



Environmental Justice Task Force Newsletter - June 2023

<https://www.uufaithaction.org/blog/>

UU Seventh Principle: Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part. Environmental Justice (EJ): Addressing disproportionate and adverse human health or environmental effects in communities of low-income residents or persons of color.

EJTF ACTIVITIES



- **EJTF** continues to be active in the very lively NJ Offshore Wind arena; **join us at the NJ Wind Works Rally "Harnessing the Wind for a Lasting Renewable Future,"** of which UUFANJ is a co-sponsor, to be held in Long Branch, NJ on 6/10/2023 (see [p. 5](#)). Also see the news articles describing the latest developments in Offshore Wind in NJ on [pp. 14 - 17](#).
- **The EJTF May monthly meeting's** guest speaker was Reverend Ronald Tuff of GreenFaith, who presented an excellent talk on "Green Jobs - for Who?" that detailed areas of challenges and needs to ensure NJ's green economy doesn't leave black and brown communities behind. There is a need for a statewide clearinghouse, with resources from training availability to transportation, and assistance with emergencies that may impact a worker's ability to get to work on a given day. See Rev. Tuff's opinion piece at <https://www.nj.com/opinion/2022/10/new-jerseys-black-and-brown-communities-need-training-to-enter-the-new-green-economy-opinion.html>.
- **EJTF members Jo Sippie-Gora and R. William Potter** have recently had pieces published in local media; Jo's letter to the editor (one of the actions suggested by "For the Generations" at <https://njgreenamendment.org/act-now/>) touted the need for a Green Amendment in NJ. Bill Potter's opinion piece in *NJ Spotlight News* points out the perils of overlooking methane's impact when considering greenhouse gases, in particular in NJ's fossil fuel industry lawsuit (see [p. 18](#)).

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

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

JUNE 2023						
(with hyperlinks to details on the following pages)						
Sun.	Mon.	Tues.	Wed.	Thurs.	Fri.	Sat.
				1 "Maximizing the Climate Benefits of Hydrogen" - 2:00 p.m.	2 NJ Climate Change Research Symposium - 8:30 a.m. Public Hearing on BPU FY 2024 Clean Energy Program - 12:30 p.m. "Can Nuclear Energy Help Meet US Climate Goals?" - 1:30 p.m.	3 Vineland Green & Wellness Fair - 9:00 a.m. "Woodbridge March and Rally Against CPV Gas Plant" - 11:00 a.m.
4 "Jersey City Community Outreach - Petitioning Against Turnpike Expansion" - 9:30 a.m. AND 3:30 p.m.	5 Public Hearing on BPU FY 2024 Budget Related to EVs - 1:00 p.m. "Newark March/ Rally Against Gas Plants" - 4:00 p.m.	6	7 DRBC 2Q Business Meeting - 1:00 p.m. "The Future of Forestry in the Farm Bill" - 2:00 p.m.	8	9	10 NJ Wind Works Rally - 12:00 p.m. Greenfest Newark
11	12 Comments due: BPU FY24 Budgets and BPU FY24 EV Budgets	13 NJDEP Middlesex County EJ Community Engagement - 6:00 p.m.	14	15	16	17
18	19 "Harmful Algal Blooms (HABs): What They Are And What To Do About Them" - 6:30 p.m.	20 "Wind Project Updates - Ørsted & Atlantic Shores" - 7:00 p.m.	21 NJ Clean Air Council Meeting - 9:30 a.m. "Conservation Practices from Farms to Forests and Wetlands" - 2:00 p.m. "How Microplastics Affect Our Health & Environment" - 3:00 p.m. BOEM Public Meeting on Atlantic Shores South DEIS - 5:00 p.m. Comments due: NJDEP Draft 2023 NJ Ambient Air Monitoring Plan NJ Planning & Redevelopment Conference	22 BOEM Public Meeting on Atlantic Shores South DEIS - 5:00 p.m. NJ Planning & Redevelopment Conference	23 7th-annual Pinelands Summer Short Course - 9:00 a.m. NJ Planning & Redevelopment Conference	24 "Forest Fun Day" (NJSOC) - 9:00 a.m.
Calendar continues on p. 3.						

Calendar continued from p. 2.

<p>25</p>	<p>26 BOEM Public Meeting on Atlantic Shores South DEIS - 1:00 p.m.</p> <hr/> <p>"Organic Soil Health Practices for Water Management and Water Quality" - 1:00 p.m.</p> <hr/> <p>"What's Impacting the Ecological and Public Health of New Jersey's Coastal Waters?" - 6:30 p.m.</p>	<p>27 "Demanding Climate Justice with Our Children's Trust - Youth v. Gov Hawaii" - 7:00 p.m.</p>	<p>28 BOEM Public Meeting on Atlantic Shores South DEIS - 5:00 p.m.</p>	<p>29</p>	<p>30</p>	
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**"Maximizing the Climate Benefits of Hydrogen" - Webinar
 6/1/2023, 2:00 p.m. - 3:30 p.m.**

"The Environmental and Energy Study Institute (EESI) and the Environmental Defense Fund (EDF) invite you to a briefing on the science of hydrogen and its potential as a source of clean energy. Hydrogen has garnered significant attention from Congress, including funding for regional clean hydrogen hubs and the Department of Energy's hydrogen Earthshot to accelerate clean energy breakthroughs. While hydrogen is often discussed as a climate solution, if hydrogen is leaked into the atmosphere, it has an indirect warming effect. To maximize the climate benefits of hydrogen, it is important to address hydrogen leakage risks, manage other associated greenhouse gases, and use it in the highest-value applications. Panelists will describe the current state of research on hydrogen, including new technologies to detect hydrogen leaks, and discuss the most efficient and effective use cases for hydrogen power, such as powering industrial applications and heavy-duty transport." Additional information and the link to RSVP are available here:
<https://www.eesi.org/briefings/view/060123hydrogen>.

**Public Hearing on NJBPU Straw Proposal for FY 2024 Clean Energy Program
 6/2/2023, 12:30 p.m. - Virtual**

The NJ Board of Public Utilities (BPU) is holding a virtual public hearing to discuss the Fiscal Year 2024 Straw Proposal for NJ's Clean Energy Program (NJCEP) Comprehensive Resource Analysis (CRA) and the proposed FY24 program

budgets and compliance filings. "Through the CRA process, the NJCEP funding levels for energy efficiency and Class I renewable energy programs are established. The proposed funding level will fund the core NJCEP programs and provide opportunities for new and enhanced programs that help residents, businesses, and State and local governments reduce energy usage, save money, and improve the environment." **[Note: a public hearing focusing on electric vehicles, including Charge Up New Jersey, is being held on 6/5/2023 - see p. 4.] The deadline to submit comments is 5:00 p.m. on 6/12/2023.** Additional information including the link to access the relevant documents and instructions for submitting comments are available here:
https://www.nj.gov/bpu/pdf/publicnotice/Notice_Public_Hearing_FY24Proposed_CRA_Budgets_ProgramPlans.pdf

**"Can Nuclear Energy Help Meet US Climate Goals?"
 6/2/2023, 1:30 p.m. - Virtual**

Per EJTF member Sally Gellert, "Please consider joining this important briefing... the information will be important as the industry contends that nuclear energy can be part of a climate-chaos solution. Is that a reasonable conclusion?" The webinar will include "leading independent experts who... will present evidence showing the evolution of nuclear power's costs and risks, and discuss how to meet America's low-carbon energy needs." The link to preregister is available here:
<https://tinyurl.com/ysy8z6v4>.

**"Vineland Green & Wellness Fair
6/3/2023, 9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.
(rain date 6/4/2023)**

Vineland, NJ - In-person

Vineland, NJ is hosting a Green & Wellness Fair focusing on everything "green," learning how to be sustainable, and living well. It is free, and will feature "displays, promotions, demonstrations, workshops, goods for sale, food, music and fun!" The NJ Department of Environmental Protection's (DEP) DriveGreen team will be on site to register participants for electric vehicle (EV) test drives and answer questions about EVs and available incentives. Additional information is available here: <https://www.vinelandchamber.org/events/details/gvcc-and-city-of-vineland-present-vineland-green-wellness-fair-6-3-23-16711>.

**"Woodbridge March and Rally Against CPV
Gas Plant"**

**6/3/2023, 11:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.
Woodbridge, NJ - In-person**

This action is part of the Food & Water Watch "Our Planet, Our Future" week of actions calling on Gov. Murphy to stop the seven proposed NJ dirty energy projects. A one-mile march and rally will focus on the Competitive Power Ventures (CPV) planned gas plant in Woodbridge, which is being allowed to proceed without an environmental justice impact statement. Additional information and the link to sign up to attend are available here: <https://www.mobilize.us/fww/event/563395/>.

**"Jersey City Community Outreach -
Petitioning Against Turnpike Expansion"**

**6/4/2023, 9:30 a.m. - 10:30 a.m.
and 3:30 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.
Jersey City, NJ - In-person**

This action is part of the Food & Water Watch "Our Planet, Our Future" week of actions calling on Gov. Murphy to stop the seven proposed NJ dirty energy projects. This action focuses on the Murphy administration's plan for a Turnpike expansion in Hudson County. "On June 4th, thousands of local residents will participate in a mass bike ride through Jersey City for the annual 'Ward Tour' event. This is a perfect opportunity for us to speak with community members... Our goal is to collect 500 petition signatures..." against the expansion and for investment in public transit. Training and materials will be provided. Additional information

and the link to sign up to attend are available here: <https://www.mobilize.us/fww/event/563179/>.

**Public Hearing on NJBPU Proposed FY 2024
Budgets and Compliance Filings Related to
Electric Vehicles, including Charge Up NJ
6/5/2023, 1:00 p.m. - Virtual**

The NJ Board of Public Utilities (BPU) is holding a virtual public hearing to discuss the proposed Fiscal Year 2024 program budgets and compliance filings related to electric vehicles, including Charge Up New Jersey. The Charge Up New Jersey budget and other EV programs are included in the compliance filings posted here:

<https://www.njcleanenergy.com/main/njcep-policy-updates-request-comments/policy-updates-and-request-comments>. [Note: a public hearing on

the entire NJ Clean Energy Program is being held on 6/2/2023 - see p. 3.] The deadline to submit comments is 5:00 p.m. on 6/12/2023.

Additional information, including instructions for submitting comments, is available here:

[https://www.nj.gov/bpu/pdf/publicnotice/FY24%20Proposed%20EV%20Programs%20Notice%202024%20v4%20\(003\).pdf](https://www.nj.gov/bpu/pdf/publicnotice/FY24%20Proposed%20EV%20Programs%20Notice%202024%20v4%20(003).pdf).

**"Newark March and Rally Against Two
Proposed Gas Plants"**

**6/5/2023, 4:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.
Newark, NJ - In-person**

This action is part of the Food & Water Watch "Our Planet, Our Future" week of actions calling on Gov. Murphy to stop the seven proposed NJ dirty energy projects. A 1/2-mile march and rally will focus on new gas power plants that two of Gov. Murphy's own agencies are proposing to build in the region's most pollution-overburdened communities.

Additional information and the link to sign up to attend are available here:

<https://www.mobilize.us/fww/event/562935/>.

**Delaware River Basin Commission (DRBC)
Second Quarter 2023 Business Meeting**

**6/7/2023, 1:00 p.m.
Camden, NJ - In-person**

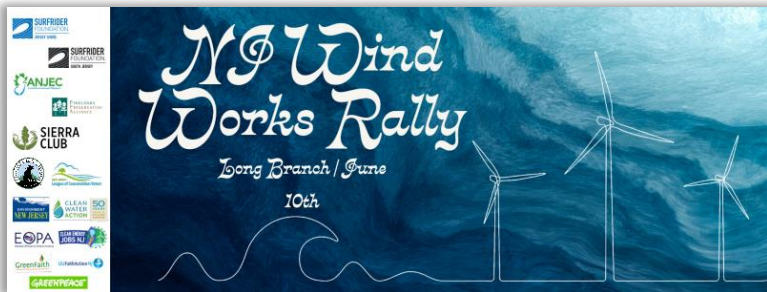
The Business Meeting Agenda will be posted approximately ten days before the meeting at the website below. After all scheduled business has been completed and as time allows, the meeting will include up to one hour of Open Public

Comment (in-person attendance and prior sign-up by 5 p.m. on 6/6/2023 is required). Additional details about items to be covered 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 (for viewing only) here:
<https://www.youtube.com/user/delrivbasincomm>.

**"The Future of Forestry in the Farm Bill"
- Webinar
6/7/2023, 2:00 p.m. - 3:30 p.m.**

"The Environmental and Energy Study Institute (EESI) and U.S. Nature4Climate invite you to a briefing on opportunities to advance climate-friendly forestry in this year's Federal Farm Bill. The forestry programs and incentives in the Farm Bill can provide greenhouse gas emission reduction benefits, as well as build resilience to climate impacts such as wildfire risk and extreme heat. At the same time, these programs generate jobs and present opportunities for innovation. During this briefing, panelists will explain forestry-related programs in the Farm Bill and cover essential forestry topics, including wildfire management, innovative wood products, carbon markets, and urban forestry." Additional information and the link to RSVP are available here:
<https://www.eesi.org/briefings/view/060723farmbill>.



**NJ Wind Works Rally - "Harnessing the Wind for a Lasting Renewable Future"
6/10/2023, 12:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.
Long Branch, NJ - In-person**

"We need a clean energy transition NOW and offshore wind is NJ's best defense against climate change. We need YOU to make your voice heard in support of offshore wind and a clean energy and safe climate future for NJ. Bring friends, family, activists, and neighbors and come out to NJ Wind Works Rally: Harnessing the Wind for a Lasting

Renewable Future on Saturday June 10th! Environmental and academic organizations will be present for folks to learn more and ask questions, including the NJ Sierra Club, NJ League of Conservation Voters, Greenpeace, Pinelands Preservation Alliance, ANJEC, Environment NJ, NJWEC, Jersey Renews, National Wildlife Federation, Clean Water Action, GreenFaith, Surfrider - Jersey Shore and South Jersey Chapters, and more." **UUFNJ is a co-sponsor, and EJTF will be there.** Additional details and a link to register are available here:
<https://addup.sierraclub.org/campaigns/support-offshore-wind-in-nj>.

**Greenfest Newark
6/10/2023 (rain date 6/17/2023)
Newark, NJ - In-person**

Newark is holding its 2nd annual Greenfest to celebrate a Sustainable Newark. This full day of family-friendly activities will feature a healthy food bazaar and farmer's market, eco-friendly interactive workshops, music performances, yoga, sustainable vendors, and more. Additional information is available here:
<https://www.greenfestnewark.com>.

**NJDEP Middlesex County EJ Community Engagement Session - Hybrid
6/13/2023, 6:00 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.
Perth Amboy, NJ - In-person and on Zoom**

The NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) is inviting Middlesex County residents to attend an EJ Community Engagement Session regarding Environmental Justice. This community engagement session will provide residents, community groups, and other members of the public a chance to meet DEP and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) senior staff and discuss environmental justice issues in Middlesex County. It is one of a series being conducted by DEP in communities across NJ. Additional information and registration to receive the Zoom link are available here:
<https://www.zoomgov.com/meeting/register/vJItce6pgDjEhJiV92X1L3LT2RxiabvTWQ>.

"Harmful Algal Blooms (HABs): What They Are And What To Do About Them"
6/19/2023, 6:30 p.m. - Webinar

As part of the Rutgers "Earth Day Every Day" webinar series, Heather Nix with Clemson Cooperative Extension will cover the basics of HABs, with a main focus on cyanobacteria including identification, contributing factors, prevention, and treatment options. Additional information and the link to register are available here: <https://envirostewards.rutgers.edu/earth-day-every-day/>.

"Wind Project Updates – Ørsted & Atlantic Shores" - Webinar
6/20/2023, 7:00 p.m.

In this webinar, part of the Association of New Jersey Environmental Commissions (ANJEC) 2023 Climate Mini-Series, Katharine Perry, Ocean Wind 1 project Permit Manager, along with a representative from the Atlantic Shores Offshore Wind project, will provide updates on these two offshore wind projects. Additional information and the link to register are available here: <https://anjec.org/climate-mini-series-part-2/>.

NJ Clean Air Council Meeting - Hybrid
6/21/2023, 9:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
Trenton, NJ - In-person and Virtual

The in-person meeting will be held at NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) headquarters in Trenton, NJ. For information about accessing the meeting virtually, contact Clean Air Council Liaison George Berdomas at 609-984-1483 or via email at George.Berdomas@dep.nj.gov. Additional information is available here: <https://dep.nj.gov/events/category/boards-and-councils-and-commissions/clean-air-council/>.

"Conservation Practices from Farms to Forests and Wetlands - Farm Bill in Focus"
- Webinar
6/21/2023, 2:00 p.m. - 3:30 p.m.

"The Environmental and Energy Study Institute (EESI) invites you to a briefing on opportunities to cultivate climate-smart conservation programs in this year's Farm Bill. The conservation title of the Farm Bill contains important programs and policies that help agricultural producers, forest managers,

and rural communities take advantage of opportunities to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and build resilience to climate impacts, while also generating other benefits such as improved water and air quality, soil health, biodiversity, and jobs. Conservation can take many forms, from regenerative agricultural practices to conservation easements. Panelists will describe conservation opportunities, barriers to access the... programs, as well as ways to advance conservation through research, technical assistance, and financial support." Additional information and the link to RSVP are available here:

<https://www.eesi.org/briefings/view/062123farmbill>.

"How Microplastics Affect Our Health & Environment" - Webinar
6/21/2023, 3:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.

In this webinar, part of Food & Water Watch's Livable Future LIVE monthly virtual event series, experts in the field will provide information about microplastics, links to the fossil fuel industry, and solutions to work toward protecting people and the environment from plastic pollution. Speakers will include Matt Simon, a senior staff writer at Wired covering biology, robotics, and the environment and author of three books, most recently *A Poison Like No Other: How Microplastics Corrupted Our Planet and Our Bodies*. Additional information and the link to sign up to attend are available here: <https://www.mobilize.us/fww/event/561555/>.

BOEM Public Meetings on Atlantic Shores South Wind Draft EIS - In-person & Virtual
6/21/2023, 5:00 p.m.,
Manahawkin, NJ - In-person
6/22/2023, 5:00 p.m.,
Atlantic City, NJ - In-person
6/26/2023, 1:00 p.m. - Virtual via Zoom
6/28/2023, 5:00 p.m. - Virtual via Zoom

The U.S. Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) has issued the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the Atlantic Shores South offshore wind project. The public comment period ends 7/3/2023. BOEM is holding two in-person and two virtual public meetings on the DEIS. Additional information and links to register for the Zoom meetings are available here: <https://www.boem.gov/renewable-energy/state-activities/atlantic-shores-south>.

7th-annual Pinelands Summer Short Course
6/23/2023, 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.
Hammonton, NJ - In-person

**Comments Due on NJDEP Draft 2023 NJ
Ambient Air Monitoring Network Plan**
6/21/2023

The NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) is accepting comments on its Draft Ambient Air Monitoring Network Plan for 2023. The Plan provides a complete description of the air monitoring network operated by the Bureau of Air Monitoring (BAM), and summarizes any changes made in the previous year and those planned for the next year. The primary purpose of the air monitoring program is to demonstrate compliance with the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) for specific pollutants, and it also provides real-time air quality data to the public through its website (available here: https://www.nj.gov/dep/airmon/index.html?utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery), and measures concentrations of additional pollutants for the protection of public health. The Plan is available here: <https://www.nj.gov/dep/airmon/pdf/nj-network-plan-2023-draft.pdf>, and comments may be submitted on or before 6/21/2023 to bamweb@dep.nj.gov.

NJ Planning & Redevelopment Conference
6/21/2023 - 6/22/2023 - Virtual
6/23/2023 - In-person (New Brunswick)

"New Jersey Future and the New Jersey Chapter of the American Planning Association are proud to present the annual New Jersey Planning and Redevelopment three-day conference convening virtually on June 21-22 and in person on June 23 at the Hyatt Regency in New Brunswick. The conference will feature a multitude of timely sessions and bring together hundreds of visionary New Jersey professionals, elected officials, and community activists who share a passion and commitment to the Garden State. Together we can reimagine land use to optimize efficiency, promote sustainable growth, and bolster community resilience in a rapidly changing environment!" Additional information and the link to register (\$350 for non-members) are available here: <https://pheedloop.com/njprc23/site/home/>.

The Pinelands Summer Short Course is a day-long event featuring educational presentations that explore the unique history, ecology, and culture of the Pinelands. This year, attendees can select among three guided field trips and 12 educational presentations, including a new course on turtles of southern NJ. Additional information about all of the offerings, and the link to register (\$60.00), are available here: <https://www.stockton.edu/continuing-studies/pinelandsshortcourse.html>.

"Forest Fun Day"
Friends of the NJ School of Conservation
(NJSOC) Program
6/24/2023, 9:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.
Sandyston, NJ - In-person

"Experience the magic that can only be found at the NJ School of Conservation (SOC) during a day of fun in the forest... We've mapped out your day as a journey with stops to experience some of our most popular activities at SOC including archery, boating, family hiking essentials, campcraft, fishing and ever-popular rock painting... No visit to the SOC would be complete without a campfire and smore's! As the day winds down, we invite you to gather to share stories of your adventures while enjoying some music." Additional information, including registration (\$10.00 - \$35.00), are available here: <https://friendsofnjsoc.org/event/forest-fun-day-3/>.

Note: EJTF has been following the NJ School of Conservation's (NJSOC) situation over the past several years, and it is good to see that the NJSOC is continuing and providing programs. "Forest Fun Day" is just one of the NJSOC programs in June; additional programs can be found here: <https://friendsofnjsoc.org/events/>.

**"What's Impacting the Ecological and
Public Health of New Jersey's Coastal
Waters?"**
6/26/2023, 6:30 p.m. - Webinar

As part of the Rutgers "Earth Day Every Day" webinar series, Bob Schuster with the NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) will cover how the Bureau of Marine Water Monitoring

tracks water quality in NJ's coastal waters. Monitoring programs focus on both ecological health (e.g., nutrient monitoring) and public health issues (e.g., algal bloom monitoring, pollution source tracking) related to coastal waterways. Additional information and the link to register are available here:

<https://envirostewards.rutgers.edu/earth-day-every-day/>.

**"Demanding Climate Justice with Our Children's Trust - Youth v. Gov Hawaii"
- Webinar**

6/27/2023, 7:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.

In this webinar sponsored by the Elders Climate Action Network, youth plaintiffs and attorneys from the constitutional climate lawsuit "Navahine F. v. Hawai'i Department of Transportation" will discuss the case, in which the youth plaintiffs claim that their state Department of Transportation's operation of a transportation system that results in high levels of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions violates their state constitutional rights, causing them significant harm and impacting their ability to "live healthful lives in Hawai'i now and into the future." The trial is scheduled to begin 9/26/2023. Additional information and the link to register are available here:

https://www.eldersclimateaction.org/event/nc_june23/.

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 June 2023 (a sampling is listed below), but the site includes updated information over time; check the site periodically for an updated list:

<https://climatesociety.rutgers.edu/events/all-climate-events/range.listevents/>.

**NJ Climate Change Research Symposium
6/2/2023, 8:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
New Brunswick, NJ - In-person**

"Join the NJ Climate Change Resource Center for a symposium presenting the latest natural and social science, economics, engineering, legal, and policy research related to understanding, assessing,

evaluating, and responding to climate change in New Jersey as well as furthering a community of scholarship in pursuit of such information. The symposium will feature posters, panel sessions, and presentations by faculty, students, and staff of research institutions, public agencies, nongovernmental organizations, and others engaged in climate change research in New Jersey." Links to additional information and registration (\$75) are available here:

<https://climatesociety.rutgers.edu/events/all-climate-events/icalrepeat.detail/2023/06/02/7772/-/new-jersey-climate-change-research-symposium-2023>.

**"Organic Soil Health Practices for Water Management and Water Quality"
- Webinar**

6/26/2023, 1:00 - 2:30 p.m.

In this webinar, sponsored by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), Mark Schonbeck, Research Associate with the Organic Farming Research Foundation, "will discuss water management in organic agriculture, cover the ways that soil health can enhance water use efficiency and nutrient retention, and outline conservation strategies that optimize the stewardship of water resources." A link to additional information including how to register/join is available here:

<https://climatesociety.rutgers.edu/events/all-climate-events/icalrepeat.detail/2023/06/26/7796/-/webinar-organic-soil-health-practices-for-water-management-and-water-quality>. [Note: this event uses Adobe Connect.]



**Jersey Water Works and Lead-Free NJ -Joint Meeting
7/12/2023
9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.
New Brunswick, NJ -
In-person**

This joint meeting, "Aligning our Actions - Smart Infrastructure, Strong Communities" will provide "opportunities to connect, exchange updates, and advance the conversation about the state's water infrastructure and the need for statewide holistic lead remediation." Additional information including the agenda, and the link to register are available here: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/jersey-water-works-lead-free-nj-membership-meeting-tickets-628544713157>.

VIDEOS OF PAST EVENTS

"Localizing Forest Adaptation Strategies to Diverse Northeastern Forest Ecosystems and Threats" - Video of Webinar

Sponsored by the Northeast Climate Adaptation Science Center, this webinar described strategies that have been tested to address the diversity of Northeastern forests as related to the varied nature of changing climate and disturbance regimes. "... the varied nature of climate change impacts and their interactions with other stressors, including non-native insects and diseases, present unique, site-level management challenges ... complicate strategies for maintaining specific species or habitat conditions into the future." A number of strategies were tested to address these issues, "including a mix of novel tactics, such as planting future-climate adapted species, and more commonly applied ecological silvicultural approaches designed to increase ecosystem complexity, all localized to current forest conditions and long-term forest and wildlife goals for the site. This webinar highlight[ed] the outcomes from this work and implications for... increasing adaptive capacity, while sustaining key wildlife species and ecosystem processes, such as carbon storage and sequestration." The video is available here: <https://necasc.umass.edu/webinars/localizing-forest-adaptation-strategies-diverse-northeastern-forest-ecosystems-and-threats>.

"100% Clean Energy Standard by 2035" - Video of Webinar

Gov. Murphy recently announced, by executive order, that NJ will be speeding up its transition to a 100% clean energy economy by 2035 - 15 years ahead of the goal set in his first term. This executive order puts NJ on track to meet the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) goal of cutting global greenhouse gas emissions in half by 2030. In this NJ League of Conservation Voters (NJLCV) webinar, a panel discussed what this means for NJ. The video is available here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TZiduaTNDBQ>.

"Microplastics: Tiny Particles with Major Impacts" - Video of Webinar

As part of the Rutgers "Earth Day Every Day" webinar series, Dr. Judith Weis with Rutgers University discussed all aspects of microplastics - how diverse they are, where they come from, how they are distributed in the environment, what effects they have, and what can be done about them - including what you can do. The video is available here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zs1-5IcS8sQ>.

"The Process and Path Forward for Passing a Bipartisan Farm Bill" - Video of Webinar

This webinar, sponsored by the Environmental and Energy Study Institute (EESI), presented "the basics of the Farm Bill, including the process for passing the bill, the history of the Farm Bill, and opportunities for a bipartisan path forward." "The Farm Bill is an omnibus, multiyear law that Congress renews every five years to address numerous issues from conservation to crop insurance... affecting how and what food is grown, food access and nutrition, natural resources, rural development, and more. With the 2018 Farm Bill expiring this September, Congress has already begun the process of developing the next Farm Bill." The video is available here: <https://www.eesi.org/briefings/view/042623farmbill>.

"What's Next for Community Solar in NJ?" - Video of Webinar

NJ's pilot community solar program is going to become permanent, which means "more people will be able to access affordable, clean solar energy and see savings on their energy bills." In this NJ League of Conservation Voters (NJLCV) webinar, NJLCV staff members, representatives from Solar Landscape, a community solar provider, and community solar subscribers discussed the program and how you can become a part of it. The video is available here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MMESyvQodsQ>.

"Why We Need Permitting Reform for Building Clean Energy Projects"

- Video of Webinar

"According to a recent Princeton study, more than 80 percent of the emissions reductions potential of the Inflation Reduction Act would be wasted if it isn't made easier to build the infrastructure necessary to expand clean energy. As climate activists are finding out, permitting reform is the lynchpin to unlocking our energy future. In this Elders Climate Action webinar, Dana Nuccitelli, an environmental scientist and climate journalist, discuss[ed] what permitting reform is, why it's so important for America's climate targets, what the Biden Administration and Congress can do to achieve it, and why some climate justice organizations are concerned about it." The video is available here: <https://youtu.be/qKrkwUzggwg>.

"Carbon Utilization and Other Needed Technologies for the Transition to Net Zero" - Video of Webinar

"What happens if conventional carbon dioxide sequestration (CCS) isn't broadly accepted by society? What happens if we reach an irreversible climate change tipping point? Solutions, with or without CCS, will include carbon dioxide utilization, carbon-emission-free electrification of everything possible, and solar radiation management." Professor Emily A. Carter spoke about these issues and described efforts she is leading for the National Academies and in her research within the Princeton University/national lab ecosystem to address them. Dr. Carter is the Gerhard R. Andlinger Professor in Energy and the Environment and a Professor of Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering (MAE) at the Andlinger Center for Energy and the Environment (ACEE), and Applied and Computational Mathematics at Princeton University. The video is available here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9NWFih6sjVM>.

"Punching Out Plastic - Learn What You Can Do to Keep NJ Litter-Free"

- Video of Webinar

In this webinar celebrating the one-year anniversary of NJ's plastic pollution reduction law, the Association of New Jersey Environmental Commissions (ANJEC) and invited guests discussed plastic pollution in NJ, including "Successes of the first year of the Plastic Pollution Reduction Act;" "NJ Plastic Advisory Council Recommendations;" and "NJ Clean Communities Programs & Initiatives." The video is available here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DsklO5LvE3M>.

"Climate, Energy, and Economic Win-Wins in the Farm Bill" - Video of Webinar

For those interested in learning more about the Federal Farm Bill, which will undoubtedly impact NJ, the Environmental and Energy Study Institute (EESI) is having a series of webinars about it. This webinar addressed potential win-wins made possible by Farm Bill provisions. "During this briefing, panelists explain[ed] how the Farm Bill helps agricultural producers and communities drive down greenhouse gas emissions while also building climate and economic resilience, with discussions of the role of agroforestry, urban agriculture, distributed energy resources, and agricultural research and innovation." The video is available here:

<https://www.eesi.org/briefings/view/051023farmbill>.

"Eating Our Cake Without Losing It: Exploring Sustainability in Agriculture and Food Security With Land Modeling"

- Video of Webinar

This webinar, part of the Cornell Atkinson "Perspectives on the Climate Change Challenge" series, was presented by Dr. Sonali McDermid, an Associate Professor in the Department of Environmental Studies at New York University. "Global agriculture has transformed ~40% of Earth's land surface, consuming copious inputs including water, fertilizer, and land. ... Land systems modeling is a crucial tool for understanding agriculture as both a driver of global environmental change as well as its vulnerabilities to these changes. Both must be ...

better modeled - in order to meet the combined goals of global food security and global environmental change mitigation..." This talk provided a brief overview of agriculture-Earth systems interactions and identified key questions for modeling agriculture in a land and Earth systems framework, flagging key outstanding uncertainties on which future research is needed and highlighting important efforts for coordinated and cross-disciplinary Earth system modeling centered around agriculture and land use. The video is available here:

<https://www.atkinson.cornell.edu/media/eating-our-cake-without-losing-it-modeling-for-global-food-security-and-environmental-goals/>.

"Climate Change Impacts on NJ: Ocean Acidification & Sea Level Rise"

- Video of Webinar

In this webinar, part of the Association of New Jersey Environmental Commissions (ANJEC) 2023 Climate Mini-Series, two Rutgers professors (Grace Saba, Ph.D., Associate Professor, Rutgers University School of Environmental and Biological Sciences and Bob Kopp, Ph.D., Professor and Co-Director, Rutgers University Office of Climate Action) who are doing cutting-edge climate research presented information on ocean acidification and sea level rise impacts on NJ.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nd-7NPATZCO>

"Powering Toward a Sustainable Future: Learning How We Can Reach 100% Clean Electricity by 2035"

- Video of Webinar

In this webinar sponsored by the Elders Climate Action Network, Sam Ricketts from Evergreen Action discussed the pathway to a 100% Clean Power transition and how we can get involved in supporting the transition in our communities. "Clean electricity combined with electrification could ultimately cut 70 to 80 percent of current U.S. GHG [greenhouse gas] pollution. Electricity represents the best opportunity to achieve the United States's near-term international pledge of a 50-52 percent reduction in GHG pollution by 2030." The video is available here:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ENTuk_URDBM.

"Unlocking Rural Economies: Farm Bill Investments in Rural America"

- Video of Webinar

For those interested in learning more about the Federal Farm Bill, which will undoubtedly impact NJ, the Environmental and Energy Study Institute (EESI) is having a series of webinars about it. This webinar addressed policies and programs that help farmers, ranchers, small businesses, and rural communities drive down greenhouse gas emissions, generate jobs, and stimulate the economy through means such as improving energy efficiency, accessing electrification retrofits, upgrading water systems, and building out broadband capabilities. The video is available here:

<https://www.eesi.org/briefings/view/052423farmbill>.

"The Role of Plant Genetics in Soil Health: Selecting Crop Cultivars for Organic Production"

- Video of Webinar

This webinar, sponsored by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) presented recent advances in cultivar development for healthy soils and successful organic production. "Organic farmers need crop cultivars that perform well in organic production systems, and several farmer-participatory plant breeding networks are beginning to meet that need. Breeding priorities for the organic sector include disease and pest resistance, weed competitiveness, nutrient and water use efficiency, rapid emergence and establishment, overall vigor, and resilience to drought and other weather extremes as well as market traits such as flavor and nutritional value. Cultivars that perform well in low-tillage organic production systems, partner effectively with beneficial soil microbes, utilize nutrients and moisture efficiently, require less cultivation for weed control, and generate extensive root systems and abundant above-ground residues while maintaining good yields can contribute directly to soil health." A link to register to view the video is available here:

<https://conservationwebinars.net/webinars/the-role-of-plant-genetics-in-soil-health-selecting-crop-cultivars-for-organic-production>.

"NRCS Support for Organic Transition" - Video of Webinar

This webinar, sponsored by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) presented new opportunities available for NRCS to support producers in the transition to organic, including the USDA's Organic Transition Initiative and NRCS's role in supporting producers in transitioning to organic. "The new Organic Management Interim Conservation Practice

Standard (823) [was] highlighted, including technical and financial assistance for producers transitioning to organic and wanting to improve soil health, reduce erosion, improve plant productivity and health, reduce plant pressure, and more." A link to register to view the video is available here:

<https://conservationwebinars.net/webinars/nrcs-support-for-organic-transition>.

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 New Jersey 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. Advocating for better health and reducing climate change for all by protecting and expanding New Jersey's public and urban forests.**

NEWS RELATED TO EJTF ISSUES

[covering 4/27/2023 – 5/26/2023]

ELECTRIC VEHICLES & VEHICLE EMISSION REDUCTION

Lawmakers Drive to Get More Electric School Buses on the Road

A bill (S886) approved by the NJ Senate Environment and Energy Committee would direct the NJ Infrastructure Bank to establish an Electric School Bus Financing Program, to provide loans and other forms of financial assistance to school districts to finance the purchase of electric school buses and the purchase and installation of related electric school bus charging infrastructure. This would be the first involvement of the Infrastructure Bank in the clean energy sector. The amount of \$20 million annually would come

from the societal benefits charge that funds the Clean Energy Fund. The bill "provides that a school district may use performance and operational savings realized from the purchase and use of an electric school bus or related charging infrastructure to repay a loan issued pursuant to the bill." An identical bill (A3139) has not yet been considered by the Assembly Environment and Solid Waste Committee. <https://www.njspotlightnews.org/2023/05/regional-greenhouse-gas-initiative-clean-energy-fund-electric-school-bus-diesel-fumes-school-district-sen-bob-smith-doug-omalley-d-middlesex-environment-new-jersey-20-million-sen-edward/>

Move to Electric Vehicles and State Will Benefit, Report Says

A report, "NJ Advanced Clean Cars II Program" (available here: <https://www.erm.com/contentassets/0ea3b193115448cd9dd5c7e3622373a0/new-jersey-advanced-clean-cars-ii-program.pdf>), commissioned by the Natural Resources Defense Council and the Sierra Club, evaluates the costs and benefits of NJ adopting the Advanced Clean Cars II (ACC II) regulation. This rule, recently adopted by California, would require vehicle manufacturers to increase sales of light-duty zero-emission vehicles (ZEVs), reaching 100 percent sales by 2035. The ramp up of these vehicles to reach that 2035 goal would be affected by manufacturers' use of compliance flexibilities in the first five years of the program, and the report evaluates three scenarios based on degree of the use of these flexibilities. The report estimates that by adopting the rule NJ could avoid 175 to 358 premature deaths between 2027 and 2050, save vehicle owners \$4.4 billion yearly, and cut annual electric bills for the typical household up to \$174. The report assumes NJ would adopt the rules by the end of 2023, in time to impact the 2027 vehicle model year, which is not currently envisioned by the NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP). <https://www.njspotlightnews.org/2023/05/nj-economy-and-health-would-benefit-from-phasing-out-gas-powered-vehicle-says-report/>

LAND MANAGEMENT/ AGRICULTURE/FOOD

Governor Murphy Takes Action on Legislation - Absolute Veto of A4035/S3577

The bill A4035/S3577, which would have required gubernatorial appointment of the State Agriculture Development Committee (SADC) Executive Director, received an Absolute Veto from Gov. Murphy. In his memorandum returning the bill to the General Assembly, Gov. Murphy stated that the rationale for his veto was that "I am concerned that limiting the candidates for the SADC Executive Director position to three individuals selected by the SBOA [State Board of Agriculture] would unduly limit my discretion and

impede the State's ability to find the best candidate to carry out the SADC's important mission. This concern is compounded by the fact that these three candidates are put forward by a board whose members are solely selected by the agricultural community." Currently the Executive Director is chosen by the SADC board. The bill would have limited the choice of ED to one of three proposed by the State Board of Agriculture, which is just one member of the SADC, and whose members are chosen solely by the farming community. Gov. Murphy's memorandum is available here:

<https://d31hzhk6di2h5.cloudfront.net/20230515/8d/29/14/a0/0537948189546c458f903c5e/A4035AV.pdf>.

NJEDA Awards Over \$1 Million Through Food Security Planning Grant Program

The NJ Economic Development Authority (EDA) has awarded grants totaling over \$1 million to seven NJ county and municipal governments "to support the development of plans to improve food access and food security by leveraging and repurposing distressed assets [real property that is priced below market value] in New Jersey's Food Desert Communities (FDCs)." All of these grants have gone to entities in the top 20 FDCs, including three of the highest-ranked FDCs (Camden, Atlantic City and Newark)..."
<https://www.njeda.gov/njeda-awards-over-1-million-through-food-security-planning-grant-program/>



New Jersey to Partner With NASDA Foundation for Regional Food Business Center in Northeast

The NJ Department of Agriculture (NJDA) is a partner in a U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) national initiative to establish a Regional Food Business Center to serve the agricultural industry in 11 Northeast states. The National

Association of State Departments of Agriculture (NASDA) Foundation was awarded \$38.4 million to establish the Center, with the goal of expanding agricultural production and processing, increasing the amount of regionally grown products, creating new products, encouraging the development of food hubs, and strengthening the food supply chain. It will also focus outreach and inclusion to Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) agricultural communities.

<https://www.nj.gov/agriculture/news/press/2023/approved/press230508.html>

New Native Seed Library at WML Promotes Environmental Sustainability

The Westfield Memorial Library (WML) has partnered with the Town of Westfield Green Team to create a Native Seed Library with seeds for library users to take home and plant. A program goal is "to combat the expanding number of invasive plants in the ecosystem and improve the overall health and biodiversity of local habitats by encouraging the growth of native plants."

<https://patch.com/new-jersey/westfield/new-native-seed-library-wml-promotes-environmental-sustainability>

Opinion: New Jersey’s Native Plants Need Stronger Protections

In this opinion piece, Alison Mitchell, Co-Executive Director, NJ Conservation Foundation, points out that there are currently no laws providing protection to rare and threatened or endangered plants in NJ. Several actions that need to be taken to protect them are described, including supporting the bill S2186 "aimed at stopping the spread of invasive species through better regulation, including a ban on the sale of invasive plants. The legislation would also reinstate the New Jersey Invasive Species Council, an advisory group that was eliminated in 2010."

<https://centraljersey.com/2023/05/08/new-jerseys-native-plants-need-stronger-protections/>

RENEWABLE RESOURCES (other than Offshore Wind)

NJBPU Approves Agreement with Rutgers for Dual-Use Solar Pilot Program

The NJ Board of Public Utilities (BPU) has approved an agreement with the Rutgers University Agrivoltaics Program (RAP) to facilitate the development and implementation of a Dual-Use Solar Energy Pilot Program over the next three years. "The Pilot Program is designed to demonstrate and study the compatibility of agricultural or horticultural production with solar photovoltaic infrastructure on the same property. ... The Pilot Program will provide incentives to solar electric generation facilities, located on unpreserved farmland, which plan to maintain the land’s active agricultural or horticultural use. Dual-use solar can provide farmers with an additional stream of revenue, assisting with farm financial viability enabling continued agricultural or horticultural production of land while also increasing the statewide production of clean energy." A straw proposal for the pilot program is planned to be issued during Summer 2023 "followed by a robust public engagement process."

<https://nj.gov/bpu/newsroom/2023/approved/20230501.html>

OFFSHORE WIND

GENERAL

NJ Pitches Faster, Cheaper Way to Bring Power From Offshore Wind Farms

In 2020, NJ became the first state to integrate its offshore wind transmission objectives with the regional grid’s planning and development process through the "State Agreement Approach" (SAA) process. In the SAA process, the regional grid operator PJM Interconnection, LLC (PJM) opened a solicitation window on behalf of the NJ Board of Public Utilities (BPU) for developers to submit potential transmission solutions. The BPU had found that this "transmission-first" approach would lower costs, reduce the chance of delays in offshore wind projects, and minimize community

and environmental impacts. Now, BPU is utilizing the SAA process for a second time, asking PJM to solicit transmission solutions to serve an additional 3,500 megawatts of wind energy. A report on the success of the previous use of the process noted that even greater benefits would have been realized if it had involved more states than just NJ; this time, the BPU staff has been directed to accelerate discussions with other states also developing offshore wind capacity in order to look at regional transmission solutions. <https://www.njspotlightnews.org/2023/04/nj-bpu-develops-regional-offshore-wind-solutions/>

New Jersey Slightly Favors Ditching Offshore Wind Work, Poll Finds

In a recent Fairleigh Dickinson poll (details are available here: <https://www.fdu.edu/news/new-jersey-wants-to-halt-development-of-off-shore-wind-farms/>), when respondents were asked about



offshore wind farm development without including public concerns over marine mammal deaths, 42% of respondents said the development should continue, compared with 33% saying that it should be stopped. However, when the question included a mention of dead marine mammals washing up on NJ beaches (saying "no one is sure why"), 28% said development of offshore wind farms should continue, while 46% said it should be stopped.

https://pressofatlanticcity.com/news/local/new-jersey-slightly-favors-ditching-offshore-wind-work-poll-finds/article_ed730658-f0e7-11ed-9fa2-1f43d4ffaa44.html

Lawmakers Warn BPU Chief Against Any New Subsidies to Offshore Wind

There have been reports that Ørsted, the developer of the Ocean Wind 1 offshore wind project off Atlantic City, has approached Gov. Murphy's office seeking to renegotiate financial terms. An Ørsted spokesperson has stated that the company is in discussions with state

policymakers "to consider options that could most effectively advance and deliver" on clean energy goals, but "challenges such as high inflation, rising interest rates and supply chain constraints are impacting long-term capital projects, including Ocean Wind 1." The NJ Board of Public Utilities president told the NJ Senate Budget Committee that he is not aware of any subsidies being considered for offshore wind developers, but that the developers may be looking to gain fiscal support from the Inflation Reduction Act. <https://www.njspotlightnews.org/2023/05/bpu-cautioned-over-handing-new-subsidies-to-offshore-wind/>

Sweeney Is All in on Offshore Wind Industry

In this 4-minute news video, the NJ offshore wind industry is touted by former NJ Senate President Sweeney, and its benefits - including jobs - are emphasized by a panel at a conference that took place at Rowan University. The panel included offshore wind industry representatives, the NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) commissioner, and the Chief Executive Officer of the NJ Economic Development Authority (EDA). <https://www.njspotlightnews.org/video/sweeney-is-all-in-on-offshore-wind-industry/>

OCEAN WIND 1 PROJECT

Another Permit Keeps Offshore Wind Project on Course

Before Federal permits may be issued for major projects with significant impact, an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is required. The Final EIS for Ørsted's Ocean Wind 1 project (available here: <https://www.boem.gov/renewable-energy/state-activities/ocean-wind-1-final-environmental-impact-statement-feis-commercial>) has been completed by the U.S. Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM). It assesses the reasonably foreseeable impacts on physical, biological, socioeconomic, and cultural resources that could result from the construction and installation, operations and maintenance, and conceptual decommissioning of the project. BOEM will use the Final EIS to decide whether to approve, approve with modifications, or disapprove the Construction and Operations Plan

(COP). The Record of Decision (ROD) is expected to be issued by the BOEM this summer.

<https://www.njspotlightnews.org/2023/05/orsted-completes-final-step-in-environmental-review-for-offshore-wind-farm-off-atlantic-city/>

Offshore Wind Sails Past Regulatory Hurdle

The NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) has approved Ørsted's Ocean Wind 1 permit applications for offshore wind work in and around coastal areas, tidal areas and coastal and freshwater wetlands. The work includes "the installation of electric transmission cables to the B.L. England substation and the Oyster Creek substation, associated infrastructure along the cable routes including manholes, duct banks, and transition joint bays (TJB's), the construction of two onshore substations, and maintenance dredging of Oyster Creek Federal Channel." DEP also issued a Federal Consistency Certification "for the portion of the project in federal waters which includes the construction of up to 98 wind turbine generators ... up to three (3) offshore alternating current substations, array cable installations linking the individual turbines to the offshore substations, and substation interconnector cables linking two of the three substations to each other." This certification confirms DEP's assessment that the wind farm will conform to the Coastal Management Zone Plan for protection of coastal resources. Additional federal, state and local approvals, along with approval from the U.S. Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) are required.

<https://www.njspotlightnews.org/2023/05/offshore-wind-projects-gets-permits-for-construction/>

Offshore Wind Company Sues Ocean City

This 1-1/2-minute news video describes a lawsuit filed by Ørsted, the developer of the Ocean Wind 1 offshore wind project, seeking a court order to enable it to start preliminary engineering work on an acre of land in Ocean City. The company has state approval, but is being held up by an Ocean City appeal of a NJ Board of Public Utilities (BPU) ruling that used an amendment to state law to bypass local review of the proposed transmission line through town. The appeal was made on the basis that this may not be the only or best route, and that other routes were given

little consideration; it is holding up permit issuance for the engineering work.

<https://www.njspotlightnews.org/video/offshore-wind-company-sues-ocean-city/>

ATLANTIC SHORES PROJECT

Atlantic Shores South Reaches Pivotal Milestone in Federal Review Process

The U.S. Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) has issued the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (the link to the DEIS and additional information, including how to comment, are available here:

<https://www.boem.gov/renewable-energy/state-activities/atlantic-shores-south>) for the Atlantic Shores Offshore Wind South project. **The 45-day public comment period ends 7/3/2023, and BOEM has scheduled four public meetings (see p. 6).** The NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) will review the DEIS, which analyzes the project's potential impacts to natural, historic, and cultural resources and associated mitigation measures, and provide comments, which will be made available on the "Atlantic Shores" tab on DEP's website here: <https://dep.nj.gov/offshorewind/projects/>.

OFFSHORE WIND and MARINE MAMMALS

NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) Statement on the "2016-2023 Humpback Whale Unusual Mortality Event": <https://dep.nj.gov/humpback-whale-unusual-mortality-event/>

Why Are Whales Dying? NJ Lawmakers Hear Expert Opinions

This 4-1/2-minute news video covers a hearing held by the NJ Assembly Science, Innovation and Technology Committee at which a panel addressed whale deaths at the NJ shore. The NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) Commissioner LaTourette stated that "The changes to the environment in which these mammals exist is what is causing [the deaths]," adding that increased ship traffic and warmer seas are to blame. "And we are seeing mortality of whales in many instances because of ship

CLIMATE CHANGE

strikes," he said. Driven by warming ocean currents, whales' food fish gather in large schools closer to shore. When the whales follow them, they cross the path of increasing port traffic and big ships. Republican committee members asked for scientific evidence, and also for a moratorium on offshore wind activity for 30, 60, or 120 days to see if there was any impact on the deaths.

<https://www.njspotlightnews.org/video/why-are-whales-dying-nj-lawmakers-hear-expert-opinions/>

NJ GOP Seeks Wind Projects Halt to See if Whales Benefit

At an online hearing, NJ Republican legislators and other opponents of offshore wind called for a 30- to 60-day moratorium on offshore wind projects' site preparation to see if it would have an effect on marine mammal deaths. The two-hour hearing took place a week after NJ Democratic legislators held a similar hearing at which many of NJ's key environmental groups said the greatest danger to whales is climate change, not offshore wind.

<https://news.yahoo.com/nj-gop-seeks-wind-projects-190640369.html>

Sierra Club: Republican Hypocrisy: "Desire" to Follow Science but Falling Flat on Real Whale Protections

At a NJ Senate budget hearing, Republican Senator Tesla accused environmental groups such as the Sierra Club of hypocrisy in supporting offshore wind energy development in light of marine mammal deaths. In return, the Director of the NJ Chapter of the Sierra Club pointed out the lack of evidence tying the deaths to offshore wind, and enumerated actions that could be taken, based on scientific evidence, to mitigate impacts to marine wildlife. These include reducing vessel speeds, mitigating plastic pollution in our oceans, and supporting environmentally responsible offshore wind energy that will address the climate change that is the real stressor of marine wildlife.

<https://www.insidernj.com/press-release/sierra-club-republican-hypocrisy-desire-to-follow-science-but-falling-flat-on-real-whale-protections/>

Hoboken's Lawsuit Against Big Oil to Stay in State Court

Following on its action last month for similar cases in other states, the U.S. Supreme Court has declined to hear the appeal of the oil industry to change the jurisdiction from state court to federal court for a climate change damages-related case brought by Hoboken, NJ. Federal court procedural rules are generally viewed as more favorable to industry. This ruling may also indicate a promising jurisdictional outcome for the recently-filed NJ state lawsuit, for which the jurisdiction issue is currently being considered by federal district court.

<https://www.njspotlightnews.org/2023/05/chevron-bp-exxonmobil-conocophillips-american-petroleum-institute-hoboken-big-oil-u-s-supreme-court-fossil-fuels-climate-change-hoboken-mayor-ravi-bhalla-theodore-boutrous-judge-anthony-v-d/>



18.2 = Sea-Level Rise (In Inches) In Atlantic City Since 1911

Rutgers University has issued its annual "State of the Climate Report" for NJ 2022 (available here: <https://www.njspotlightnews.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/123/2023/05/State-of-the-Climates-2022-042423.pdf.pdf>), which summarizes updated scientific information on climate trends and projections. This year's report included the facts that NJ has experienced more than double the global average of sea level rise (18.2 inches in Atlantic City) since 1911, and about double the global average in temperature rise since 1900. It also includes projections, such as that temperature, sea level, precipitation, and extreme events are all projected to increase due to climate change.

<https://www.njspotlightnews.org/2023/05/sea-level-has-risen-18-2-inches-in-atlantic-city-since-1911/>

NJ in Slow Lane on Road to Electrify Buildings?

This article describes possible roadblocks to electrifying buildings in NJ and some approaches possibly being considered; buildings represent the second-largest source of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in the state.

<https://www.njspotlightnews.org/2023/05/new-jerseys-slow-road-to-electrification-of-buildings-gas-stoves-elections-regulations/>

Opinion: Listen to NJ Businesses on Heat Pump Benefits

In this opinion piece, Jeaneen Zappa, executive director of the Energy Efficiency Alliance of New Jersey and the Keystone Energy Efficiency Alliance trade organizations, addresses the facts and "fiction" related to heat pumps, including the jobs the industry provides and heat pumps' efficiency in heating homes.

<https://www.njspotlightnews.org/2023/05/op-ed-nj-businesses-heat-pump-benefits/>

Opinion: The Perils of Overlooking and Underestimating Methane

In this opinion piece, **EJTF member R. William Potter**, a partner in the Princeton-based law firm Potter and Dickson, points out that "arguably the most damaging greenhouse gas (at least in the short term): methane" is missing from NJ's lawsuit charging the fossil fuel industry with running a campaign of mass deception, falsely denying the catastrophic impacts of greenhouse gas emissions on global warming and climate change by burning petroleum and coal. The ramifications of not including methane are described in detail.

<https://www.njspotlightnews.org/2023/05/op-ed-the-perils-of-overlooking-and-underestimating-methane/>

FOREST HEALTH

DEP Fines Its Own Bureau for Cutting Timber, Disturbing Wetlands

A project undertaken by the NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) Bureau of Land

Management (BLM), with no advance public notice, resulted in clearcutting acres of mature upland forest and destruction of wetlands in order to develop a habitat area for the American woodcock. A public outcry ensued (see <https://www.njspotlightnews.org/2023/03/nj-conservation-groups-irate-over-state-agencys-forest-clearance-work/>), which caused the project to be halted. Now, a DEP compliance bureau has issued notices of violation to the BLM, which include a \$266,000 fine and requirements to mitigate erosion and to submit a restoration plan. <https://www.njspotlightnews.org/2023/05/department-of-environmental-protection-dep-glassboro-wildlife-management-area-266000-barred-owl-red-shouldered-hawk-new-jersey-conservation-foundation-freshwater-wetlands-transition-area-division-of/>.

During a budget hearing, NJ legislators questioned DEP Commissioner LaTourette on what is being done to prevent similar occurrences.

<https://www.njspotlightnews.org/2023/04/nj-lawmakers-push-dep-chief-on-next-steps-after-glassboro-forest-debacle/>

LEAD REDUCTION IN HOUSEHOLDS

Passaic Valley Water Commission Replaces 1,000th Lead Service Line During Drinking Water Week

The Passaic Valley Water Commission (PVWC) celebrated Drinking Water Week by announcing that it has replaced its 1,000th lead service line since last fall. The PVWC's efforts have been funded through the NJ Infrastructure Bank, with 80% of the funding being in the form of principal forgiveness that does not need to be repaid.

<https://www.tapinto.net/towns/paterson/sections/green/articles/passaic-valley-water-commission-replaces-1-000th-lead-service-line-during-drinking-water-week>

ENERGY EFFICIENCY

New Jersey Board of Public Utilities Comfort Partners Energy Efficiency Program Celebrates 125,000th Customer

The New Jersey Board of Public Utilities (BPU) has celebrated the 125,000th home to participate in

the Comfort Partners energy efficiency program, a partnership between BPU and electric and gas utilities that helps income-qualifying families and individuals save energy and money by making homes more energy efficient. According to BPU President Fiordaliso, "New Jersey's housing stock is one of the oldest in the nation and often these homes are located in environmental justice communities."

<https://nj.gov/bpu/newsroom/2023/approved/20230508.html>

POLLUTION

5.5B = Single-Use Plastic Bags Eliminated From NJ Waste Stream, May - December 2022

The first-year report of the NJ Plastics Advisory Council (available here: <https://dep.nj.gov/wp-content/uploads/pac-first-year-report-2023.pdf>) found that:

- the New Jersey Food Council estimates that 5.5 billion single-use plastic bags and 110 million single-use paper bags were eliminated from entering the waste stream and environment between May and December 2022;
- there has been a more than 37% decrease in single-use plastics in each of three categories affected by the law (including single-use plastic bags, foam food containers and straws) found as litter along the Jersey shore; and
- there has been a reduction in the number of plastic straws purchased by convenience stores for distribution to customers, from 17 million to 2 million per month.

<https://www.njspotlightnews.org/2023/05/5-5-billion-single-use-plastic-bags-eliminated-2022/>

EDUCATIONAL and YOUTH-RELATED

Climate Change: Rutgers Helps Teachers to Include It in Curriculum

This 4-1/2-minute news video describes a workshop held by Rutgers for NJ K-12 educators, to help them integrate climate change topics across all disciplines in the curriculum. NJ is the

first state in the U.S. to include climate change in this way in the public school curriculum.

<https://www.njspotlightnews.org/video/climate-change-rutgers-helps-teachers-to-include-it-in-curriculum/>



On Arbor Day, DEP, TCNJ and Sustainable Jersey Launch Trees for Schools Grant Program

In celebration of Arbor Day, the NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), The College of New Jersey (TCNJ) and Sustainable Jersey launched the Trees for Schools grant program. Funded by Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI) auction proceeds, the \$2.5 million Trees for Schools program will provide grants to New Jersey public school districts, county and state colleges, and state universities to fund the planting of trees on their campuses. Forty percent of the grant funding will be set aside for applicants located in overburdened communities, with preference given to schools with the highest impervious surface coverage (i.e. paved surfaces such as paved areas and buildings) and lowest tree coverage. "Planting and caring for trees help our students learn about ecosystems and the valuable role trees play. The Trees for Schools program will foster positive connections between students and the trees in their community with the goal of cultivating a lifelong respect for trees," said Randall Solomon, director of Sustainable Jersey.

https://www.nj.gov/dep/newsrel/2023/23_0026.htm

OTHER



Murphy Administration Advances Liberty State Park Revitalization Program at Open House

The **EJTF** joins other environmental advocates, including the Friends of Liberty State Park (LSP), in applauding the NJ Department of Environmental Protection's (DEP) announcement of revitalization plans for Liberty State Park (LSP). EJTF has been supporting the efforts of The Friends of LSP, *et al.*, to ensure that improvements to this park include addressing the needs of local residents as well as preserving the entire park area for everyone to enjoy. Sam Pesin, President of The Friends of LSP, praised DEP Commissioner LaTourette for "transforming a former freight yard site into spectacular urban nature habitats and miles of paths, and also for his democratic planning process with maximum

public participation for the design of 60 acres of free active recreation and other Central Park-type improvements." The plan includes cleanup of 230+ acres of old industrial contaminated soils within the park, keeping much of it as a restored ecosystem, and also providing public open space for active and passive recreation. Additional details about the plans are available here:

<https://dep.nj.gov/revitalizelsp/>. In partnership with the U.S. Corps of Engineers (COE), the DEP plan will also provide protection from flooding. https://www.nj.gov/dep/newsrel/2023/23_0033.htm

Liberty State Park Facelift Plan Unveiled

This 5-minute news video describes the NJ Department of Environmental Protection's (DEP) plan for Liberty State Park (LSP). The plan includes three phases, with the first phase focusing on cleaning up industrial pollution on 230 acres, starting this fall. That phase will culminate in that area becoming a nature area with walking paths. Two additional phases will provide recreation and sports facilities in other sections of the park. DEP has emphasized that there will be no privatization or commercialization allowed in the park, and local residents and environmentalists alike seem pleased with the plan.

<https://www.njspotlightnews.org/video/liberty-state-park-facelift-plan-unveiled/>

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. 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 NJ 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
