



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.

CONGREGATIONAL ACTIVITIES

Unitarian Universalist Ocean County Congregation (UUOCC)



• Following in the spirit of indigenous people and their relationship with drumming, in which "Drums are often considered sacred amongst indigenous peoples, representing the heartbeat of people, animals and Mother Earth herself" (see tinyurl.com/ye25s4pm), and that the sound is said to improve people's moods, restore balance, promote healing, and promote a connection with the spirit, the Unitarian Universalist Ocean County Congregation (UUOCC) hosted a drum circle, which was well-attended and filled with exuberance!



• A recent Unitarian Universalist Ocean County Congregation (UUOCC) service featured Bishop Daniel E. Wilson Sr. (photo at right), Director of Interfaith Family Services of Ocean County, a nonprofit,

interfaith ministry that provides shelter, meals and assistance to homeless families. His topic was "On applying the first principle of the inherent worth and dignity of every person."



NEWSLETTER CONTENTS

Congregational Activities	1	- Climate Change	15
EJTF Activities	3	- Forest Health	16
Future Events	4	- Lead Reduction in Households	17
Videos+ of Past Events	10	- Drinking Water (other than lead)	18
EJTF's Goals for 2022/2023	13	- Pollution	19
News Related to EJTF Issues	13	- Educational and Youth-related	20
- Environmental Justice	13	- Other	20
- Renewable Resources	14	Moratorium Mondays	21

CONGREGATIONAL ACTIVITIES (continued)

Morristown Unitarian Universalist Fellowship (MUUF)



- In February, the Green Earth Ministry (GEM) at the Morristown Unitarian Universalist Fellowship (MUUF) participated in a "Volunteer Fair" that highlighted the work of several groups at the Fellowship (see photo above - **EJTF member Jo Sippie-Gora** is at right). GEM displayed exhibits and provided information about the benefits of electrification, and of generous rebates now becoming available with the recent passage of the federal Inflation Reduction Act. See <https://www.rewiringamerica.org> for a simple tool that can help you determine rebates you can recover from smart purchases like electric stoves, heat pumps, etc.
- **SAVE THE DATE:** On Saturday, April 8, the Green Earth Ministry (GEM) at the Morristown Unitarian Universalist Fellowship (MUUF) will present the "Current Revolution" short film series, with discussion afterward, from 4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. at 24 Normandy Heights Road, Morristown. Admission is free. The Current Revolution film series is featured in Interfaith Power & Light's Faith ClimateAction Week, April 14-23, 2023. These films expand on this year's Faith Climate Action Week theme: "Living the Golden Rule: Just Transition to a Clean Energy Economy." The theme examines our responsibility to transition to energy sources that are sustainable and healthy for our communities and Creation. More details to come in the April newsletter.

Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Monmouth County (UUCMC)

- Over the last Sunday in January and the first Sunday in February, the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Monmouth County (UUCMC) members and friends completed 40 sets of postcards (160 total) thanking their elected state officials for passing the legislation establishing the NJ



Organic Farming Board (the postcard project was initiated by EJTF - see p. 1 of the EJTF February newsletter). Participation, not to mention follow-through mailing, was made easier by providing stamps and mailing labels at the signing tables. It also seemed to encourage personal messages, which were on most of the cards sent. A co-benefit was drawing attention to the Environmental Justice Task Force and to UU FaithAction NJ in general, as several questions and conversations about the groups ensued.



EJTF ACTIVITIES

- **EJTF Co-Chair Peggy Middaugh** and **EJTF member Mike Skelly** attended the joint meeting of the NJ legislature's Senate Environment and Energy Committee and the Assembly Environment and Solid Waste Committee, at which the NJ Forest Stewardship Task Force presented its final report. The Forest Stewardship Task Force was convened a year ago by the Senate Environment and Energy Committee Chairman Bob Smith, and Peggy was a member of the Task Force, whose primary task was "to seek and build consensus around matters related to the stewardship of New Jersey's public forestlands."



The over 100 regular participants of the Task Force held 45 hours of meetings over the course of the year, with additional countless hours spent in researching information. The final report, which includes 16 recommendations, is available here: <https://www.njconservation.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/NJ-Forest-Stewardship-Task-Force-Report-Full-Report-with-Appendices-Feb-22-2023.pdf>. Although consensus was the goal, it proved elusive in some areas such as proforestation vs. logging. At the meeting, The Highlands Coalition presented their reasons for not endorsing the report. Their comments pointed out the lack of clarity in the Task Force report around the definition of "ecological purposes" related to timber harvesting, and they emphasized the benefits of proforestation. EJTF supports the Highlands Coalition position. There was agreement, however, that for any stewardship plans to be successful, the NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) will need to receive sufficient funding to address them. Also see news article on [p. 16](#).



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

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

MARCH 2023						
(with hyperlinks to details on the following pages)						
<i>Sun.</i>	<i>Mon.</i>	<i>Tues.</i>	<i>Wed.</i>	<i>Thurs.</i>	<i>Fri.</i>	<i>Sat.</i>
			1 "Water's Edge" Delaware River Roundtable - 4:00 p.m.	2 "NJ Extreme Heat Resilience Action Plan" - 6:00 p.m. LWVNJ "Budget Testimony Writing Workshop" - 6:00 p.m.	3 One Earth Film Festival	4 One Earth Film Festival
5 One Earth Film Festival	6 One Earth Film Festival	7 NJDEP "Climate Pollutant Reduction Initiatives" - 11:00 a.m. One Earth Film Festival	8 DRBC 1Q Business Meeting - 10:30 a.m. One Earth Film Festival	9 "Implementing the Inflation Reduction Act" - 2:00 p.m. LWVNJ "Introduction to the Legislative Process" - 6:00 p.m. One Earth Film Festival	10 One Earth Film Festival	11 One Earth Film Festival
12 "34th-annual Pinelands Short Course" - 9:00 a.m. One Earth Film Festival	13 NJDEP "Advanced Clean Cars II" - 9:00 a.m. NJDEP Public Session on Ciba-Geigy - 6:00 p.m.	14 "Pathways for Climate-Informed Forest Management" - 1:00 p.m.	15 "2023 Sustainable Energy in America Factbook" - 3:00 p.m.	16 "Energy Efficiency: 1st Step to Building Electrification" - 7:00 p.m.	17	18
19	20 "Beating the Weeds Without Herbicides: Soil-Friendly Organic Weed Management" - 1:00 p.m. "Climate Justice: Why We Can't Wait" - 2:45 p.m.	21	22 "Transportation Equity: Community-Building in Action" - 1:00 p.m. "Whales of New York and New Jersey" - 7:00 p.m. Responses Due on: DEP Survey on Recreation Needs	23 "Grow Organic: The Climate, Health, & Economic Case for Expanding Organic Agriculture" - 12:00 p.m.	24 Princeton Environmental Film Festival	25 2023 Watershed Congress - 8:30 a.m. Princeton Environmental Film Festival
26 Princeton Environmental Film Festival	27 2023 Watershed Congress Princeton Environmental Film Festival	28 "In this Together" - 7:00 p.m. 2023 Watershed Congress Princeton Environmental Film Festival	29 2023 Watershed Congress Princeton Environmental Film Festival	30 2023 Watershed Congress Princeton Environmental Film Festival	31 2023 Watershed Congress Princeton Environmental Film Festival	

"Water's Edge: The Delaware River Watershed's Challenges & Promises for NJ"
NJ Spotlight News Roundtable - Virtual
3/1/2023, 4:00 p.m. - 5:15 p.m.

Over the years the Delaware River and its web of tributaries have been subjected to grave threats ranging from pollution to threats from overdevelopment, agrarian waste, and, now, climate change. NJ Spotlight News has launched an online project, entitled "Water's Edge: The Trials and Tributaries of the Delaware River Watershed," looking at the challenges facing the watershed in NJ and the promises for its future, focusing on four key areas: the Highlands, the Pinelands, the Bayshore, and urban estuary. (See the full project here: <https://www.njspotlightnews.org/special-report/taking-stock-of-delaware-river-watershed-vital-to-millions-in-nj-and-surrounding-states/>.) The project will be capped with an NJ Spotlight News virtual roundtable featuring top experts and leaders, summarizing the online project and exploring what's next for the watershed. Additional information and the link to register are available here: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/waters-edge-the-delaware-river-watersheds-challenges-and-promises-for-nj-tickets-547969841547>.

"NJ Extreme Heat Resilience Action Plan"
3/2/2023, 6:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m. - Webinar

"New Jersey's Interagency Council on Climate Resilience is seeking public input on how the state should address extreme heat priorities and concerns as part of the development of a series of plans, known as the Resilience Action Plans, outlining the incorporation of climate resilience into state agencies' policies, programs and regulations. The first Resilience Action Plan will focus on state agency efforts to address increasing extreme heat events resulting from climate change. Public involvement will be an important step in the process." The Interagency Council hosted a webinar on 2/9/2023 that presented the Resilience Action Plan initiative and the Scoping Document which addresses its purpose, development process, and content (see link below). A second webinar is scheduled for 3/2/2023 to further develop and discuss potential state agency actions which will build NJ's resilience to extreme heat. The Plan will pay special attention to overburdened and socially

vulnerable communities, identifying state actions that focus on environmental justice and equity. Additional information, including links to slides and the transcript from the 2/9/2023 meeting, a link to the scoping document, a link to **provide comments (through 3/17/2023)** and the link to join the 3/2/2023 webinar (to be held on Microsoft Teams), are available here: <https://nj.gov/dep/climatechange/resilience-action-plans.html>.

One Earth Film Festival - Hybrid
3/3/2023 - 3/12/2023

"One Earth Film Festival is the Midwest's premier environmental film festival, creating opportunities for understanding climate change, sustainability and the power of people. It showcases top-issue, thought-provoking environmental films, leads audiences in interactive post-film discussions focused on solutions, and offers concrete actions people can take." The in-person sessions are in the Chicago area, but a number of films may be viewed by registering for a Virtual Watch Party for them (films available virtually are listed at the bottom of the page here: <https://www.oneearthfilmfest.org/films-by-location>). Additional information is available here: <https://www.oneearthfilmfest.org>.

NJDEP Public Session: "Climate Pollutant Reduction Initiatives Phase II"
3/7/2023, 11:00 a.m. - Virtual

Building upon the NJ Protecting Against Climate Threats (PACT) reform agenda first directed by Gov. Murphy in January 2020, the NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) is beginning a series of public engagement sessions to explore the next phase of Climate Pollutant Reduction (CPR) initiatives. "Through CPR Phase II, DEP will seek to further reduce emissions of greenhouse gases and other climate pollutants that fuel climate change and adversely affect air quality and public health." In this first general session, DEP will provide a recap of its first phase of CPR rules, introduce potential new initiatives and solicit stakeholder feedback. Additional information and the link to join the session are available here: <https://dep.nj.gov/njpact/>.

**Delaware River Basin Commission (DRBC)
First Quarter 2023 Business Meeting
3/8/2023, 10:30 a.m. - via Zoom**

The Business Meeting Agenda will be posted approximately ten days before the meeting at the website below. After all scheduled business has been completed and as time allows, the meeting will include up to one hour of Open Public Comment (prior sign-up by 5 p.m. on 3/7/2023 is required). Additional details about items to be covered, 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>. The meeting will also be livestreamed here:

<https://www.youtube.com/user/delrivbasincomm>.

**"Implementing the Inflation Reduction Act & Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act"
3/9/2023, 2:00 p.m. - 3:30 p.m. - Webinar**

This webinar, sponsored by the Environmental and Energy Study Institute (EESI), addresses implementation of the Inflation Reduction Act and the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act. "These laws provide billions of dollars to confront the climate crisis and strengthen critical infrastructure. Panelists will provide an update on the status of their implementation, describe how state and local governments and organizations are accessing funds, and explain the oversight role Congress must play to maximize these investments." Additional information and the link to RSVP are available here:

<https://www.eesi.org/briefings/view/030923camp>.

**"34th-annual Pinelands Short Course"
3/12/2022, 9:00 a.m. - 3:45 p.m.
Galloway, NJ - In-person**

The "Pinelands Short Course" is a much-touted annual daylong event featuring educational presentations that explore the unique history, ecology, and culture of the Pinelands. This year's event will feature 21 new programs. A brochure describing course offerings and excursions is available here: https://www.stockton.edu/continuing-studies/documents/PSC_Brochure_2023_Web.pdf; and registration information (\$50.00, or \$45.00 for Seniors and Students with code in the brochure) including course sign-up is available here:

<https://stockton.gosignmeup.com/public/Course/browse?courseid=3217>.

**NJDEP Public Session: "Advanced Clean Cars II"
3/13/2023, 9:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m. - Virtual**

Building upon the NJ Protecting Against Climate Threats (PACT) reform agenda first directed by Gov. Murphy in January 2020, the NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) is beginning a series of public engagement sessions to explore the next phase of Climate Pollutant Reduction (CPR) initiatives. Among other initiatives, DEP will begin considering the potential adoption of the Advanced Clean Cars II (ACC II) regulation implemented by the California Air Resources Board. If adopted, the ACC II regulation would require automobile manufacturers to increase their zero-emission sales of light-duty vehicles to 100 percent by 2035. During this meeting, DEP will present an outline of the potential rulemaking and then invite discussion and questions. Additional information and the link to join the session are available here: <https://dep.nj.gov/njpact/>.

**NJDEP Public Engagement Session
on Ciba-Geigy Site Proposed Settlement of
Natural Resource Damages
3/13/2023, 6:00 p.m. - In-person**

The NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) will hold a public engagement session on Monday, 3/13/2023, to provide the public with additional information and take questions regarding the assessment, and proposed restoration, of injured natural resources related to the former Ciba-Geigy chemical plant site in Toms River, Ocean County. The engagement session will be held in the Toms River North High School Auditorium and begin at 6 p.m. **Written public comments will be accepted through 4/5/2023.** Additional information, including links to details about the proposed settlement, and where to comment, are available here:

https://www.nj.gov/dep/newsrel/2023/23_0206pn.htm.

The history of the Ciba-Geigy site is given in great detail on the "Save Barnegat Bay" nonprofit organization's website, available here:

<https://www.savebarnegatbay.org/initiatives/ciba-geigy-superfund-site-in-toms-river/>. Also see the news article on [p. 21](#).

"Pathways for Climate-Informed Forest Management" - Webinar

3/14/2023, 1:00 p.m. - 2:00 p.m.

This webinar is part of the 12-part "Climate Adaptation for Forest-Dependent Wildlife" series sponsored by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS). This series tells a story about climate change and its impacts on forest ecosystems and forest-dependent wildlife species. It examines forest ecosystems and their composition and structure under a changing climate, and the influence on wildlife populations and carbon dynamics. Tools and management approaches to help facilitate forest and wildlife climate adaptation at both landscape and stand scales will be addressed. The webinar series, which began in March 2022, takes place on the 3rd Tuesday of each month from 1:00 p.m. - 2:00 p.m. through April 2023. Attendance at all presentations is highly recommended as each month's topic builds upon the prior webinar; however, videos of all previous presentations are available here:

<https://forestadaptation.org/learn/climate-adaptation-forest-dependent-wildlife-webinar-series>. Additional information and registration are available here: https://doitalent.zoomgov.com/webinar/register/WN_hz6jP44-R_y-boTiyMqUWg.

"2023 Sustainable Energy in America Factbook"

3/15/2023, 3:00 p.m. - 4:30 p.m. - Webinar

This webinar, sponsored by the Business Council for Sustainable Energy and the Environmental and Energy Study Institute (EESI), will present information from the *2023 Sustainable Energy in America Factbook*. "2022 was a record-breaking year for investment in the energy transition and the deployment of renewable power, battery storage, and sustainable transportation according to the eleventh edition of the Sustainable Energy in America Factbook. The Factbook, published by BloombergNEF (BNEF) and the Business Council for Sustainable Energy (BCSE), will be released on March 1, and will be available to download for free at www.bcse.org/factbook. The Factbook provides valuable year-over-year data and insights on the American energy transformation, with an in-depth look at the energy efficiency, renewable energy, and natural gas sectors, as well as emerging areas such as digitalization, micro-grids, offshore wind, hydrogen, and renewable natural gas. The eleventh edition of the Factbook provides new data

and analysis about the performance of clean energy sectors by tracking year-on-year as well as long-term trends within the U.S. energy economy." Additional information and the link to RSVP are available here:

<https://www.eesi.org/briefings/view/031523factbook>.

"Energy Efficiency: 1st Step to Building Electrification" - Webinar

3/16/2023, 7:00 p.m. - 8:15 p.m.

Presented by the Sierra Club NJ Chapter and NJ 50x30 Building Electrification Team, this webinar addresses "Design and Construction of a 'Passive House.'" The construction and features of a newly-built 2-story "Passive House," built to the world's most rigorous building standard, are described. These standards include insulating buildings to provide maximum thermal retention with minimal heating or cooling. Fresh air is filtered in, and stale air is exhausted through heat recovery units. This custom house used factory built modules, is very cost-effective, and can be assembled on-site in one day. A final "Blower Door Test" showed the house was sealed significantly better than the Passive House requirement. Additional information and the registration link are available here:

<https://act.sierraclub.org/events/details?formcampaignid=7013q000002NqZLAA0&mapLinkHref=>.

"Climate Justice: Why We Can't Wait" 3/20/2023, 2:45 p.m. - 4:00 p.m. - Webinar

This talk, part of the Cornell "Perspectives on Climate Change Challenge" series, is presented by Dr. Gregory S. Jenkins, Professor of Meteorology and Atmospheric Science, Geography, and African Studies at Penn State. A form of injustice "is occurring all around the globe, with new burdens placed on future generations in terms of climate injustice - which includes the hazards of climate change, environmental injustice, and social injustice." In this talk, Dr. Jenkins discusses the reasons why we need a climate justice movement and why we can't wait any longer. Additional information and the link to register are available here: <https://www.atkinson.cornell.edu/news-events/climate-change-seminar/>.

**"Whales of New York and New Jersey"
3/22/2023, 7:00 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.
- via Zoom**

In this webinar, part of the "Option Green" series co-sponsored by the Friends of the East Brunswick Environmental Commission, Danielle Brown, a PhD Candidate at Rutgers University and the Director of Research for Gotham Whale, will introduce attendees to the baleen whales found in the coastal waters of NY and NJ, past and present. She will focus on humpback whales specifically, including their increasing presence in the region and risks from anthropogenic activity. Additional information and the link to register are available here: <https://ilove.ebpl.org/adults/events/whales-new-york-and-new-jersey-zoom/2023-03-22-230000-2023-03-23-003000>.

DEP Survey Seeking Public Input on Recreation Needs, With Emphasis on Overburdened Communities Responses Due 3/22/2023



The NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) is launching an online survey to identify how to best enhance and expand outdoor recreation and open space opportunities that focus on the needs of overburdened communities as part of the Outside, Together! initiative (see article on [p. 14](#)). The survey is available here: <https://dep.nj.gov/outside-together/survey/>. **Survey responses will be accepted until 3/22/2023.**

**"Grow Organic: The Climate, Health, and Economic Case for Expanding Organic Agriculture" - Webinar
3/23/2023, 12:00 p.m. - 1:30 p.m.**

"The Environmental and Energy Study Institute (EESI) and the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC) invite you to a briefing on expanding

organic agriculture. Organic agriculture is a time-tested, scientifically-supported approach to farming and ranching that centers ecological diversity, soil fertility, and natural systems rather than chemical interventions. The briefing will feature the firsthand experience of organic farmers and findings from NRDC's new report, *Grow Organic: The Climate, Health, and Economic Case for Expanding Organic Agriculture*. As Congress crafts the next reauthorization of the Farm Bill, this briefing will cover how federal policies can support the expansion of organic farming and ranching." Additional information and the link to RSVP are available here:

<https://www.eesi.org/briefings/view/032323ag>.

**Princeton Environmental Film Festival
3/24 - 3/31/2023 - Hybrid**

The Princeton Environmental Film Festival is sponsored by the Princeton Public Library and is held annually at 65 Witherspoon Street in downtown Princeton, NJ, and in virtual screenings. Film selections will be announced early in March. Additional information is available here:

<https://princetonlibrary.org/peff/>.

**2023 Watershed Congress - Hybrid
3/25/2023, 8:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.
- In-person in Pottstown, PA
3/27/2023 - 3/31/2023, various times
- via Zoom**

The Watershed Congress is presented by the Delaware Riverkeeper Network and its partner organizations as well as private individuals. "Sharing information, tools, and practices for watershed protection and restoration - the Watershed Congress has evolved since 1998 to advance the best available information and techniques for protecting and restoring watersheds. The focus on networking across disciplines means that the Watershed Congress melds science, policy, and practical applications into one program. As a result, the annual Watershed Congress is a highly anticipated event for people interested in understanding, protecting, and restoring their local streams." Additional information, and links to register (full access = \$100, in-person only = \$75, and virtual only = \$40) are available here:

<https://sites.google.com/view/watershedcongress/watershed-congress-home>.

"In this Together: Connecting with Your Community to Combat the Climate Crisis"
3/28/2023, 7:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m. - Webinar

In this webinar sponsored by Elders Climate Action, Dr. Marianne E. Krasny, author, and Director of the Civic Ecology Lab at Cornell University, will describe "network climate action," or how we can influence our close friends and family to take climate actions alongside us. In this way, and by living up to our "role-ideals," we can scale up what we can do as individuals to have a greater impact. Additional information and the registration link are available here:

https://www.eldersclimateaction.org/event/nc_mar23/.

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 2023 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 "Budget Testimony Writing Workshop"

3/2/2023, 6:00 p.m. - 7:30 p.m. - via Zoom

"Each year the Executive and Legislative Branches work together to approve a new state budget and determine how the state's resources will be allocated. In this Action Workshop, activists will learn how to write and deliver testimony for the public hearings on the state's budget. You will learn how to prepare testimony (written and oral) for a public hearing and how you can use your voice to advocate for funding programs that are meaningful to you. You will receive fact sheets and other resources you can use to craft your testimony..." Recommended Prerequisites: completion of the LWVNJ "Introduction to the Legislative Process" and "Understanding the State Budget Process" trainings. The registration link is available here: <https://www.lwvnj.org/training>.

LWVNJ "Introduction to the Legislative Process"

3/9/2023, 6:00 p.m. - 7:30 p.m. - via Zoom

"This training is perfect for anyone who is new to advocating for legislation or any veteran grassroots lobbyist looking for a refresher on how laws are made in the Garden State. Our trainers will provide an overview of the structure and powers of the New Jersey Legislature, explain how bills advance through each chamber, teach you how to research and track legislation, and let you know how you can start lobbying with the League." The registration link is available here:

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

Rutgers Climate Institute Listing of 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 2023 (a sampling is listed below), but the site includes updated information over time; check the site periodically for an updated list: <https://climatechange.rutgers.edu/events/all-climate-events/range.listevents/>.

"Beating the Weeds Without Herbicides: Soil-Friendly Organic Weed Management"
3/20/2023, 1:00 p.m. - 2:30 p.m.
- Webinar

In this webinar sponsored by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), Mark Schonbeck of the Organic Farming Research Foundation will discuss weed management in organic agriculture and highlight soil-friendly approaches to help maintain sufficient weed suppression and satisfactory organic yields. "Weeds pose the #1 production hurdle to successful organic farming, and organic producers continually seek to optimize their weed management system for both soil health and production." A link to additional information, including how to register/join, is available here:

<https://climatesociety.rutgers.edu/events/all-climate-events/icalrepeat.detail/2023/03/20/7555/-/webinar-beating-the-weeds-without-herbicides-soil-friendly-organic-weed-management>. [Note: this event uses Adobe Connect.]

"Transportation Equity: Community-Building in Action" - Webinar
3/22/2023, 1:00 p.m. - 2:30 p.m.

This webinar is sponsored by the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine's Transportation Research Board (TRB). "In these times of rapid and unprecedented change, the critical need for urgent action in advancing greater workforce diversity and development, innovation and continuous learning, and 'people-readiness' at all levels has risen to new levels. Climate change, growing inequality, increasing digitalization, new players and business models highlight the critical role of transportation careers in community-building and achieving equity-centered and sustainable outcomes." This webinar "will spotlight the development of

policies and practices that more fully address inequities and injustices caused and contributed to by transportation. Presenters will share how cross-sector integration can improve access to goods, services, and opportunities in communities. Presenters will also discuss the importance of diverse and authentic community participation in driving more equitable policies, programs, practices, and outcomes." Links to additional information and to register are available here:

<https://climatesociety.rutgers.edu/events/all-climate-events/icalrepeat.detail/2023/03/22/7590/-/webinar-career-series-3-transportation-equity-community-building-in-action>. [Please note: an account with The National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine (which can be set up online) is necessary to register.]

VIDEOS+ OF PAST EVENTS

**"Drought-Reduction Legislation:
The Link Between Forest and Rain"
Recording of Radio Show**

The Eco-Logic radio/internet program on WBAI (co-hosted by **EJTF member Sally Gellert**) presented a program with guest Mark Latour, a Land Use Environmentalist, Board member of Staten Island's Protectors of the Pine Oak Woods, and Committee member of the NYS Open Space Conservation Plan Committee. In this Eco-Logic show, topics included: how droughts are created by mismanaged land use; why trees and forests are important for weather, climate, quality of life, comfort, property values, flood control and to help endangered wildlife; how Eastern states of the U.S. are affected by deforestation in Western states; and what legislation is available to help - the proposed Drought Reduction Bill. The recording is available here:

<https://wbai.org/archive/program/episode/?id=38996>.

This program also included an in-depth segment on whale deaths and offshore wind. Information referenced in that segment, along with information and links to previous recent programs on solar energy, recycling, and shipping toxic cargo, among others, are available here:

<http://www.comicbookradioshow.com/eco-logic.html>.

**"Carbon Capital: The Moral Metrics of
Energy Finance" - Video of Webinar**

This webinar, part of the Dartmouth "New Energy Series," was presented by Dr. Sean Field, a Research Fellow at the Centre for Energy Ethics and in the Department of Social Anthropology at the University of St Andrews. His research focuses on how financial professionals ethically and financially value energy. "Drawing on ethnographic fieldwork with energy financiers in Houston, Texas, Dr. Field explored how experts use a lexicon of models and metrics to conceptualize and construct allegories about future hydrocarbon projects and companies, resulting in a kind of energy ethics - distinguishing what is good and advocating for particular energy futures. As the energy industry pivots toward renewables, Dr. Field argues that these metrics, models and allegories are coming to bear on new forms of extraction." The video is available here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c2Amac2dUHM>.

**"Public Polling on Climate Change"
- Video of Webinar**

This webinar, sponsored by the Environmental and Energy Study Institute (EESI), explored the public's interest in seeing continued federal

attention on climate change. "Forty-six percent of people in the United States say they have personally experienced the impacts of climate change and 55 percent of people say that climate change should be a high or very high priority for Congress and the administration, according to the Yale Program on Climate Change Communication." Panelists explored the latest analyses of public opinion on climate change across sectors and geography and explained why it matters for the 118th Congress. The video is available here:

<https://www.eesi.org/briefings/view/020923camp>.

"Non-CO2 Greenhouse Gases" **- Video of Webinar**

This webinar was sponsored by the Environmental and Energy Study Institute (EESI). "Although carbon dioxide (CO2) is the most commonly discussed greenhouse gas, there are many other gases that also contribute to global warming, including methane, nitrous oxides, and fluorinated gases." This webinar examined how these gases play a part in climate change, and presented solutions for limiting their effects. Presenters highlighted federal and international policy actions, including the Kigali Amendment to the Montreal Protocol, that address the warming potential of non-CO2 greenhouse gases. The video is available here:

<https://www.eesi.org/briefings/view/022323camp>.

"The Energy Transition: Opportunities and Challenges for Indigenous Communities" **- Video of Webinar**

The Center on Global Energy Policy at Columbia University's School of International and Public Affairs presented this webinar, in which a panel of experts discussed opportunities and risks for indigenous communities in the North American energy transition. "According to the US Department of Energy, wind resources on US tribal lands could meet up to 32% of US electricity needs. Similarly, ... 79% of US lithium reserves are located within 35 miles of an Indian reservation." The panel discussed the Biden administration's efforts to strengthen indigenous consultation and environmental justice around natural resources and renewable energy development. They also explored how Canadian

indigenous leaders are developing equity-based partnerships to develop renewable energy and critical minerals projects. The video is available here:

<https://www.energy.columbia.edu/events/the-energy-transition-opportunities-and-challenges-for-indigenous-communities-in-the-us-and-canada/>.

"Clean Energy, Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reduction, and Rapid Decarbonization in the PJM Region" **- Video of Webinar**

PJM is the Regional Transmission Organization (RTO) that operates the wholesale power markets and controls the transmission of electricity in NJ and a number of other states. In this Rutgers Climate Academy webinar, Professor Jesse Jenkins, Princeton University, presented an analysis of the impact that the federal Inflation Reduction Act will have on electricity cost, greenhouse gas emissions and investments in electricity capacity in the PJM region thru 2035, and what additional investments and resources would be needed to deeply decarbonize the region while maintaining affordable and reliable electricity. A panel provided responses. The video is available here: https://njclimateresourcecenter.rutgers.edu/past_events/climate-academy-clean-energy-greenhouse-gas-emissions-reduction-and-rapid-decarbonization-in-the-pjm-region/.

"Advancing New Jersey's Climate Goals with Transportation Infrastructure Investments" **- Video of Webinar**

"The transportation sector is responsible for roughly a third of the U.S.'s carbon dioxide pollution, with about 80 percent coming from cars and trucks on the nation's roadways. With its authorization of \$1 trillion over five years, the federal Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) represents a historic investment in the country's transportation systems and infrastructure. Those investments have the potential to contribute significantly to the nation's efforts to achieve major reductions in the emissions and pollution that contribute to climate change." The Rutgers Climate Academy presented this webinar addressing how different scenarios of federal transportation investments may

contribute to New Jersey's efforts to achieve its statewide 2030 and 2050 greenhouse gas emissions limits. The video is available here: https://njclimateresourcecenter.rutgers.edu/past_events/climate-academy-advancing-new-jerseys-climate-goals-with-transportation-infrastructure-investments/.

"Biological Nutrient Management: Best Organic Practices for Soil Fertility and Resource Stewardship" - Video of Webinar

This webinar, sponsored by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) gives in-depth information on nutrient management in organic agriculture, "using a resource-conserving approach... that builds soil nutrient retention, cycling, and delivery capacity." This webinar included soil nutrient dynamics, the impact of soil organisms, the functions of each, and guidelines for optimizing practices and outcomes. It also provided the history of approaches to nutrient management in organic farming. The PowerPoint presentation, a transcript, and **very** detailed presentation notes for the webinar, as well as a link to register to view the video, are available here: <https://forestrywebinars.net/webinars/biological-nutrient-management-best-organic-practices-for-soil-fertility-and-resource-stewardship/>.

"An Introduction to Climate Risk Management" - Video of Webinar

This talk, part of the Cornell "Perspectives on Climate Change Challenge" series, was presented by Dr. Vivek Srikrishnan, Cornell Department of Biological & Environmental Engineering. "Climate change enhances and creates risks. Identifying and implementing sound climate risk management strategies involves many challenges, including deep and dynamic uncertainties, complex feedbacks between climate and socioeconomic systems, and the different scales on which different risk management strategies operate." This talk included climate change effects on risk calculation, the role of uncertainty, and climate risk management. The video is available here: <https://atkinson.cornell.edu/media/an-introduction-to-climate-risk-management/>.

"The Political Economy of Greening China" - Video of Webinar

This talk, part of the Cornell "Perspectives on Climate Change Challenge" series, was presented by Professor Jeremy Lee Wallace of the Cornell University Department of Government. "Without action from China, the world will not be able to contain the climate emergency. China produced nearly 30% of global carbon emissions in 2020, making Xi Jinping's declaration that year that his country would be carbon neutral by 2060 one of epic significance. Will China be able to meet or exceed this goal, and what political and economic roadblocks stand in its way?" This lecture introduced some of the challenges, opportunities, and competing narratives at play, with a particular focus on real estate construction and China's growth model. The video is available here: <https://atkinson.cornell.edu/media/the-political-economy-of-greening-china/>.

"Future Generation: Exploring the New Baseline for Electricity in the Presence of the Inflation Reduction Act" - Video of Webinar

This webinar was presented by Resources for the Future (RFF), an independent, nonprofit research institution in Washington, DC whose mission is "to improve environmental, energy, and natural resource decisions through impartial economic research and policy engagement." The webinar featured opening remarks by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Principal Deputy Assistant Administrator, Office of Air and Radiation, Joseph Goffman, followed by a panel of energy sector modelers from RFF, the Electric Power Research Institute (EPRI), EPA, and the National Renewable Energy Laboratory. Panelists presented recent findings on how the electricity sector is expected to transform in the coming decades as a result of the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA), illuminating a new baseline for the sector. The video is available here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NtBB3CGMTCo>.

Northeast Organic Farming Association of New Jersey (NOFA-NJ) Winter Conference - Videos of Sessions

Videos are available of sessions of the NOFA-NJ winter conference, including the keynote speech by Jeff Moyer, CEO of the Rodale Institute, a non-profit organization that supports research into organic farming. "Jeff Moyer is a world-renowned authority in organic agriculture with expertise in organic crop production systems, weed

management, cover crops, crop rotations, equipment modification and facilities design. His vast experience and knowledge regarding organic farming has provided the media with a reliable source and perspective for information on current agricultural issues." A link to the videos is available here: <https://nofanj.org/wc23/>.

EJTF's GOALS for 2022/2023

- 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).**
 - 4. [NEW] Advocating for better health and reducing climate change for all by protecting and expanding New Jersey's public and urban forests.**
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NEWS RELATED TO EJTF ISSUES

[covering 1/27/2023 – 2/26/2023]

ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

Environmental Justice Rules Still Not Set, More Than Two Years Since Law Enacted

In this 4-1/2-minute news video, **EJTF partner Maria Lopez-Nuñez**, Deputy Director for Organizing and Advocacy of the Ironbound Community Corporation (ICC), describes the impacts on environmental justice communities of the Environmental Justice (EJ) Law's implementing regulations not having been approved, close to two and a half years since the law was passed. An intensive public participation effort related to the

regulations was undertaken, but the last public hearing on the proposed regulations was in June 2022, and the comment period ended in September 2022, and the final regulations still have not been approved. In the meantime, projects that impact environmental justice communities are proceeding without needing to meet requirements of the EJ Law because of the lack of approval of the implementing regulations. <https://www.njspotlightnews.org/video/environmental-justice-rules-still-not-set-more-than-two-years-since-law-enacted/>

DEP Launches Online Survey Seeking Public Input on Recreation Needs, With Emphasis on Overburdened Communities

The NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) is launching an online survey (available here: <https://dep.nj.gov/outside-together/survey/>) to identify how to best enhance and expand outdoor recreation and open space opportunities that focus on the needs of overburdened communities, as part of the "Outside, Together!" initiative. The survey results will help the DEP develop an action plan and funding priorities to expand high-quality open space and recreational opportunities. The plan will be designed to "further equity and environmental justice, enhance climate resilience and sustainability, identify investments in ecotourism, as well as promote technology, stewardship and the conservation and restoration of biodiversity."

Survey responses will be accepted until March 22.

https://www.nj.gov/dep/newsrel/2023/23_0016.htm

NJ Communities of Color Grapple With Lack of Trees, Environmental Inequity

This article describes, and provides data on, the benefits of tree cover, especially with respect to overburdened communities that very often have disproportionately fewer trees than do more affluent neighborhoods. The NJ Conservation Foundation has received \$1.3 million to plant trees in overburdened communities in Trenton.

<https://www.njspotlightnews.org/2023/02/new-jersey-communities-of-color-grapple-with-lack-of-trees-environmental-inequity/>

RENEWABLE RESOURCES

Watching the New Jersey Wind Port Take Shape

This 4-minute news video shows the current state of construction at the NJ Wind Port, along with schematics of future plans and a description of its ultimate uses and impact on the offshore wind industry.

<https://www.njspotlightnews.org/video/watching-the-new-jersey-wind-port-take-shape/>

The Continuing Saga of Whale Deaths

It is becoming virtually impossible to keep up with the onslaught of articles regarding whale deaths and offshore wind. An article ("Why Whale Deaths Are Dividing Environmentalists — And Firing up Tucker Carlson") that summarizes the controversy is available here:

<https://www.politico.com/news/2023/01/29/whale-deaths-new-jersey-offshore-wind-00079462> and the 2/25/2023 "Eco-Logic" radio program and website provides excellent information (see [p. 10](#)).

For additional information, an internet search of "NJ whale deaths offshore wind" will yield a plethora of information, some of which feature **EJTF member Walt Nadolny**, a professor emeritus at SUNY Maritime College in New York, who has been teaching students for two decades about how to avoid whale strikes before they head to sea as merchant mariners, and who has stated that "The odds are ridiculously low" that the whales struck a slow-going offshore wind survey vessel (<https://phys.org/news/2023-01-whales-perilous-route-nj-shore.html>). In the meantime, both state and federal legislators are introducing, or planning to introduce, legislation related to this topic, rallies are being held, and mayors of NJ coastal towns are asking Gov. Murphy for a moratorium on offshore wind development. However, one of the most troubling results of the controversy is that the small, non-profit Marine Mammal Stranding Center (MMSC), "which is the only federally-authorized animal hospital in NJ that responds to marine mammals and sea turtles in distress and provides medical treatment," is receiving threats and has felt the need to release its IRS 990 filing to prove to online harassers that it is not funded by wind energy companies

(<https://www.shorenewsnetwork.com/2023/02/18/marine-mammal-center-investigating-whale-deaths-denies-funding-by-wind-energy-companies/>). The MMSC has released a statement that "Although there has been speculation about whether these whale deaths are linked to wind energy development, at this point, no whale mortality has been attributed to offshore wind activities. We will continue to gather data and go where the science leads us." EJTF supports the science, which has found no linkage between whale deaths and offshore wind activities, and which rather emphasizes the existential threat to whales of climate change, which offshore wind can help to mitigate.

Will Warehouses Step to Green-Energy Future?

A bill (S427) that would give tax breaks for rooftop solar panels on existing warehouses has been voted out of the Senate Environment and Energy Committee. An identical Assembly bill (A1446) has not yet been considered by committee. These bills dovetail with an earlier law requiring all new warehouses without completed permit approvals by 7/1/2022 to be solar-ready. <https://www.njspotlightnews.org/2023/02/moving-nj-warehouses-toward-green-energy-future/>

NJEDA to Expand Wind Institute Fellowship Program

The NJ Economic Development Agency (EDA) is expanding a program begun in 2022 that offers students at several NJ public and private universities paid research fellowships to prepare them for careers in the offshore wind industry. Students can receive up to \$30,000 in academic years 2023-24 and 2024-25 for offshore wind research. <https://www.njeda.com/njeda-to-expand-wind-institute-fellowship-program/>

New Law Lets Ørsted's Offshore Wind Energy Project Bypass New Jersey Local Government Approval

For the second time since it was passed in 2021, the NJ Board of Public Utilities (BPU) used an amendment to NJ's offshore wind law to bypass local authorities. In this case, easements were granted to Ørsted for underground transmission lines in Cape May County. <https://enviropolitics.com/new-law-lets-orsteds-offshore-wind-energy-project-bypass-new-jersey-local-government-approval/>

A Backlash To New Renewables Is Mounting Across The Nation

This article cites the opposition on the NJ coast to renewable energy development, and describes the backlash to both wind and solar development that is taking place around the U.S. It contains a link to another article that includes links to statistics. <https://enviropolitics.com/a-big-backlash-to-new-renewables-is-mounting-across-the-nation/>

CLIMATE CHANGE

Murphy Pushes Green-Energy Goal Posts Closer

Gov. Murphy has announced a series of new and accelerated targets and commitments to combat climate change, including: 1) a target of 100% clean energy by 2035, moving the target up from the 2050 goal that was set out initially; 2) a target for installing zero-carbon-emission space heating and cooling systems in 400,000 homes and 20,000 commercial properties, and making 10% of all low-to-moderate income (LMI) properties electrification-ready, by 2030; 3) a requirement that all new car and light-duty truck sales be for zero-emission vehicles (ZEV) by 2035; 4) enactment of rules to enhance flood protection in riverine and coastal areas by the summer of 2023; 5) the offering of new grant funding for heavy-duty electric vehicles (EVs); and 6) collaborative planning for the future of NJ's natural gas utilities. The press release is available here: <https://nj.gov/governor/news/news/562023/approved/20230215b.shtml> and a 4-1/2-minute news video is available here: <https://www.njspotlightnews.org/video/as-murphy-announces-new-energy-plans-critics-demand-more-progress/>. The news video includes environmental and environmental justice advocates who were demonstrating outside the building where Gov. Murphy made his announcement, pointing out that he has not put an end to fossil fuel projects, and that the Environmental Justice Law that passed close to two-and-a-half years ago has not yet been implemented through the required regulations. <https://www.njspotlightnews.org/2023/02/gov-phil-murphy-announces-more-aggressive-clean-energy-goals-for-nj/>

"1" = Last Month's Place, Tied With 1932, as Mildest January in NJ Since Records Began

In January 2023, "The average temperature... was 9.3 degrees above normal, tying it for first place with January 1932 as the mildest January in New Jersey since records began in 1895." <https://www.njspotlightnews.org/2023/02/january-2023-places-first-mildest-on-record-ties-january-1932/>

Hazard NJ Episode 8: The Resurrection of Price's Pit

In this 22-minute podcast, the history of Price Landfill's hazardous plume that threatened to taint the water supply for the Atlantic City area is described, along with the decades it took to clean up the site. "Now, the Price Landfill has entered a new chapter. And this time it's helping, not harming. In the final episode in this podcast series, we examine how redeveloping cleaned-up Superfund sites could be used to help fight climate change."

<https://www.njspotlightnews.org/podcast/hazard-nj-episode-8-the-resurrection-of-prices-pit/>

Governor Murphy Signs Legislation to Incentivize Decarbonization of Concrete Industry

Gov. Murphy's press release states, "Governor Phil Murphy signed bill S287, which provides corporation business tax (CBT) and gross income tax credits for costs of preparing environmental product declarations that assess the global warming potential of various concrete mixes and enable comparison of their environmental impacts. The bill further provides tax credits for the delivery of concrete for use in state construction and improvement projects that has lower carbon emissions associated with its production, including mining, refining, manufacturing, or shipping, or that utilizes carbon capture, utilization, or storage technology to remove or recycle carbon dioxide generated through the manufacturing process."

<https://www.state.nj.us/governor/news/news/562023/approved/20230130d.shtml>

How Will Cranberries Take the Heat?

This article provides an in-depth look at what is necessary for cranberries to succeed, what has happened to cranberry crops in other states as a result of changes in climate and growing conditions, and how NJ is addressing current actual, and future potential, changes in conditions.

<https://www.njspotlightnews.org/special-report/nj-cranberry-growers-must-contend-with-issues-brought-on-by-climate-change/>

FOREST HEALTH



Legislative Task Force Delivers Tome on Best-Practices Forest Management

At a joint meeting of the NJ legislature's Senate Environment and Energy Committee and the Assembly Environment and Solid Waste Committee, the NJ Forest Stewardship Task Force presented its final report. The Task Force was convened a year ago by the Senate Environment and Energy Committee Chairman Bob Smith, to "seek and build consensus around matters related to the stewardship of New Jersey's public forestlands." **EJTF Co-Chair Peggy Middaugh** was a member of the Task Force - see "EJTF Activities" on [p. 3](#). (This 4-minute news video shows the joint legislative session, and input provided by those who took issue with the potential timber harvesting aspect of the report, wearing "Let Our Forests Stand!" stickers - <https://www.njspotlightnews.org/video/forest-stewardship-task-force-presents-16-point-plan-for-forest-protection/>.) A majority of stakeholders agreed on items such as deer management, addressing invasive species, and needing adequate funding for the NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), and endorsed the report because it contained many good points. However, some did not endorse it primarily because of the issue of timber management, and even some of those who endorsed it did not agree with recommendations related to that issue. <https://www.njspotlightnews.org/2023/02/departement-of-environmental-protection-dep-public-forests-biodiversity-carbon-storage-sen-bob-smith-d-middlesex-elliott-ruga-highlands-coalition-sara-webb-drew-university-limited-logging-legislative/>

New Jersey Forest Fire Service Plans Prescribed Burning Across Thousands of Acres in State Forests

The NJ Forest Fire Service's annual prescribed burning program to reduce wildfire risk and manage natural resources by burning the buildup of potential fuels such as undergrowth, leaves, branches and pine needles on forest floors is underway. Upcoming prescribed burns over a five-day period can be viewed on the NJ Prescribed Burn Notification map available here:

<https://www.nj.gov/dep/parksandforests/fire/infotools/rxb.html>. This year, the Forest Fire Service intends to treat 25,000 acres of forests, grasslands and marsh with prescribed fire.
https://www.nj.gov/dep/newsrel/2023/23_0012.htm

This Ancient Forest in Bear Swamp West Is a Gem. Can It Be Saved?

This article, part of a NJ Spotlight News series "Water's Edge: Trials and tributaries of the Delaware River Watershed," provides an in-depth description of the Bear Swamp West old-growth forest, including threats to its continued existence from sea-level rise, and solutions being explored to save it from becoming a "ghost forest."

<https://www.njspotlightnews.org/special-report/old-growth-forest-in-bear-swamp-west-nj-threatened-by-sea-level-rise-saltwater/>

New Map, Permits Possible for Off-Road Drivers in Wharton State Forest

The NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) has released the results of a survey of how people use Wharton State Forest, which parts they use the most, and how DEP could improve their experience. Slides from a public meeting showing the results are available here:

<https://www.njspotlightnews.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/123/2023/02/Wharton-Visitor-and-Vehicle-User-Survey-Results-Feb.8.pdf>. Based on the survey, DEP is considering ways to mitigate conflicts between those who use the area for nature activities and those who use it with off-road vehicles. Possible outcomes are maps delineating areas for different uses and/or permits required for certain uses. [On a side note, the DEP lists 43 animals found in the Wharton State Forest as

threatened or endangered.] This article includes feedback from participants at the DEP meeting.
<https://www.njspotlightnews.org/2023/02/new-wharton-state-forest-map-plan-permitting-system-to-deal-with-off-road-controversy/>

Opinion: When Clear-Cutting Masquerades as Conservation

In this piece by Laura Oltman, a member of the New Jersey Highlands Coalition Natural Heritage Committee, she describes loopholes in NJ requirements that allow for logging activities to be performed without the environmental safeguards required of other activities on forested lands. In addition, she describes the "Young Forest Initiative" that posits logging as a means to re-invigorate forests by cutting down most of the trees and encouraging new growth.

<https://www.njspotlightnews.org/2023/02/roaring-rock-park-department-of-environmental-protection-dep-new-jersey-highlands-u-s-department-of-energy-young-forest-initiative-sparta-mountain-management-plan-c1-water-washington-township-warren/>

LEAD REDUCTION IN HOUSEHOLDS

Commissioner LaTourette Joins Vice President Harris to Announce NJ's Participation in Program to Accelerate Lead Service Line Replacements in Underserved Communities

On 1/27/2023, NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) Commissioner LaTourette joined Vice President Harris and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Administrator Regan at a White House Lead Action Summit to announce NJ's participation in the federal Lead Service Line Replacement Accelerator community initiative. This program, funded under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, is designed to help underserved communities address the complex problem of identifying and replacing lead-containing service lines. The initial NJ communities participating in the program are East Newark and Harrison, and the DEP will be working to add more communities. Other states participating in the program are Connecticut, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin.

https://www.nj.gov/dep/newsrel/2023/23_0007.htm

Governor Murphy, Lieutenant Governor Oliver Announce More Than \$38 Million Through Lead Remediation and Abatement Grant Program

Gov. Murphy and Lieutenant Gov. Oliver announced more than \$38 million in funding to nonprofits and local governments across the state through the Lead Remediation and Abatement Grant Program. The grant funds will be used to identify and remediate lead-based paint hazards in homes through encapsulation, replacement, or abatement. This announcement is part of the Murphy-Oliver Administration's investment of \$180 million in American Rescue Plan State Fiscal Recovery Funds through the State Fiscal Year 2022 and 2023 budgets to address the ongoing threat of childhood lead poisoning. Grants have been awarded to 20 organizations selected in response to a Request for Proposals for the first tranche of this funding. A second and larger round of awards is planned to be made before the end of June. See

<https://www.state.nj.us/governor/news/news/562023/approved/20230201a.shtml>. A 3-1/2-minute news video about the program is available here: <https://www.njspotlightnews.org/video/murphy-announces-grants-for-organizations-riding-nj-of-lead-exposure/>.

DRINKING WATER-RELATED ISSUES (other than lead)

NJ Receives \$66M In Federal Funds To Combat Emerging Contaminants In Drinking Water

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has announced that grant funds will be available from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law to be awarded to states to address PFAS ("forever chemicals") in small, rural, and disadvantaged communities. Additional information about the grant program is available here:

<https://www.epa.gov/dwcapacity/emerging-contaminants-ec-small-or-disadvantaged-communities-grant-sdc#press>. NJ's allotment is over \$66 million, which the state will need to apply for later this year by identifying eligible projects that include:

- 1) Efforts to address emerging contaminants in

- drinking water that would benefit a small or disadvantaged community on a per household basis;
- 2) Technical assistance to evaluate emerging contaminant problems;
- 3) Programs to provide household water-quality testing, including testing for unregulated contaminants;
- 4) Local contractor training; and
- 5) Activities necessary and appropriate for a state to respond to an emerging contaminant.

<https://enviropolitics.com/nj-receives-66m-in-federal-funds-to-combat-emerging-contaminants-in-drinking-water/>



Smith Announces Nearly \$95 Million in Federal Funds to Help Secure Clean Water for New Jersey Residents

For the second consecutive year, NJ has been allotted \$95 million in Bipartisan Infrastructure Law funds for water infrastructure improvements under the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Clean Water State Revolving Fund (SRF) program. (Additional information is available here:

<https://www.epa.gov/system/files/documents/2023-02/FY23%20CWSRF%20BIL%20Allotments%20Memo%20February%202023.pdf>.) Congress required 49 percent of Clean Water SRF General Supplemental funding be provided as grants and forgivable loans to communities that meet a state's affordability criteria or certain project types, consistent with the Clean Water Act, and EPA encourages states to use these funds to support projects in disadvantaged communities, for eligible projects such as upgrades at water-treatment facilities and replacement of combined sewer and stormwater systems.

<https://www.insidernj.com/press-release/smith-announces-nearly-95-million-in-federal-funds-to-help-secure-clean-water-for-new-jersey-residents/>

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 to help them enhance waste reduction and recycling programs. Municipalities must use their grants for various recycling initiatives that may include sponsoring household hazardous waste collection events, providing recycling receptacles in public places, or maintaining leaf composting operations. Additional information, and a list of grant recipients, is provided in the press release, available here:

https://www.nj.gov/dep/newsrel/2023/23_0011.htm.

Packaging Product Stewardship Act Aims to Reduce Plastic Waste in NJ

This article describes a bill (S426/A1444) that would require producers of packaging products sold in NJ to adopt and implement packaging product stewardship plans to: "(1) ensure that participating producers remain responsible for managing and facilitating the collection, transportation, reuse, and recycling or disposal of all discarded packaging products in the State, in accordance with environmentally sound management practices; (2) encourage participating producers to increase the post consumer content in packaging products and reduce the amount of waste generated from discarded packaging products; (3) prioritize and promote the reuse and recycling of discarded packaging products; and (4) otherwise minimize public sector involvement in the life cycle management of packaging waste." Fees would be collected from the producers to fund the plans, which would have to be approved by the NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP). The article provides reactions from various sectors to the bill.

<https://www.njspotlightnews.org/2023/02/nj-packaging-product-act-aims-to-reduce-plastic-waste/>

City of Hoboken Expands Textile Recycling Program

In December 2022, the City of Hoboken launched a Textile Recycling Program as part of its Climate Action Plan to be carbon neutral by 2050. The program, which addresses greenhouse gas emissions caused by solid waste by diverting textiles from landfills, has just been expanded to include more drop-off locations. So far, the program has recycled over 2 tons of textiles. The city also has reusable bag donation bins that support the Hoboken Community Center's food pantry distribution program.

<https://www.hobokennj.gov/news/city-hoboken-expands-textile-recycling-program>

Cut Food Waste in NJ Landfills to Slash Greenhouse Gas Emissions

A bill (S421) that would establish targets to reduce the disposal of organic waste in landfills (i.e., a 50% reduction from the 2016 level by 1/1/2027 and a 75% reduction by 1/1/2032), has been voted out of the Senate Environment and Energy Committee by a vote of 3 to 2. An almost identical Assembly bill (A5191) has not yet been considered by committee. The bills would also require the NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) to develop rules and regulations for achieving these targets. Environmental advocates welcome the bills, which would address the methane emissions from food waste, one of the largest sources of greenhouse emissions. Other groups, however, object to the rulemaking authority being given to the DEP, and also question the achievability of the targets.

<https://www.njspotlightnews.org/2023/01/doug-omalley-environment-new-jersey-sen-edward-durr-r-gloucester-dep-njbia-gary-sondermeyer/>

EDUCATIONAL and YOUTH-RELATED

New Jersey Department of Education Announces First-In-The-Nation \$4.5 Million Grant to Support Climate Change Education in Schools

The NJ Department of Education (DOE) has announced the availability of \$4.5 million in grants to fund locally focused climate change education in schools. The "Climate Awareness Education" grants will help schools meet New Jersey's first-in-the-nation standards that incorporated climate change into nine school content areas such as science, social studies, health, and visual/performing arts. The grants "are designed to help schools implement hands-on, experiential learning opportunities for students; create 'Green Teams' of students and educators to provide leadership and support local initiatives; establish professional development for teachers; and offer curriculum development and instructional materials aligned with the State's learning standards." All public school districts, charter schools, and renaissance school projects in NJ are eligible to apply for a share of the funding. <https://www.state.nj.us/governor/news/news/562023/approved/20230215d.shtml>

Millburn Environmental Commission Awards Funds to Food Waste Recycling Pilot Project at Millburn High School

With schools being some of the largest generators of food waste, the Millburn Environmental Commission has partnered with Millburn High School to pilot a food waste recycling project. Volunteers will be trained by Java's Compost company, and they will haul the food scraps collected on a weekly basis to an industrial facility where the scraps will be composted. A goal is education and providing awareness in the student body and the community. <https://www.tapinto.net/towns/millburn-slash-short-hills/sections/green/articles/millburn-environmental-commission-awards-funds-to-food-waste-recycling-pilot-project-at-millburn-high-school>

OTHER

In a First, Private Equity Takes Over Public Gas

Interestingly, two of NJ's gas utilities are being taken over by a private-equity investment firm. NJ Board of Public Utilities (BPU) commissioners have stated that the approval included protections for ratepayers as well as insuring reliability of gas distribution systems. The utilities have committed to undertake programs that will reduce greenhouse gas emissions and limit unnecessary investments in natural gas infrastructure. They are also to assess alternatives to gas, such as building electrification and energy efficiency, <https://www.njspotlightnews.org/2023/01/bpu-sji-south-jersey-south-jersey-gas-elizabethtown-gas-joseph-fiordaliso-mary-anna-holden/>



As Budget Begins, So Does Push for Stronger NJ Transit Funding

In a Transit Equity Week news conference, transit and environmental advocates asked Gov. Murphy again for a dedicated source of funds to operate NJ Transit, characterizing it as an environmental justice issue when funds that are intended to be used for Clean Energy projects, such as bus electrification, are used for operations instead. This has been occurring for years, and continues to occur despite a campaign promise from Gov. Murphy that he would stop that practice. <https://www.njspotlightnews.org/2023/02/transit-advocates-renew-calls-for-stable-funding-nj-transit/>

A Landmark of Preservation, Pinelands Sees Renewed Threats

This article, part of a NJ Spotlight News series "Water's Edge: Trials and tributaries of the Delaware River Watershed," provides an in-depth history of the Pinelands preserve and describes numerous threats to its continued existence.

<https://www.njspotlightnews.org/special-report/nj-pinelands-preserve-pine-barrens-development-threats-rising-seawater-higher-temps-pollution/>

For Ocean County Residents, Ciba's Scars Run Deep

This article provides background from a number of Ocean County residents regarding the history of the Ciba-Geigy site and its effects on the community, on them, and on their friends and family. See [p. 6](#) for information about a public session to be held by the NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) 3/12/2023 and for information about submitting comments.

<https://www.jerseyshoreonline.com/toms-river/for-ocean-county-residents-cibas-scars-run-deep/>



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
