



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



At the 6/10/2023 **NJ Wind Works Rally** in Long Branch, NJ, **co-sponsored by UUFANJ**, a broad coalition of 19 environmental, faith-based, labor, and community organizations and activists including - notably - Greenpeace, the Sierra Club, and GreenFaith, gathered to show public support for offshore wind and clean energy, as well as to advocate for additional policies that will help protect marine life. There were about 300 in attendance, including over a dozen representatives from two of the Jersey Shore Unitarian Universalist (UU) congregations - UU Ocean County Congregation (UUOCC) and UU Congregation of Monmouth County (UUCMC). **EJTF co-chair Peggy Middaugh** (green t-shirt and yellow vest) and **EJTF member Judy Stevens** (yellow UUFANJ t-shirt) can be seen in the photos. The groups expressed the need for NJ to move toward a 100% clean energy future – including offshore wind – to mitigate the impacts of climate change, create good family-sustaining jobs, and improve the overall health of communities. The event included musical guests, speakers, and a march on the boardwalk. (See [article](#) and [news video](#) on p. 11.)

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CONGREGATIONAL ACTIVITIES

Morristown Unitarian Universalist Fellowship (MUUF)



The Green Earth Ministry (GEM) at the Morristown Unitarian Universalist Fellowship (MUUF) has resumed tabling during the Sunday coffee hour. In the photo at left, a member has just received information about the rebates and tax credits available through the federal Inflation Reduction Act. Also included on the table is a board with information about how essential it is to pass the federal Farm Bill as currently written, one reason being to encourage and support a transition into more sustainable farming practices. GEM plans to continue tabling and promoting these issues at least through the summer.

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

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

JULY 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 "Summer Wild Edibles Information Walk" (NJSOC) - 11:00 a.m.
2	3 Comments Due: BOEM Atlantic Shores South DEIS	4	5	6 Comments due: NJBPUR Revenue Review: Nuclear Plant ZECs	7 Comments due: Draft of NJ Transit's First-Ever Sustainability Plan	8 Highlands Green Fair & EV Car Show - 11:00 a.m.
9	10	11	12 Jersey Water Works and Lead-Free NJ -Joint Meeting - 9:00 a.m.	13 National Green Amendment Day Panel - 4:00 p.m. "Ways Houses of Worship are Embracing Solar Power for Energy Needs" - 6:30 p.m.	14	15
16	17	18 Congressional Renewable Energy & Energy Efficiency EXPO/ Policy Forum - 9:30 a.m.	19 NJ Clean Air Council Meeting - 9:30 a.m. Pinelands Commission Climate Committee Meeting - 9:30 a.m.	20 "Scaling up Urban Growth Projections with FUTURES" - 10:00 a.m.	21	22
23	24	25 "Climate Catalysts: Unveiling Power of Regulatory Work" - 7:00 p.m.	26	27	28	29
30	31			SAVE THE DATE UUFANJ 2023 Gala - 9/9/2023		

FUTURE EVENTS

"Summer Wild Edibles Information Walk" Friends of the NJ School of Conservation (NJSOC) Program 7/1/2023, 11:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. Sandyston, NJ - In-person

"Jumpstart a foraging habit for your soups, stews, salads, pestos and fritters! Your program leader, Joanne White, will lead you on a hike to discuss and take photos of whatever is available in woods and meadow-like areas. Although this is not an eating event, lots of follow-up information will be available including an email with photos and descriptions of items covered on the walk. There will be references to dichotomous keys, books, nutrition, safety, ethics, gastronomy, survival and fun science. Joanne is a former science teacher with over 40 years of teaching experience, and decades of enjoying wild edibles. This program is for older teens (age 16 and up) and adults. Registration [\$12.00] is REQUIRED." Additional information and the registration link are available here: <https://friendsofnjsoc.org/event/summer-wild-edibles-information-walk/>.

BOEM Atlantic Shores South DEIS Comments Due 7/3/2023

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.** Additional information is available here: <https://www.boem.gov/renewable-energy/state-activities/atlantic-shores-south>.

NJBPU Revenue Review: Nuclear Plant ZECs Comments due 7/6/2023

In 2019, the NJ Board of Public Utilities (BPU) awarded Zero Emissions Certificates (ZECs) to Salem 1 Nuclear Generating Plant ("Salem 1"), Salem 2 Nuclear Generating Plant ("Salem 2"), and the Hope Creek Nuclear Generating Plant ("Hope Creek"). One implementation requirement is for the BPU to ensure that a selected nuclear plant does not receive double-payment for its fuel diversity, resilience, air quality, or other environmental attributes. The ZEC recipients have submitted financial documents to the BPU, which has reviewed them and has not found any double-

payment and therefore does not recommend any reduction in past payment obligations. Comments may be submitted until 5:00 p.m. on 7/6/2023. Additional information is available here: https://nj.gov/bpu/pdf/publicnotice/Notice_RequestforComment_ZEC_Double_Payment.pdf.

Public Comment Period Open on Draft of NJ Transit's First-Ever Sustainability Plan Comments due 7/7/2023

NJ Transit is in the process of developing its first-ever sustainability plan to "advance sustainable practices, environmental stewardship, and resiliency." The Plan has seven themes: Energy, Air Quality, Mobility & Accessibility, Climate Resilience, Waste, Water, and Community Engagement. Links to the draft plan, videos of the four public webinars that were held, and a form for submitting comments are available here: <https://www.njtransit.com/sustainabilityplan>. Public comment on the plan is being sought by NJ Transit, and **comments may be submitted through 7/7/2023.** <https://www.njtransit.com/press-releases/nj-transit-opens-public-comment-period-draft-first-ever-sustainability-plan>

The Highlands Green Fair & EV Car Show 7/8/2023, 11:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. Lebanon, NJ - In-person

"The Green Teams from Clinton Township, the Town of Clinton, and the Borough of High Bridge are organizing a Green Fair & EV Car Show, which encourages sustainable lifestyle choices for our community, raises awareness regarding environmental issues, demonstrates how consumers can reduce their impact on the earth by selecting sustainable, eco-friendly products and services, and highlights the climate, clean air, and cost savings benefits provided by electric cars." The NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) electric vehicle and anti-idling teams will participate in the event, to showcase the benefits of driving electric, talk about incentives, put idling misconceptions to rest, and answer clean transportation questions. Additional information, including a list of vehicles registered to be shown, and links to register to attend and/or to show your vehicle, are available here: <https://driveelectricweek.org/event?eventid=3666>.

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>.

**National Green Amendment Day
7/13/2023, Online panel at 4:00 p.m.**

National Green Amendment Day will feature the highlighting of videos, made by advocates of the Green Amendment, on the "For the Generations" website, social media platforms, and a page for the press. A prize drawing will take place for those who have completed one or both of the Green Amendment Day activities (i.e., getting a business to sign on in support or submitting a video on why the Green Amendment is important). A Green Amendment Day Live Panel with "an array of experts [telling] how Green Amendments are helping government officials and communities proactively secure essential environmental protections" will be presented online. Additional information and links to register for events are available here: <https://forthegenerations.org/national-green-amendment-day/>

**2023 Congressional Renewable Energy and
Energy Efficiency EXPO and Policy Forum
7/18/2023, 9:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. - Hybrid
Washington, DC - In-person and
Livestreamed**

"The Environmental and Energy Study Institute (EESI) and the Senate Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency (REEE) Caucus invite you to join us for the 26th Annual Congressional Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency EXPO and Policy Forum (EXPO 2023). Presenting before Congress and the public, top-level speakers will showcase technologies and solutions that reduce carbon emissions, save households money, improve the

economy, build resilience, and protect our security interests. Panel topics will include:

- Toward the Energy System of the Future;
- Training the Workforce for the 21st Century Clean Energy Economy;
- Clean Energy and National Security;
- Where It All Begins: Energy Efficiency Essentials;
- Accelerating Sustainable Transportation; and
- Clean Energy Opportunities in Rural Communities."

Additional information and the link to register are available here:

<https://www.eesi.org/briefings/view/expo2023>.

**NJ Clean Air Council Meeting - Hybrid
7/19/2023, 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 via email at George.Berdomas@dep.nj.gov. Additional information is available here:

<https://dep.nj.gov/event/clean-air-council-meting-20230719/>.

**Pinelands Commission Climate Committee
Meeting**

**7/19/2023, 9:30 a.m.
Location is forthcoming**

Additional information on location, agenda, and other details will be available here, on the "Meetings" tab: <https://www.state.nj.us/pinelands/>.

**"Climate Catalysts: Unveiling the Power of
Regulatory Work" - Webinar
7/25/2023, 7:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.**

In this webinar sponsored by the Elders Climate Action Network, "Dani Hupper, Deputy Campaigns Director for Evergreen Action, will share her expertise and firsthand experiences in navigating the complexities of regulatory initiatives, and exploring the potential of regulatory action to catalyze positive change in our fight against climate change." Additional information and the link to register are available here:

https://www.eldersclimateaction.org/event/nc_july23/.

Rutgers Climate Institute Listing of Climate Seminars

Multiple online events are listed on this site. Currently there are limited events listed for July 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/->.

"Ways Houses of Worship are Embracing Solar Power for Energy Needs" – Part 1 7/13/2023, 6:30 p.m. - 8:00 p.m. - Webinar

This webinar, sponsored by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) "is the first in a mini-series on Solar Energy Use & Supporting Vulnerable Communities, as part of the EJ Webinar Series for Houses of Worship and Communities. This webinar will share how Houses of Worship have used historical approaches to develop and use solar energy, create community resiliency hubs, establish viable solar power, and use financial and technical assistance in a creative way. The webinar will provide insight into lessons learned and recommendations for faith leaders and faith-based organizations interested in exploring solar opportunities." Links to additional information and to register are available here: <https://climatesociety.rutgers.edu/events/all-climate-events/icalrepeat.detail/2023/07/13/7849/-/webinar-ways-houses-of-worship-are-embracing-solar-power-for-energy-needs-part-1>.

"Scaling up Urban Growth Projections with FUTURES" - Webinar 7/20/2023, 10:00 a.m.

This webinar, jointly sponsored by the Southeast Conservation Adaptation Strategy and Southeast Climate Adaptation Science Center (SE CASC), will present results from a SE CASC-supported project, "Improving Scenarios of Future Patterns of Urbanization, Climate Adaptation, and Landscape Change in the Southeast," which scaled up the

FUTURES open-source urban growth model developed to address the environmental and ecological impacts of urbanization. The webinar will also present efforts to model climate-aware scenarios for the Southeast U.S., that integrate dynamic flood event modeling and human adaptive response, to forecast patterns of urban growth via population redistribution and adaptation. Additional information and the link to register are available here: <https://tinyurl.com/4uy6np9j>.



UUFANJ 2023 Gala 9/9/2023, 12:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m. Princeton, NJ - In-person

The 2023 UU FaithAction NJ (UUFANJ) Annual Gala will be Saturday, September 9th, from 12:00 noon to 3:00 pm. The Gala luncheon will be hosted at the beautiful Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Princeton. Additional information about the UUFANJ 2023 Gala is available here: <https://www.uufaithaction.org/event/gala/>.

VIDEOS OF PAST EVENTS

"Harmful Algal Blooms (HABs): What They Are And What To Do About Them" **- Video of Webinar**

As part of the Rutgers "Earth Day Every Day" webinar series, Heather Nix with Clemson Cooperative Extension covered the basics of Harmful Algal Blooms (HABs), with a main focus on cyanobacteria including identification, contributing factors, prevention, and treatment options. The video is available here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LJ41jjbjOgg>.

"Maximizing the Climate Benefits of Hydrogen" - Video of Webinar

The Environmental and Energy Study Institute (EESI) and the Environmental Defense Fund (EDF) presented 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 described the current state of research on hydrogen, including new technologies to detect hydrogen leaks, and discussed the most efficient and effective use cases for hydrogen power, such as powering industrial applications and heavy-duty transport." The video is available here:

<https://www.eesi.org/briefings/view/060123hydrogen>.

"Can Nuclear Energy Help Meet U.S. Climate Goals?" - Video of Webinar

In this webinar, "three leading nuclear experts" came together to discuss "the future of nuclear power: the dangers, costs, alternatives, and much more." The panelists were: the Hon. Gregory Jaczko, former Chair of the U.S. Nuclear

Regulatory Commission; Dr. Mark Z. Jacobson, Stanford University Professor of Civil and Environmental Engineering, Director of Stanford's Atmosphere/Energy Program, and author of "No Miracles Needed: How Today's Technology Can Save Our Climate and Clean Our Air"; and Dr. M. V. Ramana, Professor and Simons Chair in Disarmament, Global and Human Security at the University of British Columbia. The video is available here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZB8FUaZzYYM>.

"The Future of Forestry in the Farm Bill" **- Video of Webinar**

"The Environmental and Energy Study Institute (EESI) and U.S. Nature4Climate presented this webinar "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." Panelists explained forestry-related programs in the Farm Bill and covered essential forestry topics, including wildfire management, innovative wood products, carbon markets, and urban forestry. The video is available here:

<https://www.eesi.org/briefings/view/060723farmbill>.

NJDEP Middlesex County EJ Community Engagement Session - Video of session

The NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) invited Middlesex County residents to attend an EJ Community Engagement Session regarding Environmental Justice. This community engagement session provided 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 was one of a series being conducted by DEP in communities across NJ. A video recording of the session is available here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VoR64z9t0HU>.

"Wind Project Updates – Ørsted & Atlantic Shores" - Video of Webinar

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, provided updates on these two offshore wind projects. Look for the video to be posted on the ANJEC YouTube Channel here: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCCEuWtY-juaDStB-22S5SpQ/videos>. Note: additional webinars in the ANJEC 2023 Climate Mini-Series are also available on their YouTube Channel, including "Climate Change Impacts on NJ: Ocean Acidification & Sea Level Rise" and "Offshore Research & Monitoring: What we know and what we're learning."

"Conservation Practices from Farms to Forests and Wetlands - Farm Bill in Focus" - Video of Webinar

The Environmental and Energy Study Institute (EESI) presented this webinar 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 described conservation opportunities, barriers to access the programs, and ways to advance conservation through research, technical assistance, and financial support. The video is available : <https://www.eesi.org/briefings/view/062123farmbill>.

How Can We Understand the Vulnerabilities Communities Face to Climate Change-related Disasters and Equitably Build Resilience Within Those Communities? - Video of Webinar

This webinar, part of the "Perspectives on the Climate Change Challenge" seminar series at Cornell University, was presented by Rebecca Morgenstern Brenner, MPA, a Senior Lecturer in the Jeb E. Brooks School of Public Policy at Cornell University whose research and practice include managed retreat and equity, environmental justice, bridging policy with science, climate change education, and building disaster resilience with vulnerable communities. The webinar addressed the following questions: "How can we understand the vulnerabilities communities face to more frequent and more intense disasters and build resilience within those communities? This session will look at how to understand what is vulnerability, risk, and exposure communities face and how we can expand adaptive capacity and build resilience? How do we develop equitable policies in a changing global climate?" The video is available here: <https://www.atkinson.cornell.edu/media/how-can-we-understand-the-vulnerabilities-communities-face-to-climate-change-related-disasters-and-equitably-build-resilience-within-those-communities/>.

"The Transition to Renewable Energy: Truths and Consequences" - Video of Webinar

In this webinar, sponsored by the Citizens' Climate Lobby (CCL), Dr. Adam Simon, Professor of Energy and Mineral Resources at the University of Michigan, addressed this issue: "The transition away from fossil fuels and toward clean energy will require massive amounts of metals that go into the production of electric vehicles, batteries, induction stoves, wind turbines and solar panels. Do enough of these metals exist to get the job done? Where can they be found and can they be extracted in a sustainable manner that doesn't lay waste to our environment?" Dr. Simon's work focuses on the global flow of energy and mineral resources with an emphasis on the geologic availability of critical energy metals. The video is available here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MFdIu2EIdeE>.

UUJEC "The Making of a Climate Action Warrior" - Video of Webinar

In this webinar sponsored by the Unitarian Universalists for a Just Economic Community (UUJEC), Miriam Kashia shared her experiences

as a climate activist and some adventures and lessons learned along the way. She shared her mottos: "Action is the antidote to despair," and "Everything we do matters" and how they have guided her life as an activist. The video is available here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O4sSwKNudR4>.

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 5/27/2023 – 6/26/2023]

ELECTRIC VEHICLES & VEHICLE EMISSION REDUCTION

Electric School Bus Program Starts to Roll

This 4-minute news video covers, environmental advocates, educators, and local and state legislators who gathered at a school in East Brunswick to tout the pilot program to help replace diesel school buses with electric school buses in NJ, and to support the program's funding in the NJ FY2024 budget. The 3-year pilot program, signed into law last year, stipulates that at least half of the school districts or school bus contractors, and at least half of the grant funding awarded each year, shall be located in a "low-income, urban, or environmental justice community."

<https://www.njspotlightnews.org/video/electric-school-bus-program-starts-to-roll/>

NJ Senate Pushes 'On' Button for Electric Vehicle Battery Recycling

A bill (S3723) that has passed the NJ Senate would put NJ in the forefront among U.S. states in the area of recycling electric vehicle batteries. The bill has been voted out of committee in the NJ Assembly, with amendments requiring that producers of batteries for electric or hybrid road vehicles develop "battery management plans" to be approved by the NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP).

<https://enviropolitics.com/nj-senate-pushes-on-button-for-electric-vehicle-battery-recycling/>

Murphy Wants NJ Transit to Switch to Electric Buses. But There's a Speed Bump Ahead

The recurring issue of the lack of a dedicated revenue stream for NJ Transit (which has resulted in raids to the Clean Energy Fund to fund NJ

Transit) is impacting the entity's ability to make infrastructure upgrades needed to aging garages (some of which were originally built as donkey trolley barns) so they can store and charge batteries for zero-emission buses.

<https://www.northjersey.com/story/news/environment/2023/05/24/nj-transit-electric-buses-pilot-funding-issue/70249351007/>

FOSSIL FUEL INFRASTRUCTURE

New Jersey LCV Applauds FERC Action Regarding NESE Pipeline

On 4/27/2023 the Transcontinental Gas Pipe Line Company, LLC (Transco) requested that the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) grant it another two-year extension, until 5/3/2025, for constructing and placing into service the Northeast Supply Enhancement Project (NESE). [Note: UUFANJ had previously provided comments to the NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) stating that "The DEP must not permit this project for two reasons: First, the project is not needed and, second, the project doesn't serve any health purpose, rather it creates challenges to the health of New Jersey residents."] On 6/6/2023, FERC sent a letter to Transco requesting the additional information shown in the box below.

1. Update Table 1.5-1 "Major Environmental Permits, Licenses, Approvals, and Consultations for the Northeast Supply Enhancement Project" from the final environmental impact statement for the Northeast Enhancement Supply Enhancement (NESE) Project. Note whether each permit is pending, granted, or denied, and for any granted permit whether the permit expires, and if so, the expiration date.
 - a. Detail the work that Transco has done in the past two years to obtain all outstanding permits for its NESE Project.
 - b. Have any of Transco's permits for the project expired? If so, have applications for those permits been refiled or when does Transco anticipate refileing?
 - c. How is Transco maintaining its granted permits for the project?
 2. In its April 27, 2023 Request for Extension of Time, Transco stated that "Transco continues to review the scope of work under NESE to not only meet National Grid's firm transportation capacity needs but also to address water quality concerns raised by New York and New Jersey in their respective denials of water quality certification for the project under Section 401 of the Clean Water Act (CWA)." Detail any engagement between Transco and the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) and the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) regarding the denials of the water quality certificates. Include all letters, emails, and other correspondence between Transco and NYSDEC and NJDEP.

The NJ League of Conservation Voters (NJLCV) applauds this action; their comments, as well as the text of the FERC letter, is available here: <https://www.njlc.org/news/new-jersey-lcv-applauds-ferc-action-regarding-nese-pipeline>.

Opponents of Second Power Plant in Woodbridge Say Proposal Is 'Environmental Injustice'

Environmental advocates held a march and rally in Keasbey, NJ to protest the Competitive Power Ventures (CPV) proposal to build a 657-megawatt power plant next to its existing one, which would produce more than 2.3 million tons of carbon dioxide per year. Speakers called the area "ground zero" for air pollution's impacts in Middlesex County, and called the power plant proposal an "environmental injustice" due to impacts it would have on worsening the air quality in an overburdened community. <https://www.mycentraljersey.com/story/news/local/middlesex-county/2023/06/06/woodbridge-power-plant-keasbey/70289673007/>

Protestors Rally against Proposed PVSC Plant in Newark's Ironbound

As part of the Food & Water Watch "Our Planet, Our Future" week of actions calling on Gov. Murphy to stop seven proposed NJ dirty energy projects, environmental activists and climate leaders held a march and rally in Newark, NJ that focused on two new gas power plants that are proposed to be built in the region's most pollution-overburdened communities. They include one proposed by PVSC in the Ironbound neighborhood - the fourth power plant in that community - and another proposed by NJ Transit in the Kearny Meadowlands to provide backup for trains. See <https://www.msn.com/en-us/news/us/protestors-rally-against-proposed-pvsc-plant-in-newark-s-ironbound/ar-AA1cazIq>. Politico reports that a coalition of the Ironbound Community Corporation (ICC), New Jersey Environmental Justice Alliance (NJEJA), and Earthjustice sent a letter to Gov. Murphy 6/15/2023 (available here: <https://subscriber.politicopro.com/f/?id=00000188-d9a4-d93b-a19c-ddf488da0000>) that presents the argument that building a fourth gas-fired power plant in the Ironbound section of Newark would be in violation of federal civil rights law.

LAND MANAGEMENT/ AGRICULTURE/FOOD

Trees Change Camden, Other Urban Cities in New Jersey

This article describes work The New Jersey Conservation Foundation is performing with the more than \$1.3 million in state grant funding it received to plant trees and cultivate green spaces in overburdened communities, in partnership with the NJ Tree Foundation and others, and describes the many benefits of trees in urban communities.

<https://srhub.org/2023/05/30/trees-change-camden-other-urban-cities-in-new-jersey/>



CROPS Grows With New Store, Grant From CRDA

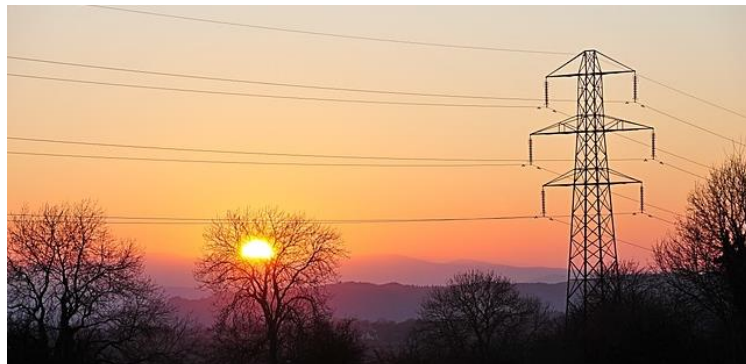
This article describes the nonprofit organization "Communities Revolutionizing Open Public Spaces" organization (CROPS - the website is here: <https://www.cropsnj.org>) that is "working in Southern New Jersey to build local community bonds, support economic growth in the area, promote educational opportunities, end food injustice and beautify unused public spaces." A main function of CROPS is operating three local farmers markets, three community gardens, and now a store in Atlantic City, which is a designated NJ "Food Desert Community," with the second-highest food desert factor score in NJ (after Camden). The store, in addition to providing locally-sourced fresh food and products, is installing a hydroponic system to grow vegetables. CROPS has also just received a grant of more than \$300,000 from the Casino Reinvestment Development Authority (CRDA). <https://srhub.org/2023/06/02/crops-grows-with-new-store-grant-from-crda/>

RENEWABLE RESOURCES (other than Offshore Wind)

Can Aging Grid Handle New Green Power?

This article describes the needs, costs, and concerns related to NJ's electric grid and the amount of power expected to be generated by new solar and offshore wind energy sources. At a Senate Environment and Energy Committee hearing held "to hear testimony from invited speakers on steps that the State can take to modernize the electrical grid and prepare for the interconnection of more renewable energy resources" cost allocation was identified by several speakers as one of the most challenging problems.

<https://www.njspotlightnews.org/2023/06/can-aging-grid-handle-new-green-power/>



Short Hills Reservoir Has Nation's Largest Floating Solar Array

This 4-minute news video shows the ribbon-cutting ceremony for "North America's largest floating solar array" on the Canoe Brook Reservoir Number One in Short Hills, NJ. The array, with 16,000 solar panels, provides 95% of the energy needed for NJ American Water's nearby water treatment plant, and will offset over 8,000 metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions compared to traditional power sources. See <https://www.njspotlightnews.org/video/short-hills-reservoir-has-nations-largest-floating-solar-array/>. Additional information is available here: <https://enviropolitics.com/large-floating-solar-array-over-nj-reservoir-powers-treatment-plant/>.

GREEN AMENDMENT

Green Amendment-related Youth Lawsuits

Montana: MT is one of three states (along with PA and NY) to have included Green Amendment language in the state constitution's Bill of Rights. Sixteen MT young people filed a constitutional climate lawsuit against the state; it has become the first constitutional lawsuit climate trial in the U.S. The young people assert that, by supporting a fossil fuel-driven energy system, which is contributing to the climate crisis, MT is violating their constitutional rights, including the right to a clean and healthful environment; to seek safety, health, and happiness; and to individual dignity and equal protection of the law. The trial ended on 6/20/2023, and a ruling from the judge is being awaited. Additional information is available here:

<https://tinyurl.com/2p8ntkxc>.

Hawai'i: Although not in the HI state constitution's Bill of Rights and therefore not officially considered a Green Amendment (although one is in the works), the HI constitution does contain language that "[e]ach person has the right to a clean and healthful environment." Fourteen HI young people filed a constitutional climate lawsuit against the HI Department of Transportation (HDOT) - the world's first such case directed at stopping climate pollution from transportation systems. The trial is scheduled to begin 9/26/2023.

Additional information is available here: <https://earthjustice.org/press/2023/judge-rules-in-favor-of-hawaii-youth-plaintiffs-in-climate-case-navahine-f-v-hawaii-department-of-transportation-case-will-proceed-to-trial>.

Note: In **New Jersey**, students have formed the NJ Student Sustainability Coalition, a youth-run network of over 500 college, high school, and younger students that pushes forward sustainability initiatives in the state. They have a Team that promotes the Green Amendment in NJ by engaging in lobbying, outreach, social media, and mainstream media. Additional information is available here:

<https://www.njstudentsustainability.com/project-1>.

OFFSHORE WIND

GENERAL

Environmental Groups Gathered in Long Branch to Show Their Overwhelming Support For Responsible Offshore Wind Development and Marine Mammal Protection

A coalition of environmental advocates, elected leaders, faith based activists, and other supporters gathered in Long Branch, NJ for the NJ Wind Works Rally, **co-sponsored by UUFANJ**, to show their overwhelming support for responsibly developed offshore wind (see [p. 1](#) and the article below). All of the groups expressed the need for NJ to move toward a 100% clean energy future – including offshore wind – to mitigate the impacts of climate change, create good family-sustaining jobs, and improve the overall health of communities. The speakers lineup included NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) Commissioner LaTourette, NJ Senator Zwicker, former NJ Senate President Sweeney, NJ Assemblyman DeAnjelo, Atlantic County Commissioner Fitzpatrick, Danielle Holland from Greenpeace, Phil Radford from the Sierra Club, and Reverend Ronald Tuff from **EJTF's partner organization**, GreenFaith.

<https://www.insidernj.com/press-release/environmental-groups-gathered-in-long-branch-to-show-their-overwhelming-support-for-responsible-offshore-wind-development-and-marine-mammal-protection/>

Fight over Incentives Threatens Progress of NJ Wind Industry

This 4-minute news video covers the NJ Wind Works Rally **co-sponsored by UUFANJ** that took place in Long Branch, NJ on 6/10/2023 (see [p. 1](#) and the article above). A major focus of the rally was to urge the offshore wind companies to speed up development so that the negative climate change-caused impacts on the marine environment, as well as on the whole planet, can begin to be ameliorated. The video also delves into some reasons given by offshore wind companies for delays, and a plea from the

president of the NJ Board of Public Utilities (BPU) for them to speed up development (additional information, including issues surfacing with offshore wind developments in other states, is available here:

<https://www.njspotlightnews.org/2023/06/bpu-board-of-public-utilities-joseph-fiordaliso-warning-orsted-new-jersey-eastern-seaboard-offshore-wind-farm-pjm-interconnection-office-of-rate-counsel-sweeney-center-for-public-policy-at-rowan-univ/>). The news video is available here:

<https://www.njspotlightnews.org/video/fight-over-incentives-threatens-progress-of-nj-wind-industry/> and a video of the livestream of the speakers at the rally is available here:

<https://www.facebook.com/NJSierraClub/videos/649541373367834>.



Fed Tax-Credit Clash Could Stall NJ's Offshore Wind Sector, Report Suggests

Ørsted, the developer of NJ's first offshore wind project, and EEW American Offshore Structures, the manufacturer of the monopiles that serve as foundations for wind turbines, want to use federal tax credits to cushion unanticipated increases in project costs, as is being done in other states. The companies blame the COVID-19 pandemic for increasing material, labor and borrowing costs beyond their original projections. A report, "Benchmarking New Jersey's Offshore Wind Initiatives" (available here: https://chss.rowan.edu/centers/sweeney_center/docs/sweeney-center-report-benchmarking-nj-on-offshore-wind-060523.pdf), issued by the Sweeney Center at Rowan University, explores the state of offshore wind in NJ, including how competitive it is compared with other states. The report finds that delays in the monopile manufacturing facility in Paulsboro, and the fact that NJ is the only state that currently does not allow full use of federal tax credits for offshore wind developers, may be

negatively impacting NJ's bid to become the leader in offshore wind in the Northeast.

<https://www.njspotlightnews.org/2023/06/orsted-ocean-wind-i-atlantic-shores-paulsboro-steve-sweeney-federal-tax-credits-board-of-public-utilities-president-joseph-fiordaliso-senate-budget-committee-sweeney-center-for-public-policy-rowan-univ/>

Congressional Watchdog Agency to Probe Offshore Wind Impacts

Following a request by several U.S. Republican Representatives, including Chris Smith and Jeff Van Drew of NJ, the independent watchdog agency of Congress - the U.S. General Accounting Office (GAO) - has agreed to "review matters relating to the potential impacts of offshore wind energy development" in the northern Atlantic area between Maine and NJ. It said the review would include impacts on "infrastructure and vessel traffic."

<https://abcnews.go.com/US/wireStory/congressional-watchdog-agency-probe-offshore-wind-impacts-100125363>

OCEAN WIND 1 PROJECT

Save LBI: NJDEP and Ørsted Sued Over State Approval of Federal Wind Turbine Leases off Atlantic City, Ocean City; Decision Ignores Evidence That Turbines Will Cause Major Environmental Damage to Coastal Zone, Court Papers Say

The groups "Save LBI," "Defend Brigantine Beach," and "Protect Our Coast NJ" have filed suit in NJ Superior Court against the NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) and Ørsted's U.S. subsidiary Ocean Wind LLC, challenging DEP's approval of the Ocean Wind 1 project. The lawsuit states that DEP ignored evidence that the wind turbines will be fully visible from the beaches and will crush and destroy the seabed. The groups have stated that this is the first in a series of lawsuits, both state and federal, that they plan to file. Under court rules, DEP now has 30 days to file with the appellate court.

<https://www.insidernj.com/press-release/savelbi-njdep-and-orsted-sued-over-state-approval-of-federal-wind-turbine-leases-off-atlantic-city-ocean-city-decision-ignores-evidence-that-turbines-will-cause-major-environmental-damage-to-coasta/>

New RPA Report Offers Recommendations for Community-Focused Approach to Offshore Wind Transmission Development

As NJ and NY are looking to connect seven projects to the electrical grid through coastal neighborhoods by 2030, a report from Regional Plan Association (RPA) and Karp Strategies, "Making Offshore Wind Transmission Work for Communities" (available here: <https://rpa.org/work/reports/offshore-wind-transmission>), analyzes the potential impact the transmission aspect could have on communities, and what is needed to facilitate the process, since local approvals are needed for cable landings and transmission pathways. A case study (South Fork Wind in East Hampton, NY) provides insights into how to make the process work, and includes a video of the completed onshore cable route on local town roads, illustrating a success story. <https://rpa.org/latest/news-release/new-rpa-report-offers-recommendations-for-community-focused-approach-to-offshore-wind-transmission>

ATLANTIC SHORES PROJECT

BOEM's Atlantic Shores Public Sessions Dilute but Don't Deter Criticisms

The U.S. Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) held the first of four public sessions on its draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS). According to the BOEM, "the goal of these meetings is to help attendees provide written comments for the record." Rather than a formal public hearing, the BOEM held the meeting in the style of an informal information session, so local groups opposing the wind projects found that it was not the platform they expected for voicing their opposition. <https://enviropolitics.com/boems-atlantic-shores-public-sessions-dilute-but-dont-deter-criticisms/>

OFFSHORE WIND and MARINE MAMMALS

\$82M = Funding for NOAA to Help Whale Protection Efforts

In April, NJ Democratic U.S. Representatives sent a letter to the White House Counsel on

Environmental Quality requesting information on what the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) is doing to address marine mammal deaths. NOAA has just announced \$82 million to help conserve the critically endangered North Atlantic right whale. As described on the NOAA website, the funds will be used to "provide direct support for the application of newer technologies, such as passive acoustic monitoring [of the whales]. We will invest in the development and, ultimately, implementation of new technologies to enable vessels to detect and avoid right whales and other large whales. This will reduce one of the primary threats to this species. We will continue developing and evaluating new technologies, such as satellite observations, to transform North Atlantic right whale monitoring and to improve understanding of the whales' distribution and habitat use." According to NOAA, 77% of whale deaths and injuries are caused by vessel strikes and entanglements.

<https://www.njspotlightnews.org/2023/06/82m-federal-money-to-noaa-whale-conservation-protection/>

Q&A: FDU Pollster on Shifting Attitudes Toward Offshore Wind

A recent Fairleigh Dickinson University (FDU) poll found that people in NJ responded differently when polled on the favorability of offshore wind, depending on whether or not the question they were asked mentioned that offshore wind has been linked, without any evidence, to the deaths of dolphins and whales off the NJ Shore. The conclusion drawn was that people are persuadable on the issue, particularly Democrats who are environmentally conscious (a preponderance of Republicans have already decided they are against offshore wind), and if offshore wind is to gain their support, additional attempts are needed to persuade them. <https://www.njspotlightnews.org/2023/05/nj-pollster-on-offshore-wind-development-whale-deaths/>

NJ Commissioner on Offshore Wind & Dead Whales

At the 13:00 minute to 16:30 minute of this NJ Spotlight News "Chat Box" video interview, NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) Commissioner LaTourette discusses the

controversy between offshore wind and marine mammal deaths, reiterating the DEP's position that there is no scientifically-supported link between the offshore wind-related survey vessels and the increased marine mammal deaths which have been occurring since 2016, calling the attempt to link them as "a work of sophistry and panic."

<https://www.njspotlightnews.org/2023/06/what-the-commissioner-says-about-liberty-state-park-chat-box/>

CLIMATE CHANGE

The Laws That Took Down Mobsters Are Now Being Turned Against Big Oil

Three years ago, Hoboken, NJ filed a lawsuit against ExxonMobil, Shell, Conoco, Chevron, Phillips66, and the American Petroleum Institute, for the companies' misleading the public about harmful climate-related impacts they knew would be caused by burning fossil fuels. The oil companies had tried to get the case transferred from state court to federal court, which was seen as more favorable to them. The U.S. Supreme Court just declined to hear their appeal, so the case will remain in state court. NJ has a Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations Act, known as RICO, and Hoboken has just amended the initial complaint, to become the first in the U.S. to charge oil companies with violating a state's racketeering laws by coordinating to spread climate disinformation. A RICO case brings more risk to the companies, both from a financial perspective, since NJ can triple the damages awarded to plaintiffs under RICO judgments, and also from the reputational damage that would come with public exposure of the companies' coordinated attempts to defraud the public.

<https://www.njspotlightnews.org/2023/06/hoboken-other-cities-now-use-laws-that-took-down-mobster-against-big-oil/>

NJ Uses Climate Projections to Set New Restrictions on Development

Originally proposed to be issued on an "emergency" basis a year ago (due to the "imminent peril" from climate change exacerbated by the fact that NJ's official flood zones and rainfall projections hadn't been

updated to reflect current reality), and then delayed after pushback from the business community, NJ finally issued the Inland Flood Protection Rule (Gov. Murphy's press release is available here:

<https://www.state.nj.us/governor/news/news/562023/approved/20230606c.shtml>). The rule puts NJ in the forefront of states, by utilizing projections of precipitation and flooding - in some cases as far ahead as 2100 - and by using the rule for all development, not just that planned by the state. The rule will not apply to projects that are administratively complete at the time the rule is adopted, which was requested by the business community but criticized by environmental advocates. See

<https://www.njspotlightnews.org/2023/06/nj-development-climate-projections-restrictions-flood-levels-new-rule/>. A 4-minute news video describing the new rule and its impact on flood plains, almost doubling the size of some of them, is available here:

<https://www.njspotlightnews.org/video/new-nj-requirements-will-almost-double-size-of-some-flood-plains/>.



Legislators, Environmental Advocates Call for Passage of an Historic New Jersey 100% Clean Energy Bill

Environmental advocates held a press conference at the NJ Statehouse on 6/8/2023, to call on the Legislature to transition NJ to an equitable clean energy future by implementing provisions including: 1) removing trash incineration from the renewable portfolio standard to ensure that industries that pollute low-income communities of color cannot benefit from new clean electricity requirements; and 2) increasing the amount of clean energy that is required to be produced within NJ, which will lead to the creation of

thousands of new jobs. They are pushing for codifying Gov. Murphy's clean energy goals into law this year to ensure that successive administrations can't roll back the state's "100% clean electricity by 2035" standard. However, according to a Politico news article (see article below), prior to this press conference Sen. Bob Smith, the primary sponsor of a bill (S2978) that would codify clean energy goals, has stated that it won't be considered until after the next election, partly because of the provisions desired by the environmental advocates.

<https://www.insidernj.com/press-release/legislators-environmental-advocates-call-for-passage-of-an-historic-new-jersey-100-clean-energy-bill/>

New Jersey Clean Energy Bill on Hold

Politico has reported that Sen. Bob Smith, the primary sponsor of a bill (S2978) that would codify goals that would put NJ to obtain all of its electricity from clean energy by 2035, has stated that the bill won't be considered until after the next election. Smith cited obstacles from organized labor, based on worries that jobs will be lost due to NJ buying power from out-of-state, and from environmentalists, who oppose the bill because it includes trash incineration (see article above).

<https://www.politico.com/newsletters/weekly-new-york-new-jersey-energy/2023/06/05/new-jersey-clean-energy-bill-on-hold-00100125>

As Floodwaters Receded, Poisonous Mold Flourished in NJ Homes

Climate change is exacerbating the occurrence of mold infestations: "As pollution traps heat, storms are growing more ferocious and the intensity of rainfall is increasing, fostering more mold. For those living near shores and estuaries, coastal flooding is occurring more frequently as seas rise." This article describes the devastation mold caused in the aftermath of Hurricane Ida.

<https://www.njspotlightnews.org/2023/06/victims-of-hurricane-ida-in-nj-face-big-bills-to-ameliorate-mold-outbreaks/>

Climate Change Is Increasing Wildfire Risk in NJ, New Report Says

A report, "Burning Hot: 50 Years of Fire Weather Across the United States" (available here: <https://www.climatecentral.org/climate-matters/fire-weather-2023>), by the nonprofit Climate Central, has shown that North NJ has added ten "fire weather days" and South NJ has added four such days since 1973. NJ Forest Fire Service officials have found that, due to climate change, the peak fire season that used to be confined to about a 2-to-3 month period now extends into a 4-to-5 month period. See

<https://www.njspotlightnews.org/2023/05/climate-change-is-increasing-wildfire-risk-in-nj-new-report-says/>. A 4-1/2-minute news video describing impacts on NJ of the increase in fire-risk days is available here:

<https://www.njspotlightnews.org/video/climate-change-blamed-for-more-fire-risk-days-in-nj/>.

New Resiliency Park to Fight Flooding in Hoboken

This 4-minute news video describes Hoboken's new "ResilienCity Park," built using funds from the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) program. The park is designed to mitigate flooding from torrential downpours such as occurred during Superstorm Sandy that turned the city into a giant bathtub filled with water. One of the features is an underground tank designed to store a million gallons of stormwater, which is then pumped to a treatment plant before being discharged into the Hudson River. Above-ground areas including a basketball court and ice skating rink have also been designed to hold stormwater.

<https://www.njspotlightnews.org/video/new-resiliency-park-to-fight-flooding-in-hoboken/>

FOREST HEALTH

\$10,000 Awarded for Duke Island Park Reforestation Project

As part of its 2023 Environmental Grant Program, NJ American Water awarded \$10,000 to the Somerset County Park Commission for a reforestation project within Duke Island Park that will help stabilize the riparian buffer along the lower Raritan River, replacing trees lost to Hurricane Ida and the Emerald AshBorer. In all, over \$40,000 was awarded to five different organizations and community groups, which are listed in this article.

<https://patch.com/new-jersey/bridgewater/10-000-awarded-duke-island-park-reforestation-project>

LEAD REDUCTION IN HOUSEHOLDS

Getting the Lead Out: Jersey City MUA to Begin Replacing 16,000 Pipes in August

The Jersey City Municipal Utilities Authority (MUA) is planning an 8/2023 start date for the replacement of lead service lines as required by NJ law to be completed by 2031. The MUA will begin with service lines in underserved areas, and the lines will be replaced at no cost to homeowners.

<https://www.nj.com/hudson/2023/06/getting-the-lead-out-jersey-city-mua-to-begin-replacing-16000-pipes-in-august.html>

DRINKING WATER-RELATED ISSUES (other than lead)

Could Water Utilities Leave Customers With Bill for Eliminating 'Forever Chemicals'?

A bill (S3184/A4791), approved by committees in both Houses, "creates a regulatory mechanism that enables water and wastewater utilities (utilities) to recover the costs of investment in certain non-revenue producing utility system components that enhance water and wastewater system resiliency, environmental compliance,

safety, and public health." Aimed at the increased costs utilities must incur to comply with new federal standards for "forever chemicals," (PFAS) utility companies say the bill will enable them to install the required technology more quickly. However, the NJ Division of Rate Counsel director has expressed concern that it would leave ratepayers exposed to significant increases.

<https://www.njspotlightnews.org/2023/06/nj-bill-to-speed-up-recovery-for-water-utilities-could-cost-customers/>



3M Reaches \$10.3 Billion Settlement over Contamination of Water Systems with 'Forever Chemicals'

Chemical manufacturer 3M Co. has reached a settlement under which it will pay at least \$10.3 billion to settle lawsuits over contamination of many U.S. public drinking water systems with PFAS "forever chemicals" used in firefighting foam and consumer products. Several NJ towns are among the approximately 300 communities nationwide that have filed lawsuits against 3M for their selling of the products. The funds would be used to compensate water providers for pollution with per- and polyfluorinated substances, known collectively as PFAS - a broad class of chemicals used in firefighting foam and in nonstick, water- and grease-resistant products such as clothing and cookware. The settlement, which would require approval by 3M's board, would cover only municipal providers of drinking water to consumers; not the PFAS-related lawsuits that have filed by individuals with personal injury and property damage claims, or those filed by U.S. states, including NJ, over damages to natural resources such as rivers and lakes.

<https://newjersey.news12.com/3m-reaches-103-billion-settlement-contamination-water-systems-forever-chemicals>

ENERGY EFFICIENCY

State Lays Out Road Map for 'Decarbonizing' Homes and Buildings

The NJ Board of Public Utilities (BPU) has issued three straw proposals for the second three-year cycle ("Triennium 2") of energy efficiency programs implemented under the NJ Clean Energy Act of 2018. These include a straw proposal for a framework for implementation, one for building decarbonization start-up programs, and one for a demand response program. Two virtual public information/comment sessions were held (links to those sessions, as well as to the straw proposals, are available here, under "Stakeholder notice regarding Energy Efficiency Triennium 2 Straw Proposals":

<https://www.nj.gov/bpu/newsroom/public/>). The building sector is NJ's second largest carbon emissions contributor, and the BPU views these straw proposals as first steps toward large-scale transformation of the sector.

<https://www.njspotlightnews.org/2023/06/nj-bpu-clean-energy-homes-electric-fossil-fuels-decarbonizing-homes-buildings-draft-proposal/>

What Happened When PSE&G Customers Went Big-Time for Energy Efficiency Programs?

According to a PSE&G press release, "[i]n its first 30 months since implementation close to 1.7 million customers have received services from PSE&G's award winning energy efficiency programs, including approximately 300,000 customers who took action to save energy through these programs. Through their participation in these programs, customers are expected to save approximately \$300 million on their utility bills annually." In addition, the programs have resulted in PSE&G's hiring of 2,200 people, including many from environmental justice communities, for jobs in the green economy.

<https://www.njspotlightnews.org/2023/06/nj-customers-show-big-enthusiasm-for-pseg-energy-efficiency-programs/>

EDUCATIONAL and YOUTH-RELATED

New Jersey Is Teaching Kids About Climate. Opponents Call It 'Indoctrination.'

At a NJ Department of Education public hearing, members of the public were given the opportunity to comment on the "Draft Revisions to New Jersey Learning Standards in Mathematics and English Language Arts." These standards include climate change, as NJ is the first state in the U.S. to include climate change in its learning standards in all grades K-12, and across seven subject areas. At the meeting, organized right-wing activists outnumbered supporters of climate change, despite a recent poll showing that 70% of NJ residents are in favor of including climate change in public school education (96% of Democrats were in favor, and 45% of Republicans were in favor and 45% were against). Those against including climate change in the learning standards termed it "indoctrination" of students based on "weak science," and that they "don't send their children to school to encourage activism."

<http://www.njspotlightnews.org/2023/06/new-jersey-is-teaching-kids-about-climate-opponents-call-it-indoctrination/>

Six New Jersey Schools Recognized For Innovative Climate Action Projects

This marked the third year of the "NJ Student Climate Challenge" program designed for engaging students to be climate leaders. As noted in a press release from Gov. Murphy's office, "Atlantic City Electric, Exelon, the Drumthwacket Foundation, and Sustainable Jersey honored six student teams for their NJ Student Climate Challenge action projects, which offer innovative approaches to help address the ongoing issue of climate change. Student teams, from high schools and middle schools across New Jersey, were tasked with developing and executing a school or community-based climate action project and creating a digital story video to capture the approach and impacts of their climate project. Student team winners and their teacher mentors were recognized on June 5, 2023, at an awards ceremony hosted by the Drumthwacket

Foundation with New Jersey First Lady Tammy Murphy." Videos of the winning projects are available here: <https://www.sustainablejerseyschools.com/event/s/nj-student-climate-challenge/>. The press release is available here: <https://nj.gov/governor/news/news/562023/approved/20230606a.shtml>.

Millburn High School Food Composting



Project Diverts 300 Pounds of Food In First Few Weeks

Student members of the Millburn High School Environmental Club and the Life Skills class are learning the basics of composting by partnering with the Millburn Environmental Commission on a food waste recycling pilot project. The Orange, NJ composting company "Java's Compost" trained the students.

<https://www.tapinto.net/towns/millburn-slash-short-hills/sections/green/articles/millburn-high-school-food-composting-project-diverts-300-pounds-of-food-in-first-few-weeks>

\$6,000 Granted For Sustainability Projects At Three Howell Schools

The NJ Education Association (NJEA) has funded eleven \$10,000 grants and thirty-five \$2,000 grants to NJ public schools and districts as part of the Sustainable Jersey for Schools program. Three schools in Howell each received a \$2,000 grant, one for creating a sensory path, one for a water bottle filling station, and one for a "Farm to Table Imagination Playground." See <https://patch.com/new-jersey/howell/6-000-granted-sustainability-projects-three-howell-schools>. The description of the program and a link to the complete list of grant recipients is available here: <https://tinyurl.com/54y27xuh>. In addition, another

Sustainable Jersey grant program funded by the PSEG Foundation (the description and link to list of grant recipients available here: <https://tinyurl.com/5hfvtsan>) awarded \$300,000 to advance sustainability projects in 35 NJ schools, school districts, and municipalities.

Central Jersey Teacher Shows Passion for Helping the Environment

This article describes how a fifth-grade teacher at St. Benedict Catholic School of Holmdel has been utilizing the growing of "Tower Gardens" - indoor, instant gardens that can be grown inside without soil - to teach students about where food comes from and encourage healthy eating. She also works at the Greater Outdoor Learning Center (GOLC) at St. Benedict, designed to allow children to be close to nature. GOLC is a National Wildlife Federation (NWF) "Certified Schoolyard Habitat," a designation that recognizes that it has created and restored wildlife habitat on school grounds while providing outdoor classrooms for learning across the curriculum.

<https://srhub.org/2023/06/16/central-jersey-teacher-shows-passion-for-helping-the-environment/>

OTHER

Back From the Brink, Historic NJ Conservation School Reaches Major Milestone

In a major development, the Friends of the NJ School of Conservation (NJSOC) has signed a 20-year lease with the NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP). Legislation passed last year designated the Friends of NJSOC as the managers of the school, located in Stokes State Forest, and it has been operating limited educational programs since 2021. The Friends, which were founded to save the school after it was closed in the first days of the COVID-19 pandemic, hailed the signing of the agreement as the next step to strengthen the school and prepare it to meet the state's educational need for generations to come. This long-term agreement "paves the way for the resumption of the school's full range of educational activities,

particularly overnight stays for students and researchers." Major repairs and renovations are still needed, particularly to a historic dam, and it is hoped that additional funding for the school will be provided in the NJ FY2024 budget. See <https://www.njspotlightnews.org/2023/06/dark-days-may-be-over-for-historic-nj-conservation-school/>. A 3-1/2-minute news video is available here: <https://www.njspotlightnews.org/video/nj-school-of-conservation-settles-into-new-chapter-after-threat-of-closure/>.

What the Commissioner Says About Liberty State Park: Chat Box

In this NJ Spotlight News "Chat Box" video interview, NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) Commissioner LaTourette gives a description of the process that was followed to develop the Liberty State Park Revitalization Program, and the emphasis and timeline for the program, that DEP unveiled at an open house held in May. The Liberty State Park portion of the interview is from 0:33 to 10:00.

<https://www.njspotlightnews.org/2023/06/what-the-commissioner-says-about-liberty-state-park-chat-box/>

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
