-task-force-protect-forests-collect-2-million-acres-greenhouse-gas-emissions/>
- **Protecting Forests That Help Fight Climate Change** - The NJ Highlands Coalition held a "NJ Forests Forum" online, at which experts discussed how to protect NJ's public forests, including those sequestering the most carbon. Additional information, along with a link to the presentations and the video of the forum, are available here: <https://njhighlandscoalition.org/protectourforests/>. The presentations are summarized in the article available here: <https://centraljersey.com/2022/02/04/protecting-forests-that-help-fight-climate-change/>.
- **Berkeley Heights Residents Can Request Trees in Front of Their Homes** - Partly supported by a grant from Union County, the Berkeley Heights Environmental Commission is providing homeowners who request them with trees to be planted along the right of way. The aim is to maintain the tree canopy, which provides shade and can cool urban areas up to 10 degrees, and to improve air quality. <https://www.tapinto.net/towns/berkeley-heights/categories/press-releases/articles/berkeley-heights-residents-can-request-trees-in-front-of-their-homes>

## OTHER

- **Power Grid Takes Steps to Get Projects Online** - The great volume of energy projects, 95% of which are renewable, which are in the planning queue for PJM Interconnected's electric grid, are blocking these projects from connecting to the grid and thus are threatening NJ's clean energy goals. PJM Interconnected has put forth a plan to address this blockage, which needs to go through multiple internal steps and ultimately come before the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC), possibly in May. <https://www.njspotlightnews.org/2022/02/pjm-interconnection-energy-project-logjam-plan-faster-grid-connections-nj-solar/>
- **More Customers Set to Get Smart Meters** - Jersey Central Power & Light (JCP&L) received approval from the NJ Board of Public Utilities (BPU) to install smart meters in the homes and businesses of its 1.1 million customers over the next six years. This "advanced metering technology" will create integrated, two-way communication that is designed to allow customers to make more informed decisions about how and when they use energy. Customers can opt out, for a monthly charge. <https://www.njspotlightnews.org/2022/02/jcpl-gets-smart-meter-go-ahead-nj-1-million-customers-energy-use-power-restoration/>

- **Op-Ed: Murphy Appointees to Pinelands Commission Tip Balance toward Development** (by Joan Batory, who was Camden County's appointee to the Pinelands Commission from 1979 until 1985) - The author questions whether the latest members of the Pinelands Commission appointed by Gov. Murphy will uphold the protection of its resources as called for in its charge, and calls for increased funding for education about the Pinelands. <https://www.njspotlightnews.org/2022/02/gov-phil-murphy-appointees-pinelands-commission-tip-balance-toward-development-business/>



#### **MORATORIUM MONDAYS CONTINUE**

**Please continue to contact Gov. Murphy every Monday and urge him to declare a climate emergency moratorium on fossil fuel projects! These efforts have been successful in that a number of projects have been stopped or delayed in the past year. 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 (609-292-6000). Over 50 environmental, citizen, faith, and progressive groups in NJ are calling on Governor Murphy to enact a moratorium on all new fossil fuel projects in 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

---