

**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.**

UUFANJ Spring Gala!



The UUFANJ Spring Gala, held on April 9, 2022 both in-person and on Zoom, was a great success, as shown by the smiling faces above. UUFANJ Executive Director Charles Loflin (at left) began the event, and it featured the award of micro-grants to UUFANJ Task Force partners. The award to EJTF's partner, the NJ Environmental Justice Alliance (NJEJA), was accepted by its Executive Director Melissa Miles (at right).



NEWSLETTER CONTENTS

UUFANJ Spring Gala	1	- Lead Reduction in Households	16
Congregational Activities	2	- Fossil Fuel Infrastructure	17
EJTF Activities	2	- Renewable Resources	17
Future Events	3	- Climate Change	18
Videos of Past Events	10	- Drinking Water (other than lead)	20
EJTF's Goals for 2022	13	- Pollution	20
News Related to EJTF Issues	13	- Educational & Youth Programs	21
- Environmental Justice	13	- Other	22
- Land Management/Agriculture/Food	14	Moratorium Mondays	23
- Electric Vehicles/Vehicle Emission Reduction	16		

CONGREGATIONAL ACTIVITIES

Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Princeton (UUCP)

- On April 24, 2022, the Ministry for the Earth at the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Princeton (UUCP) co-sponsored, with the Coalition for Peace Action, a Virtual Earth Week Webinar, entitled "The Ecology of War." Speakers included UUCP member Bob Harris, who reflected on his extensive environmental career, Professor Neta C. Crawford, who is co-director of a group studying the "Costs of War" and discussed how the Pentagon became the world's largest single greenhouse gas emitter and why it's not too late to break the link between national security and fossil fuel consumption, and Alan Robock, co-director of the Rutgers Impact Studies of Climate Intervention lab, who discussed his research into predicting the climatic effects of a limited nuclear war. A video of the webinar is available here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d_cn3nBslKA.

EJTF ACTIVITIES

- **EJTF member Christine Dunbar** has continued her involvement in actions related to halting the Tennessee Gas Pipeline Company's (TGP) proposed expansion of the Wantage compressor station and a new West Milford compressor station. The expansion of fossil fuel pipelines in NJ, which would deliver fracked gas to NY while delivering pollution risks to NJ water resources and overall health, is highly contrary to the Governor's plan for 100% Clean Energy by 2050. However, despite efforts to halt it, the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) has just issued its approval of the project. This was not unexpected, but now it is up to NJ to halt the project by denying the State permits needed. "In approving this project, FERC disregarded relevant state climate law, neglected environmental review requirements, and failed to demonstrate that this project is required by the public interest," said Adam Carlesco, Staff Attorney, Food & Water Watch (the Food & Water Watch press release on the decision is available here: <https://www.foodandwaterwatch.org/2022/04/22/ferc-issues-approval-for-north-jersey-compressor-expansion-project/>). Local residents and activists will continue to organize against this project and call on Gov. Murphy to live up to NJ's climate commitments and stop this project by directing the NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) to reject the state permits needed for its approval. The DEP plans to hold a public hearing on the Title V Air Permit required for the project in the coming months.
- In recognition of EJTF's 2022 goal related to healthy, community-grown food, the Task Force is becoming more aware of NJ resources in this area. **EJTF member Christine Dunbar** serves as Paulins Kill Watershed Coordinator for the Foodshed Alliance, whose affordable farmland leasing program on preserved land, known as the Sustainable Agriculture Enterprise (SAGE) supports a number of such endeavors. One of these is the **Munsee Three Sisters Medicinal Farm** in Sussex County, NJ. The stated goal of the farm is "to provide clean healthy traditionally grown food that we then would distribute throughout our community at no cost to them." The farm was just featured in a writeup: "**Sustainable Farming Protects Land, Water and Lenape Foodways**" (available here: <https://www.njspotlightnews.org/2022/03/ramapough-lenape-nation-munsee-three-sisters-medicinal-farm-sustainable-agriculture-foodshed-alliance/>). Their website, with videos about the farm, is available here: <https://munseethreesisters.org>.

FUTURE EVENTS - Virtual, In-person, and Hybrid

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

MAY 2022						
(with hyperlinks to details on the following pages)						
Sun.	Mon.	Tues.	Wed.	Thurs.	Fri.	Sat.
1 "Earth Day Fest" in Highland Park - 11:00 a.m.	2 "Climate Change and Health" (Cornell) - 2:45 p.m.	3	4 Assemblymember James Kennedy Meet and Greet - 6:30 p.m. Comments due on: BPU solar contract Consumer Disclosure Forms	5 NJ WasteWise Business Network Meeting - 10:00 a.m. Lead-Free NJ May 2022 Membership Meeting - 5:30 p.m.	6 "State of the Climate: New Jersey 2021" - 12:00 p.m. Comments due on: BPU Design of Community Solar Program	7
8	9 "How Waste Became 'Renewable' in Baltimore – A Cautionary Tale" (Cornell) - 2:45 p.m.	10 "FOOD WASTE & GHG: Understanding and Reducing Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Emissions in Agriculture & Forestry" - 9:00 a.m. "Energy Companies and the Energy Transition: Transforming the Organization" - 12:00 p.m.	11 DRBC Second Quarter 2022 Public Hearing "Assessing Global Climate Change Mitigation Scenarios from a Power System Perspective" - 12:00 p.m. Ocean County EJ DEP Community Engagement Session - 6:00 p.m.	12 "Current Global Outlook on Planet Earth - A Race Against Time" - 12:30 p.m.	13	14 UUFANJ Annual Meeting - 10:00 a.m.
15	16	17 "Collaborating for Climate Resilience" - 1:15 p.m.	18 NJ Clean Air Council - 9:30 a.m. "Living with Climate Change: Sea Level Rise" - 1:00 p.m. "Tribal & Indigenous-Based Climate Adaptation Priorities in the NE" - 4:00 p.m.	19	20	21
22	23	24	25 "Carbon Offsets - Problem or Panacea?" - 12:00 p.m. "Direct Air Capture" - 3:30 p.m.	26	27	28
29	30	31 Comments due on: BPU Solar Siting Rules				

**NJ Board of Public Utilities (BPU) Comments Due
on Issues of Interest to EJTF**

- **Proposed changes to the Consumer Disclosure forms to be used in solar contracts** based on issues that arose with previous versions of the forms. Written comments are due by **5:00 p.m. on Wednesday, May 4, 2022**, and are to be submitted to the Docket No. QO20020184 using the "Post Comments" button on the BPU's Public Document Search tool, available here: <https://publicaccess.bpu.state.nj.us>. An aural replay of a public information session showing the presentation slides is available here: https://uso6web.zoom.us/rec/play/Low7GQpXpisVyopuMVb8KWk2FsNNJjNGKu3pD8pPOawhMtU_eayZA-PtEVFjHAYN-AaM5JInJPRBHulB.AWujG_aKu64bN5To (the Disclosure Forms section begins at the 26-minute point).
- **Design of the permanent Community Solar Energy Program**, with input requested in the following areas: Program Design & Eligibility; Project Selection; Low- and Moderate-income Access; Community Solar Subscribers; Community Solar Bill Credits; and Other. Questions related to these areas are included in the Request for Comments available here: <https://nj.gov/bpu/pdf/publicnotice/Request%20for%20Comments%20on%20Community%20Solar%20Energy%20Program%20pdf.pdf>. Written comments are due by **5:00 p.m. on Friday, May 6, 2022**, and are to be submitted to the Docket No. QO22030153 using the "Post Comments" button on the BPU's Public Document Search tool, available here: <https://publicaccess.bpu.state.nj.us>.
- **Siting rules for projects in the Competitive Solar Incentive (CSI) program, including special rules for projects on "prime agricultural soils or soils of Statewide importance."** Written comments are due by **5:00 p.m. on Tuesday, May 31, 2022** (an extended deadline), and are to be submitted to the Docket No. QO21101186 using the "Post Comments" button on the BPU's Public Document Search tool, available here: <https://publicaccess.bpu.state.nj.us>. Links to replays of two public information sessions showing the presentation slides are available here: <https://nj.gov/bpu/newsroom/public/>. The 3/29/2022 meeting focused on the Siting Straw Proposal and general stakeholder comments regarding the siting rules; the 4/8/2022 meeting focused on a proposal that has been put forth for the construction of grid-scale solar on specific farmlands in Agricultural Development Areas.

"Earth Day Fest" - In-person
Sunday, May 1, 2022, 11:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.
North 3rd Ave. from Raritan Ave. to Denison, Highland Park

Sustainable Highland Park is having an Earth Day Fest, as part of the Highland Park street fair. Learn about Green Stormwater Management, the new NJ plastic bag ban, tour local rain gardens, pick up a free reusable bag and a free reusable straw, and listen to local musicians. The flyer with additional information is available here:

<https://www.hpboro.com/home/showimage?id=2667&t=637853802849106754>.

State Assemblymember James Kennedy Meet and Greet - Virtual
Wednesday, May 4, 2022, 6:30 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.

The NJ League of Conservation Voters is sponsoring this meet-and-greet and discussion with James Kennedy, the Chairman of the Environment and Solid Waste Committee of the NJ State Assembly. Additional information and the link to sign up are available here:
<https://www.mobilize.us/njlcv/event/450691/>.

NJ WasteWise Business Network Meeting - Virtual
Thursday, May 5, 2022, 10:00 a.m. - 11:45 a.m.

The New Jersey WasteWise Business Network is a free educational program designed to help businesses and other organizations learn how waste reduction, recycling, and recycled product procurement not only help the environment, but also their bottom line. One of the topics to be presented at this webinar/meeting is "The Business of Food Recovery & Sustainable Food Waste Management," to be presented by Gary Sondermeyer, Vice President of Operations, Bayshore Family of Companies, Co-Chair, New Jersey Climate Change Alliance. Links to the agenda and to register are available here: <https://www.nj.gov/dep/dshw/recycling/wastewise/wwevents.htm>.

Delaware River Basin Commission (DRBC) Second Quarter 2022 Public Hearing
Wednesday, May 11, 2022
Meeting times and locations are forthcoming

Additional information on meeting time, location, and other details will be available here:
<https://www.state.nj.us/drbc/meetings/upcoming/index.html>.

Lead-Free NJ May 2022 Membership Meeting - Virtual
Thursday, May 5, 2022, 5:30 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.

Attend this meeting to learn about Lead-Free NJ, "a new inclusive, equitable collaborative working to ensure that our children are unburdened by lead and able to thrive in a lead-safe environment through changes to state and local policy. Come participate in our efforts to demand lead remediation statewide in every home and water system!... Learn about the lead problem in New Jersey, Lead-Free NJ's purpose and goals, and how to get involved. Participate in exploring solutions to the problem and shaping the collaborative's brand." Additional information and the registration link are available here:
<https://www.leadfreenj.org/event/lead-free-nj-may-2022-membership/>.

**"Energy Companies and the Energy Transition: Transforming the Organization" -
Webinar**

Tuesday, May 10, 2022, 12:00 p.m. - 1:15 p.m.

"The transition away from a fossil fuel-based energy system to one based on cleaner energy technologies raises profound questions for traditional oil and gas companies. In looking to the world's future energy requirements, some of these companies are looking for ways to evolve into broader energy companies to reach net-zero targets by 2050. They will require new capabilities, leadership, and cultures as they shift their business models, capital allocation, and organizational capabilities. To better understand the opportunities, experiences, and challenges facing oil and gas companies in adapting to the energy transition, the Columbia University Center on Global Energy Policy will host a panel of experts with experience in the sector." Additional information and the registration link are available here: <https://www.energypolicy.columbia.edu/events-calendar/energy-companies-and-energy-transition-transforming-organization>.

**"Assessing Global Climate Change Mitigation Scenarios from a Power System
Perspective" - Webinar**

Wednesday, May 11, 2022, 12:00 p.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Integrated Assessment Models (IAMs) are used to evaluate the technological and economic feasibility of climate goals, but there is a debate regarding the suitability of IAMs for long-term planning exercises of the global energy system in response to climate change mitigation requirements. Growing importance of variable renewables such as solar and wind technologies means that the technical feasibility of scenarios need to be regularly evaluated. In this talk, Maarten Brinkerink, a Postdoctoral Researcher at MaREI, the SFI Research Centre for Energy, Climate and Marine research and innovation at University College Cork, will present results from collaborative efforts involving the IAM community and power system modelers regarding limitations and potential improvements to the models. Additional information and the link to register 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."

Ocean County EJ DEP Community Engagement Session - Hybrid

Wednesday, May 11, 2022, 6:00-p.m. - 7:30 p.m.

**Second Baptist Church of Toms River, 2 First Street, South Toms River, NJ, 08753
and on Zoom**

The NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) is inviting Ocean County residents to attend a community engagement session regarding Environmental Justice with DEP Commissioner Shawn LaTourette and EPA Region 2 Regional Administrator Lisa Garcia. This community engagement session will provide residents, community groups, and other members of the public a chance to meet

Commissioner LaTourette and discuss environmental justice issues in Ocean County, and is one of a series being conducted by DEP in communities across NJ (the meeting flyer is available here: <https://www.nj.gov/dep/ej/docs/20220511-ocean-county-session-invite.pdf>). The meeting will be in-person and also on Zoom (registration is available here: <https://www.zoomgov.com/meeting/register/vJIsdeyhrzMrHqeTebgIDcEuFgAHvE29K6I>).

"Current Global Outlook on Planet Earth - A Race Against Time" - Webinar
Thursday, May 12, 2022, 12:30 p.m. - 2:00 p.m.

"A triple existential threat looms over our planet – climate change, biodiversity loss, and global water scarcity. By allowing business-as-usual to be our current default option, the human race is running out of time to address this grave global crisis." In this webinar, sponsored by the Security and Sustainability Forum, Global Council for Science and the Environment (GCSE) co-founder Dr. Karim Ahmed will deliver a lecture on how we arrived at this unprecedented moment in human history. Dr. Ahmed will discuss what must be done urgently to disrupt the current path and will give particular attention to the globalized economy where large inequities between rich and poor continue to rise to a societal breaking point. Additional information and registration are available here: <https://register.gotowebinar.com/register/630267975227452943>.



UUFANJ Annual Meeting - Virtual
Saturday, May 14, 2022, 10:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.

All NJ UUs are encouraged to attend the UU FaithAction NJ Annual Meeting, at which the Task Forces will provide updates and present their visions for the year.

The business meeting portion is planned to take place online prior to the virtual meeting.

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

"Collaborating for Climate Resilience" - Webinar
Tuesday, May 17, 2022, 1:15 p.m. - 2:45 p.m.

Sponsored by the Security and Sustainability Forum, and "drawn from Ann Goodman's and Nilda Mesa's new book, 'Collaborating for Climate Resilience' (Routledge, 2021), this webinar is designed to spark participants' thinking—and, eventually, doing--on how to deal with one of the most challenging issues of climate adaptation: collaborating better with partners from disparate fields and walks of life - from cities, states, business, academia, community-based organizations, the military and more - to create real-life solutions to climate change." Additional information and registration are available here: <https://register.gotowebinar.com/register/5270425846588788751>.

NJ Clean Air Council - Virtual
Wednesday, May 18, 2022, 9:30 a.m.

The Council meets via Microsoft Teams. Information to join the meeting is available on the calendar, here: <https://www.state.nj.us/dep/cleanair/cac-calendar.html>.

"Living with Climate Change: Sea Level Rise" - Webinar
Wednesday, May 18, 2022, 1:00 p.m. - 2:30 p.m.

"The Environmental and Energy Study Institute (EESI) invites you to a briefing on policies and practices to address sea level rise. Sea level rise is a unique challenge for coastal communities and for policymakers. How will impacts from sea level rise compound impacts from extreme storm events? What infrastructure and communities will be impacted over different time horizons? When should funding be allocated to rebuild or armor coastlines and what are alternative options? What are the strengths and limitations of nature-based solutions for coastal resilience to sea level rise?" Additional information and the link to RSVP are available here:

<https://www.eesi.org/briefings/view/051822climatechange>.

"Carbon Offsets - Problem or Panacea?" - Webinar
Wednesday, May 25, 2022, 12:00 p.m. - 1:00 p.m.

"Net-zero targets by firms and countries have led to a sharp rise in the demand for carbon offsets. Yet, various individual studies provide contradictory evidence on the actual emissions reductions of carbon offsets. In this talk, Benedict Probst, of ETH Zurich (Swiss Federal Institute of Technology in Zurich) and Cambridge University, presents the results from an AI-assisted literature review to synthesize existing rigorous empirical evidence of the actual emissions reduction of 3,000 offset projects across all major offset sectors." Additional information and the link to register 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."

"Direct Air Capture" - Webinar
Wednesday, May 25, 2022, 3:30 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.

"The Environmental and Energy Study Institute (EESI) invites you to a briefing on direct air capture, which chemically removes carbon dioxide from the atmosphere. The captured carbon can be permanently stored underground or used in industrial processes. While climate change mitigation efforts are the priority, carbon dioxide removal will be necessary to help meet climate goals."

Additional information and the link to RSVP are available here:

<https://www.eesi.org/briefings/view/052522tech>.

"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 May are listed below; links to additional information and zoom access are available here:

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

May 2, 2022: "Climate Change and Health" - This talk will be presented by Dr. Kristie L. Ebi, who has been conducting research and practice on the health risks of climate variability and change for 25 years. Dr. Ebi "conducts research to estimate current and future health risks of climate change; design adaptation policies and measures to reduce risks in multi-stressor environments; and estimate the health co-benefits of mitigation policies."

May 9, 2022: "How Waste Became 'Renewable' in Baltimore – A Cautionary Tale" - In this talk, Dr. Chloe Ahmann, an environmental anthropologist and Assistant Professor in the Department of Anthropology at Cornell University, follows the debates among neighbors in a South Baltimore neighborhood over a proposed incinerator. Some worried the plant would solidify their neighborhood's position as a "dumping ground," while others thought it might revive them from an economic slump. Dr. Ahmann also presents a cautionary tale about the lure of techno-fixes by examining why some considered the incinerator to be a "renewable" technology.

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 May 2022 (a sampling is below and on p. 10), 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/>-.

"State of the Climate: New Jersey 2021"

Friday, May 6, 2022, 12:00 p.m.

A warming climate has led to increased temperature extremes, sea levels, and rainfall intensity in NJ. These changes are projected to continue and will present unique challenges for human health, ecosystems, agricultural production, and more. Dr. James Shope, applied climatologist with the Rutgers New Jersey Climate Change Resource Center, joined by Dr. Anthony Broccoli, co-director of the Rutgers Climate Institute, and Dr. David Robinson, the New Jersey State Climatologist, will highlight the latest climate information from across the climate change research field for NJ. A link to a flyer, additional information, and registration are available here:

<https://climatesociety.rutgers.edu/events/all-climate-events/icalrepeat.detail/2022/05/06/7122/-/webinar-state-of-the-climate-new-jersey-2021>.

"FOOD WASTE & GHG: Understanding and Reducing Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Emissions in Agriculture & Forestry"
Tuesday, May 10, 2022, 9:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.

Sponsored by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), in this webinar you will learn how citizens can help farms and landfills reduce greenhouse gases - while saving money, land area, and natural resources by reducing food waste. The webinar is in two parts: 9:00-10:00 a.m.

"Food Waste: What We Know and What We Don't;" and 10:00-11:00 a.m.

"Innovative Case Studies from a New Hampshire Landfill." Additional information and the registration link are available here:

<https://www.climatehubs.usda.gov/hubs/northeast/events/food-waste-and-greenhouse-gas-understanding-and-reducing-emissions>.

"Tribal & Indigenous-Based Climate Adaptation Priorities in the NE"
Wednesday, May 18, 2022, 4:00 p.m.

Sponsored by Northeast Climate Adaptation Science Center, this webinar will provide an overview of climate adaptation priorities for Tribal Nations and Indigenous Peoples in the Northeast. A link to additional information and registration are available here:

<https://climatesociety.rutgers.edu/events/all-climate-events/icalrepeat.detail/2022/05/18/7055/-/webinar-tribal-indigenous-based-climate-adaptation-priorities-in-the-ne-casc-region>.

VIDEOS OF PAST EVENTS

"When Do Environmental Markets Worsen or Improve Environmental Disparities?"
Video of Webinar

Sponsored by the Princeton University High Meadows Environmental Institute, this webinar addressed the linkage between addressing climate change and impacts on social inequity. This talk combined two studies, a retrospective study on the pollution disparity consequences of California's carbon market and a prospective study on pollution disparities of various simulated US-wide climate policies in order to explore when there is a trade-off and when there is alignment between these equity and efficiency considerations. The video is available here:

<https://cpree.princeton.edu/events/2022/decarbonization-and-local-air-pollution-disparities>.

"‘The Science Is Clear’: Why the Climate Crisis Needs New Narratives"
Video of Webinar

Sponsored by the Princeton University High Meadows Environmental Institute, this webinar addressed "how appeals to both big data and apocalyptic alarm define the most widely circulated environmental stories. While powerful for some groups, these appeals do not speak to the

increasingly unequal impacts of global warming. [The presenter] Carruth made a case for narratives that include localized and lived accounts of climate disaster while envisioning futures beyond catastrophe. She focused on a set of environmental art and media projects about American coastlines that cast neighborhood-level experiences of the climate crisis — and the actions to address them — as inseparable from social inequality." The video is available here: <https://youtu.be/OnHNGvaTlwY>.

"Justice40 - The Path Forward for the Administration's Environmental Justice Initiative" - Video of Webinar

This briefing, sponsored by the Environmental and Energy Study Institute (EESI), included discussions of the status, and the potential benefits to frontline communities, of the federal "Justice40 Initiative" The Justice40 Initiative was included in Executive Order 14008 which includes a target of providing 40 percent of the benefits from specific federal investments - such as those for clean energy, energy efficiency, and water infrastructure - to "disadvantaged communities." The video is available here: <https://www.eesi.org/briefings/view/040822justice>.

"Greening the Grid through Demand-Side Automation" - Video of Webinar

Sponsored by Resources for the Future (RFF), this webinar reviewed recent research and regulatory developments, as well as on-the-ground experiences, related to the use of internet-accessible smart technologies to match electricity demand with available supply and potentially also provide other services to the grid. A panel featuring experts from across academia, policy, and industry, discussed the various challenges and opportunities of using automation and pricing to help "green" the grid. The video is available here: <https://www.rff.org/events/rff-live/greening-the-grid-through-demand-side-automation/>.

"Bringing Science to Bear for Climate Solutions and Environmental Justice – A Perspective from the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP)" Video of Webinar

This talk, part of the Cornell "Perspectives on the Climate Change Challenge" series, was presented by Gretchen Goldman, Assistant Director for Environmental Science, Engineering, Policy, and Justice at the White House OSTP. It highlighted the ongoing work of the White House OSTP and other parts of the U.S. government to address issues of climate change and environmental justice. The video is available here: <https://atkinson.cornell.edu/media/bringing-science-to-bear-for-climate-solutions-and-environmental-justice-a-perspective-from-the-white-house-office-of-science-and-technology-policy/>.

"How to Achieve Net Zero Greenhouse Gas Emissions by Midcentury" Video of Webinar

This talk, part of the Cornell "Perspectives on the Climate Change Challenge" series, was presented by Stephen Pacala, Professor in Ecology & Evolutionary Biology at Princeton University). Dr. Pacala's research uses a global model to make predictions about the large-scale distribution of biomes and associated biogeochemical fluxes, as well as specific local predictions including hourly physiological

carbon gain and water loss, community composition and dynamics throughout succession, the outcome of spatial competition among plant species, and the fluxes of nitrogen, water, and carbon. The video is available here: <https://atkinson.cornell.edu/media/how-to-achieve-net-zero-greenhouse-gas-emissions-by-midcentury/>.

"Towards Sustainable Energy and Materials: Creating a New Circular Carbon Economy via Carbon Capture, Utilization, and Storage" - Video of Webinar

This talk, part of the Cornell "Perspectives on the Climate Change Challenge" series, was presented by Ah-Hyung (Alissa) Park a Professor of Climate Change at Columbia University. "In order to meet the ever-increasing global energy demands while stabilizing the atmospheric CO₂ level, the development of carbon capture, utilization, and storage (CCUS) technologies is one of the critical needs." In this webinar, Dr. Park discussed the challenges and opportunities of different CO₂ capture and conversion pathways including Negative Emission Technologies (e.g., Direct Air Capture) that can allow the development of circular carbon and hydrogen economy using renewable energy. The video is available here: <https://www.atkinson.cornell.edu/media/towards-sustainable-energy-and-materials-creating-a-new-circular-carbon-economy-via-carbon-capture-utilization-and-storage/>.

"Tackling Climate Change with Machine Learning" - Video of Webinar

This webinar, part of "New Energy: Conversations with Early-Career Energy Researchers," an online series presented by Dartmouth College, was 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 described 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. The video is available here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8yIhjIiTbi4>.

"Perspectives on Separating Possible vs. Practical Sustainable Solutions for Energy and Materials" - Video of Talk

"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 reviewed 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 also reviewed how sustainability can have competing priorities complicating optimum solutions. The video is available here: https://youtu.be/pL_5zHU87Fo.

EJTF's GOALS for 2022

- 1. Advocating for the adoption of the Green Amendment in New Jersey through work in our congregations and as a Task Force;**
 - 2. Working toward resolving the many challenges in NJ related to food-insecurity, including but not limited to promoting regenerative agriculture, increasing accessibility of healthy food, reducing food waste, and encouraging community and family gardens;**
 - 3. Supporting 100% renewable energy and energy conservation through measures such as the Clean Energy Equity Act, and those affecting transportation and Electric Vehicles (EVs).**
-
-

NEWS RELATED TO EJTF ISSUES

[covering 3/28/2022 – 4/25/2022]

ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

- **Air Quality Worse for Communities of Color** - The American Lung Association (ALA) has released its annual "State of the Air" report, which shows that "More than 137 million Americans live in counties that had unhealthy levels of particle pollution or ozone. In addition, communities of color are disproportionately exposed to unhealthy air. The report found that people of color were 61% more likely than white people to live in a county with a failing grade for at least one pollutant, and 3.6 times as likely to live in a county with a failing grade for all three pollutants." (Data for NJ by county is available here: <https://www.lung.org/research/sota/city-rankings/states/new-jersey/>.) Many areas in NJ have shown improvement in air quality, but some have not yet reached acceptable levels. Some have no monitors or incomplete data, however. <https://www.njspotlightnews.org/2022/04/air-pollution-ozone-particle-pollution-communities-of-color-american-lung-association/>
- **Acting AG Platkin, DEP Commissioner LaTourette Announce Groundwater Contamination Lawsuit in Environmental Justice Community** - The NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) "has filed suit against a Connecticut-based chemical company that, the complaint alleges, is responsible for damaging New Jersey's precious natural resources by contaminating groundwater at the site of its former manufacturing plant in Lodi, Bergen County. The community surrounding the Hexcel site has a significant low-income and minority population and is considered 'overburdened' under New Jersey's Environmental Justice Law." A summary of the history of the site and reactions to the lawsuit by members of the environmental community are described in the NJ Spotlight article available here: <https://www.njspotlightnews.org/2022/04/nj-sues-chemical-companies-tainted-groundwater-lodi-bergen-county-cleanup-costs/> This is the forty-sixth environmental justice lawsuit filed by the Attorney General's office and DEP since 2018. <https://www.njoag.gov/acting-ag-platkin-dep-commissioner-latourette-announce-groundwater-contamination-lawsuit-in-environmental-justice-community/>

- **EPA Announces Appointment of Senior Advisor for Equity to Help Advance Environmental Justice and Embed Equity in EPA Work** - Olivia C. Glenn, who has served as the NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) Deputy Commissioner of Environmental Justice and Equity since July 2020, has been appointed by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to be the "Senior Advisor for Equity and Chief of Staff to EPA's Regional Administrator Lisa F. Garcia. Ms. Glenn will be helping to guide EPA Region 2's efforts to embed environmental justice and diversity goals into all of its work and will serve as all-around Chief of Staff." <https://www.epa.gov/newsreleases/epa-announces-appointment-senior-advisor-equity-help-advance-environmental-justice-and>

LAND MANAGEMENT/AGRICULTURE/FOOD

- **Mapping Out Ways to Make NJ's Food System More Equitable, Resilient** (4-minute news video) - In this video, the co-founder of the "New Jersey Food Democracy Collaborative," [see box below] describes the myriad entities that are involved in the the food system in NJ, as described in publications issued by the group, including "The New Jersey Food System in a Nutshell" and "NJ Roadmap for Food System Resilience - a Holistic Justice Framework for Food System Transformation." <https://www.njspotlightnews.org/video/mapping-out-ways-to-make-njs-food-system-more-equitable-resilient/>

New Jersey Food Democracy Collaborative

The "New Jersey Food Democracy Collaborative," (NJFDC) was formed in June 2020, by a number of organizations across NJ food sectors "to better understand and research the state's food system and to increase local producer-to-consumer infrastructure, particularly for low-income communities across the state." It is "focused on building resilience and equity in the food system through fostering collaborative action, affecting structural change, and advocating for innovation and optimization of public programs." It envisions "a broad, connected, grassroots network of food system stakeholders, community residents, and state and local leaders that democratically transforms the state's food and agriculture system to be resilient, regenerative, equitable, and anti-racist." A number of resources compiled by the Collaborative are available on its website, here: <https://stockton.edu/food-democracy-collaborative/>. These include:

- **"The New Jersey Food System in a Nutshell - A Holistic View of the New Jersey Food System and Its Economic, Environmental, and Social Impacts"** (available here: <https://stockton.edu/food-democracy-collaborative/documents/New-Jersey-Food-System-in-a-Nutshell-2.pdf>).
- **"NJ Roadmap for Food System Resilience - A Holistic Justice Framework for Food System Transformation"** (available here: https://stockton.edu/food-democracy-collaborative/documents/NJ_Roadmap_Food_System_Resilience.pdf).
- A schematic/flow chart of **"NJ Food System Governance"** (available here: <https://stockton.edu/food-democracy-collaborative/documents/NJFoodSystemGovernanceMapV1.pdf>).
- NJFDC's response to the NJ Economic Development Authority's (EDA) Request for Information on how the state can effectively address food insecurity in its communities, which contains a wealth of information and references (available here: https://stockton.edu/food-democracy-collaborative/documents/NJFDC_Response_NJEDA_RFI_on_Food_Deserts.pdf).

Note: The Foodshed Alliance, where **EJTF member Christine Dunbar** serves as Paulins Kill Watershed Coordinator, is listed by NJFDC as a resource for food system organizing, urban agriculture and land access programs in NJ.

- **\$1.5M = Proposed Funding Grants to Improve Food Access and Food Security in NJ** - The NJ Economic Development Authority (EDA) has created a Food Security Planning Grant Program. Details are available on the program's website (available here: <https://www.njeda.com/food-security-planning-grant/>), which states: "To advance the goals of the Food Desert Relief Act (FDRA), part of the Economic Recovery Act of 2020, the EDA will use up to \$1,500,000 in economic planning services funds to create a competitive planning grant program focused on leveraging distressed assets in designated Food Desert Communities (FDCs) in New Jersey to improve food access and food security. The Food Security Planning Grant Program will competitively award grants ranging between \$75,000 to \$125,000 to municipal governments, county governments, and/or redevelopment agencies to improve food access and food security by leveraging distressed assets in New Jersey's Food Desert Communities." <https://www.njspotlightnews.org/2022/04/nj-eda-1-5m-funding-food-deserts-food-access/>
- **Murphy Administration Celebrates Earth Week With New \$15M Investment in Nature-Based Infrastructure That Will Help New Jersey Fight Climate Change** - A new "blue and green carbon grant program" announced by Gov. Murphy "will invest \$15 million in projects across NJ that create, restore and enhance salt marshes, sea grass beds, forests and urban parks that sequester atmospheric carbon in the fight against climate change." The grant program is funded through auction proceeds from the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI), and added points will be awarded to applications for projects in Overburdened Communities that have borne a disproportionate share of environmental inequities over the years. https://www.nj.gov/dep/newsrel/2022/22_0019.htm
- **NJDA Is Reinventing Its Approach To Supporting Organic Agriculture In New Jersey** - Before a food can be labeled "organic," a USDA accredited certifier must inspect the farm for it to be "certified organic." One of the entities certifying farms in NJ has been the NJ Department of Agriculture (NJDA). However, Accredited Certifying Agencies are prohibited from offering technical support and guidance to the farms they certify. In 5/2022, NJDA will move from being an organic certifying entity to focusing on educating, marketing and expanding organic agriculture to NJ growers. The organic farming community is looking forward to this increase in support from the agency. <https://noadversary.org/njda-is-reinventing-its-approach-to-supporting-organic-agriculture-in-new-jersey/>



- **A Plan to Plant More Trees in Newark** (3-1/2 minute news video) - This video shows the work of the Newark Green Team, which is focused on planting more trees around the city. The goal is to plant 400 to 500 trees over the next two years. <https://www.njspotlightnews.org/video/a-plan-to-plant-more-trees-in-newark/>
- **NJDEP Awards Urban and Community Forestry Grant to West Orange** - This article provides details about the grants awarded in 3/2022 by the NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) under the Urban and Community Forestry program. The grants are intended to support Gov. Murphy's environmental justice initiatives in vulnerable neighborhoods, with 75 percent of the funds awarded to municipalities with at least one overburdened community. Resiliency grants totaling \$925,374 were awarded to municipalities throughout the state; in Essex County, West Orange was awarded a grant of

\$50,000. Reforestation and tree planting grants totaling \$382,624 were also awarded to some municipalities. <https://essexnewsdaily.com/headline-news/njdep-awards-urban-and-community-forestry-grant-to-west-orange>

- **NJ Town Will Start Mandating ‘Native’ Plantings on Public Land** - "Montclair could soon become the first town in New Jersey to adopt an ordinance designed to help sustain bees, butterflies and other pollinators that live in and pass through the Garden State." An ordinance that is expected to be adopted in May calls for the municipality to use at least 70% native trees and other vegetation when doing new plantings on public property. Town officials decided it would be best to require at least 70% native vegetation and not 100% because supply chain disruption issues are limiting deliveries of trees, bushes and other plantings to local nurseries. <https://nj1015.com/nj-town-will-start-mandating-native-plantings-on-public-land/>
- **Farmland Preservation Plan Update Moving Forward, County Ag. Board to Host Public Info Session April 14 in Raritan Township** - This article provides a look into how one county has succeeded in preserving farmland and funding its preparation of the required Farmland Preservation Plan, and of the use of easements. Hunterdon County leads NJ in the number of preserved farms, and 97% of the farms in the county are family-owned and operated. <https://www.tapinto.net/towns/flemington-slash-raritan/sections/green/articles/farmland-preservation-plan-update-moving-forward-county-ag-board-to-host-public-info-session-april-14-in-raritan-township>

ELECTRIC VEHICLES & VEHICLE EMISSION REDUCTION

- **Murphy Administration Announces Additional \$6 Million in Vehicle Electrification Funds to Reduce Climate Pollution** - Leveraging proceeds from the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI), a \$6.6 million investment will be used by NJ to offset the cost of 16 new electric vehicles that include garbage trucks, dump trucks and ambulances in overburdened communities. The funding also will be used for an e-mobility project in Jersey City that will reduce vehicle miles traveled through an electric car sharing program. https://www.nj.gov/dep/newsrel/2022/22_0020.htm
- **Charging Stations Key to Getting More EVs on the Road** - This article details the current state of, and future need for, EV charging stations in NJ in order to meet its clean energy goals. In 8/2021, NJ ranked sixth in the nation in the number of EVs in the nation, but ranked last in the number of charging ports. However, NJ is focusing on high-speed ports, and currently has more of those than either NY or CA. <https://www.njspotlightnews.org/2022/04/ev-charging-stations-330000-vehicles-murphy-administration-rebates-clean-energy-goals/>

LEAD REDUCTION IN HOUSEHOLDS

- **Lead-Free NJ and East Trenton Collaborative to Commemorate Ongoing Partnership, Share Resources with Community Members** - On 4/9/2022, Lead-free NJ (LFNJ) and the East Trenton Collaborative (ETC) held a meet-and-greet event with local community members to commemorate their ongoing partnership and share resources. The ETC is one of LFNJ's three Community Hubs, which are local grassroots organizations that help define and advance the collaborative's yearly objectives and long term goals. They participate in the statewide collaborative, but also convene to coordinate local efforts, strategize on solutions, educate residents, and more. Each of LFNJ's Community Hubs, which are currently in Trenton, Paterson, and Newark, has specific plans that are tailored to the needs of their distinct communities. <https://www.insidernj.com/press-release/lead-free-nj-and-east-trenton-collaborative-to-commemorate-ongoing-partnership-share-resources-with-community-members/>

- **MUA Won't Beat Deadline to Get Lead Water Lines Out of Jersey City Schools** - Besides lead in households, students have encountered lead in drinking water in schools. The Jersey City Municipal Utilities Authority (MUA) had imposed a deadline of the end of 2020 on itself to remediate all the lead lines in Jersey City schools, but now says that, due to "supply chain issues associated with the coronavirus pandemic," it will miss that deadline. In the meantime, drinking fountains have been turned off and students receive bottled water. <https://www.nj.com/hudson/2022/03/mua-wont-beat-deadline-to-get-lead-water-lines-out-of-jersey-city-schools.html>

FOSSIL FUEL INFRASTRUCTURE



- **Power Plant Demonstrators Greet NJ Transit Board Members at First In-Person Meeting** - In the first in-person meeting held since the pandemic, NJ Transit heard comments lasting nearly two hours from members of the public opposing the board for its entertaining the building of a natural gas-fired backup power plant. In addition, demonstrators outside of the meeting handed out leaflets protesting plans to build the plant. They called on the board to revisit the requests for proposals it had issued, because despite NJ Transit's commitment in 2020 to use renewable options as much as possible, they maintain that the RFP puts the natural gas-fired plant back in consideration, without calling for consideration of cleaner alternatives. <https://www.nj.com/traffic/2022/04/power-plant-demonstrators-greet-nj-transit-board-members-at-first-in-person-meeting.html>
- **3 New NJ Power Plants Coming, 2 Will Definitely Use Natural Gas** - This article gives background and details about three new power plants that are planned for Newark (by PVSC), Kearny (the NJ Transit backup power plant) and Woodbridge (a Competitive Power Ventures (CPV) fracked natural gas plant). <https://patch.com/new-jersey/paramus/s/i7bfa/3-new-nj-power-plants-coming-2-will-definitely-use-natural-gas>
- **Newark Residents Protest Possible Fourth Power Plant** (4-minute news video) - **EJTF partner Nicky Sheats** is among protesters of the Passaic Valley Sewerage Commission's (PVSC) planned power plant in the Ironbound Community of Newark. He calls this the first big test of NJ's landmark environmental justice law. <https://www.njspotlightnews.org/video/newark-residents-protest-possible-fourth-power-plant/>

RENEWABLE RESOURCES

- **Wind Port Construction Begins to Boost Economy** - This article describes the impacts already felt in the job market, and projections for future jobs and economic benefits, of the wind port being constructed on the Delaware River in NJ. <https://www.njspotlightnews.org/2022/04/nj-wind-port-salem-county-300m-400m-boost-local-businesses-women-minorities-eda/>

- **Another Offshore Wind Manufacturer for NJ? It Depends** - This article describes one of the 80 different proposals the NJ Board of Public Utilities (BPU) has received for transmission of offshore wind energy to the existing grid. This proposal links the transmission solution with a proposal to build the state's first manufacturing facility for offshore wind cables. However, the cable project wouldn't go forward if the company's proposal for an offshore wind interconnection hub in South Amboy is not approved. <https://www.njspotlightnews.org/2022/04/manufacturer-offshore-wind-cables-nj-wind-energy-hub-repauno-port-and-rail-terminal/>
- **Once a Leader, NJ's Solar Industry Slips** - NJ's solar industry has experienced a combination of supply chain issues, solar price increases, and a bottleneck caused by multiple projects submitted during the transition period (between NJ's previous financing mechanism and its new one) that may not be able to get underway before NJ's deadline for them. <https://www.njspotlightnews.org/2022/04/nj-solar-industry-clean-energy-challenges-covid19-supply-chain-disruptions-price-increases/>
- **\$340,000 = USDA Grant to Expand Renewable Fuel Sales in NJ** - Under the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) "Higher Blends Infrastructure Incentive Program," NJ businesses in Bergen and Union counties are receiving grants "to assist in building infrastructure, expand sales and use of renewable fuels, and give consumers more environmentally friendly options at the pump." [Additional information about the program is here: [https://www.rd.usda.gov/newsroom/news-release/usda-invests-340000-grants-help-build-energy-independence-investing-homegrown-biofuels-new-jersey.](https://www.rd.usda.gov/newsroom/news-release/usda-invests-340000-grants-help-build-energy-independence-investing-homegrown-biofuels-new-jersey/)] <https://www.njspotlightnews.org/2022/04/nj-usda-grant-build-infrastructure-expand-sales-use-renewable-fuels-ethanol-higher-blends-incentive-program/>
- **New Jersey Establishes C-PACE Program to Finance Eligible Commercial Renewable Energy Projects** - The NJ Economic Development Authority (EDA) has established the Commercial Property Assessed Clean Energy (C-PACE) program to finance commercial renewable energy projects, as well as water efficiency and other authorized improvements where "capital providers" pay the up-front costs of the project and are then repaid through a real property assessment levied by the participating municipality. [Additional information is available on the C-PACE website, here: [https://www.newjerseypace.org/nj-c-pace-regulations-guidelines-being-developed/.](https://www.newjerseypace.org/nj-c-pace-regulations-guidelines-being-developed/)] The proposed guidelines and regulations needed to begin the program are expected this summer. <https://enviropolitics.com/new-jersey-establishes-c-pace-program-to-finance-eligible-commercial-renewable-energy-projects/>
- **Rep. Norcross Announces \$2.8 Million to Support Clean Energy Business Development in Paulsboro, New Jersey** - The U.S. Department of Commerce Economic Development Administration (EDA) has awarded a \$2.8 million grant to Paulsboro, NJ, to expand the Paulsboro Water Treatment Plant in support of business development and job growth in South Jersey's offshore wind industry. The grant will be matched with \$2.8 million in local funds and is expected to create 500 jobs, retain 100 jobs, and generate \$250 million in private investment. This EDA investment is geared toward providing the wastewater treatment capacity necessary for the development of a new manufacturing facility for offshore wind turbine components. <https://www.insidernj.com/press-release/rep-norcross-announces-2-8-million-to-support-clean-energy-business-development-in-paulsboro-new-jersey/>

CLIMATE CHANGE

- **Environmentalists Say New Fossil Fuel Projects Could Derail NJ's Climate Goals** - EmpowerNJ has issued a new report, "Completed and Pending Murphy Administration Fossil Fuel Projects" (available here: http://empowernewjersey.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/Completed_and_Pending_Fossil_Fuel_Projects_04-22-2022.pdf) which describes six NJ fossil fuel projects completed from 2018 to 2021 and seven pending projects, all of which are moving NJ in the wrong direction related to reducing greenhouse gas emissions. EmpowerNJ

is a coalition (**of which UUFANJ is a member**) of environmental, citizen, faith, and progressive groups that call on Gov. Murphy to act quickly on climate change by stopping pending fossil fuel projects and their greenhouse gas emissions. [In a 7-minute news video (available here: <https://www.njspotlightnews.org/video/why-environmental-coalition-says-nj-is-falling-short-of-clean-energy-goals/>), Anjuli Ramos-Busot, director of the NJ Sierra Club, describes "Why Environmental Coalition Says NJ Is Falling Short of Clean-Energy Goals."] Greenhouse gas emissions are said to have increased nearly 20% due to projects approved by Gov. Murphy over the last four years and have the potential to increase an additional 38% if the seven pending projects are approved and completed. <https://www.njspotlightnews.org/2022/04/empower-new-jersey-questions-njs-climate-goals-if-pending-projects-approved-says-38-rise-greenhouse-gas-emissions/>

- **Find Out What NJ Residents and Businesses Will Pay for Clean Energy, but Not Just Yet -** This article describes the areas related to the NJ Energy Master Plan where cost analyses are still missing while programs move forward with approvals. An analysis contracted for by the NJ Board of Public Utilities (BPU), issuance of which has been delayed for two years, now is projected to be issued in the fall. Environmentalists point out that the plan for the cost analysis does not adequately take into account the benefits of transitioning to clean energy or the urgency resulting from climate change. <https://www.njspotlightnews.org/2022/03/nj-bpu-approved-clean-energy-initiatives-without-knowing-overall-ratepayer-costs-energy-master-plan-utility-customers/>



- **More Rain, Higher Temperatures: Report Underlines Climate Challenge -** The annual "New Jersey State of the Climate Report," which focuses on changes in temperature, sea-level rise, precipitation, and extreme events, has been released and is available here: <https://njclimateresourcecenter.rutgers.edu/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/State-of-the-Climate-Report-NJ-2021-4-18.pdf>. The report echoes other reports in projecting higher temperatures, bigger storms, and more rain for NJ. This article also describes the "New Jersey Extreme Precipitation Projection Tool" released during Earth Week (see article below). <https://www.njspotlightnews.org/2022/04/studies-say-nj-will-get-more-rain-higher-temperatures-dep-unveils-extreme-precipitation-projection-tool/>
- **DEP Launches Extreme Precipitation Projection Online Tool -** The NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) has launched an online tool "that will help planners, local governments, developers, and residents better understand that extreme precipitation events are increasing," according to the DEP, citing recent studies by the Northeast Regional Climate Center. The DEP will be using the Extreme Precipitation Projection Tool in planning and decision-making processes and encourages local government agencies, planners and developers to use it when assessing needs for flood hazard and storm water management permits. The tool, available here: <https://njprojectedprecipitationchanges.com/>, enables users to view rainfall projected percent increase by county, municipality, grid, or custom areas, based on storm probabilities (e.g., 10-year storm, etc.), emission level scenarios, and future time period options. <https://followsouthjersey.com/2022/04/21/njdep-launches-extreme-precipitation-projection-online-tool/>

- **Some NJ Utility Owners Buck Industry Trend by Supporting Climate Policies** - A report ("The U.S. Power Sector and Climate Policy") issued by the InfluenceMap, an independent think tank that provides data and analysis on how business and finance are affecting the climate crisis, finds that only four of the 25 largest investor-owned electric utilities in the U.S. are "engaging positively with climate policy." Two of those four are Public Service Enterprise Group, the owner of NJ's largest utility, and Exelon, owner of Atlantic City Electric. <https://www.njspotlightnews.org/2022/04/nj-power-companies-utilities-among-few-nationwide-support-robust-climate-policies-pseg-exelon/>
- **Will Rising Seas Engulf NJ's History?** - This article provides a detailed look at the different approaches being taken to address preservation of historic sites in NJ threatened by sea-level rise. Issues related to Ellis Island, and the Barnegat Bay and East Point lighthouses, are examined in depth. <https://www.njspotlightnews.org/2022/04/climate-change-seas-rise-nj-historic-sites-endangered-ellis-island-barnegat-lighthouse-east-point-lighthouse/>

DRINKING WATER-RELATED ISSUES (other than lead)

- **Half of Wells Tested Exceed Limits for 'Forever Chemicals'** - Testing of private water wells by the NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) over the past several years have shown half of them contained PFAS "forever chemicals" at levels above the state standards. DEP urges owners of private wells (which supply around 13% of NJ's drinking water) to get wells tested; if tests show levels above the standards, they should switch to bottled water and can apply to the NJ Spill Fund for reimbursement for installing filters. <https://www.njspotlightnews.org/2022/03/pfas-forever-chemicals-widespread-private-water-wells-pfna-pfoa-pfos-nj-dep/>
- **Opinion: The Ghost of Gov. Christie's Policies Lingers in the Highlands. Gov. Murphy Can Change That** (by Elliott Ruga, policy and communications director for the New Jersey Highlands Coalition) - In this piece, the author describes how "Between 2015 and 2018 the Department of Environmental Protection significantly weakened the regulations and administrative procedures that protected New Jersey's drinking water resources" when Gov. Chris Christie elevated development interests over water quality protection. New development projects, four in the Highlands region, are awaiting decisions on permits the weakened rules make it easier to approve; the author calls on Gov. Murphy's administration to prevent their approval. <https://www.nj.com/opinion/2022/04/the-ghost-of-gov-christies-policies-lingers-in-the-highlands-gov-murphy-can-change-that-opinion.html>

POLLUTION

- **Opinion: A Matter of Life and Breath** (by Jill Aquino, a practicing nurse and a member of Clinicians for Climate Action New Jersey, as well as the Alliance of Nurses for Healthy Environments) - The author describes the many health issues related to use of diesel school buses, including that "particle concentration levels are five to 10 times higher in and around a school bus compared to the surrounding community," and calls for acceleration of the transition to electric school buses. <https://www.njspotlightnews.org/2022/04/schools-fossil-fuel-asthma-illness-marginalized-communities-pulmonary-cardiac-disorders-communities-of-color/>

NEW JERSEY PREPARES TO GET PAST PLASTIC

Law to Reduce Single-Use Plastic Bags and Polystyrene Foam Products Takes Effect May 4

In 2021, Gov. Murphy signed into law the nation's strongest ban on single-use plastics. The law, which goes into effect on May 4, 2022, "requires grocery stores and retail establishments to no longer provide single-use plastic bags to customers. In addition, grocery stores 2,500 square feet or larger may not provide customers with single-use paper bags. The law also prohibits the sale of polystyrene foam takeout food containers and other polystyrene food-service products such as plates, cups, food trays and utensils." The press release describing the program is here: https://www.nj.gov/dep/newsrel/2022/22_0014.htm. Numerous resources exist to help consumers understand the law, including the following:

- **"Preparing for the Statewide Single-Use Plastic Ban"** (1-hour webinar, presented by Sustainable Jersey with a presentation by ANJEC) - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SSor_nekDc8
- **"Get Past Plastic"** (NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) website with comprehensive information about the ban: what is and is not allowed, and where) - https://www.nj.gov/dep/get-past-plastic/#foam_products
- **"N.J. Plastic Bag Ban: You Still Have Questions. We Still Have Answers."** (news article with a good description of the program, answers to questions, and links to additional resources) - <https://www.nj.com/news/2022/04/nj-plastic-bag-ban-you-still-have-questions-we-still-have-answers.html>

Related news videos:

- "NJ's Plastic Bag Ban Goes Into Effect in One Month" (4-minute news video) - <https://www.njspotlightnews.org/video/njs-plastic-bag-ban-goes-into-effect-in-one-month/>
- "Majority of NJ Residents Support Plastic Bag Ban, Poll Finds" (1-minute news video) - <https://www.njspotlightnews.org/video/majority-of-nj-residents-support-plastic-bag-ban-poll-finds/>

An example of one town's (Hopewell Township) organizations' response to the NJ plastic bag ban:

- "Local Organizations Work Together to Provide Free Reusable Grocery Bags" - <https://mercerme.com/local-organizations-work-together-to-provide-free-reusable-grocery-bags-ban-on-non-reusable-bags-starts-5-4-22/>

EDUCATIONAL and YOUTH-RELATED

- **Madison Environmental Commission Set to Host Green Vision Forum** - On 3/31/2022, Madison, NJ student green teams shared their "Green Vision" for Madison in the fourth annual Green Vision Forum, held via Zoom. They presented environmental projects and solutions to environmental problems. Also included were discussions with students, town officials and community members about how to make Madison more sustainable. "From elementary school to the college level, local students impressed with their grasp of environmental concerns and solutions." <https://www.tapinto.net/towns/madison/sections/green/articles/madison-environmental-commission-set-to-host-green-vision-forum>

- NJEDA Partners With Four NJ Universities to Advance State's Offshore Wind Learning and Research Efforts** - The NJ Economic Development Authority (EDA) plans to provide a total of more than \$1 million to Rutgers University, Rowan University, Montclair State University, and New Jersey Institute of Technology (NJIT) to advance academic research and investment in offshore wind workforce training. The universities will develop the NJ Wind Institute Fellowship Program (Fellowship Program) and the University Initiatives to Advance Offshore Wind (University Initiatives). "In its pilot year, the Fellowship Program is expected to support 24 graduate and undergraduate students from diverse background and disciplines with stipends and resources as they conduct independent research on topics that will further offshore wind development in New Jersey. Selected students will participate as a cohort in workshops, site visits, and guest lectures with industry stakeholders and have the chance to present their research to government, academic and industry experts at the end of their Fellowship." <https://www.njeda.com/njeda-partners-with-four-nj-universities-to-advance-states-offshore-wind-learning-and-research-efforts/>
- Opinion: 3 N.J. Governors: Conservation School Deserves Good Management** (by former NJ governors Tom Kean, James J. Florio, and Christine Todd Whitman) - In this piece, the three former NJ governors put forth a case for the following: "At this critical time for the New Jersey School of Conservation, we are calling on policymakers in Trenton to empower the Friends [Friends of the New Jersey School of Conservation] to act as stewards and managers for this historic asset." They give many examples to describe how "the Friends' vision of the school would expand its reach beyond what it has ever achieved in its storied history" including how "the Friends have a laser-like focus on addressing the needs of traditionally underserved communities." There are currently bills in the NJ legislature (A3149/S438) to change the entity responsible for management of the school to the Friends of the New Jersey School of Conservation, and to direct the NJ Department of Education (DOE) to request funding for the school annually. <https://www.nj.com/opinion/2022/04/3-nj-governors-conservation-school-deserves-good-management-opinion.html>

OTHER

- Murphy Administration Launches \$10 Million Public Lakes Grants Program to Improve Water Quality and Enhance Environmental Infrastructure** - Grant funding announced by the NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), is to focus on addressing stormwater management, nonpoint source pollution and related infrastructure needs at public lakes, while maintaining, improving or enhancing recreation or conservation activities; applications will be accepted through 5/28/2022. "Investments such as rain gardens or stormwater improvements to restore and protect natural resources in our watersheds help protect communities from damaging storms, reduce the impacts of climate change that are favorable to harmful algal blooms and improve water quality," DEP Commissioner LaTourette said. https://www.nj.gov/dep/newsrel/2022/22_0016.htm
- PSE&G Training People for Clean Energy Jobs** - This article describes a PSE&G "Clean Energy Jobs" program that has the goal of preparing 2,000 low- to moderate-income NJ residents for careers in energy efficiency jobs. According to PSE&G's website, "PSE&G is the sponsor of the Clean Energy Jobs Program. Career placement will only occur through the program's partner suppliers - not with PSE&G." <https://njbmagazine.com/njb-news-now/pseg-training-people-for-clean-energy-jobs/>



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
