



Environmental Justice Task Force Newsletter - August 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.

OCEAN WIND 1 PROJECT ACHIEVES KEY MILESTONES! See p. 13.



EJTF ACTIVITIES

- **EJTF Chair Peggy Middaugh** and **EJTF member Michael Skelly** each provided testimony at both virtual public hearings held by the U.S. Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the Atlantic Shores offshore wind project, giving support to the project for its positive impacts on climate change. Their testimony is available on the EJTF "Policy Briefs" webpage, here: <https://www.uufaithaction.org/policy-briefs-and-positions/>.
- **EJTF member Michael Skelly** and **EJTF Chair Peggy Middaugh** provided comments on NJ Transit's first-ever Sustainability Plan. Their testimony is available on the EJTF "Policy Briefs" webpage, here: <https://www.uufaithaction.org/policy-briefs-and-positions/>. In his comments, Mike expressed pleasure that such a plan has been developed, applauding its spotlight on Environmental Justice and Equity, and urging that it be revised to significantly increase facilities and vehicles, and to include ways to support walking and biking security. Peggy echoed many of Mike's comments, and also requested that NJ Transit's "accessibility" definition be expanded to include pets.

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**SAVE THE DATE: UUFANJ GALA
9/9/2023!! See p. 7.**

EJTF ACTIVITIES (cont.)

- While on a visit to Chile, **EJTF member Nancy Griffeth**, keeping renewable energy on her mind, was struck by the use of renewable energy sources there. According to a World Economic Forum article (available here: <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2023/01/how-chile-is-becoming-a-leader-in-renewable-energy/>), "Chile, a high-income industrialised economy with 19.6 million people, could offer policymakers around the world a playbook for transitioning towards renewable energy." Chile's electricity production is more than 52% renewables, whereas the U.S. is 21.5% and NJ is about 8%. Then there's 44% nuclear in NJ and 18% in the U.S., with the rest coming from fossil fuels. Historically, Chile has had a lot of hydroelectric power, from water coming down out of the Andes. Last year that was 21.8% of the electricity production. However, this year the snow pack in the Andes is almost nonexistent, so there may be problems with that. They've also been heavily dependent on coal, currently 26.5% of the production.

Here's a solar array inside a wind farm near the Calama airport in the Atacama desert (good place for both!).



There is a solar water heater on the roof of this house. What a great way to use solar power - no need to convert to electricity and back to heat, just heat the water in the cylinder on top and then use it. This wouldn't work very well in NJ though.... we'd all have to wait for sunny days to take baths!

These solar-powered domed observatories, at a lodge "in the middle of nowhere" that specializes in astronomical observations, track the amount of variable stars' variability, and also track near-earth objects (like asteroids about to hit us!).



If you're looking for a Community Solar project in your area to sign on with, here's a link to the "New Jersey Community Solar Project Finder" - <http://www.bit.ly/NJCommunitySolar> (thanks to **EJTF member Nadine Sapirman** for the URL shortcut!)

FUTURE EVENTS - Virtual, In-person, and Hybrid

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

AUGUST 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>
		<p>1 "Framing the Media Narrative on EJ and the Climate Crisis" - 12:00 p.m.</p> <p>"Organic Seed: Current Research in Availability, Production Challenges, and Producer Needs" - 3:00 p.m.</p> <p>STEAM into Monarch Butterfly Conservation (NJSOC) - 5:00 p.m.</p> <p>New NJ Inland Flood Protection Rule Webinar - 7:00 p.m.</p>	<p>2 NJBPU - Technical Conference on Reducing Emissions in the Natural Gas Sector - 9:30 a.m.</p> <p>i-Tree Open Academy - 1:00 p.m.</p> <p>STEAM into Monarch Butterfly Conservation (NJSOC) (cont. from 10/1)</p>	<p>3 NJBPU - Technical Conference on Reducing Emissions in the Natural Gas Sector - 9:30 a.m.</p> <p>STEAM into Monarch Butterfly Conservation (NJSOC) (cont. from 10/2)</p>	4	5
6	<p>7 Field Day at SAqE Farm Site - 9:00 a.m.</p> <p>"Green Day" at NJ State Fair - 12:00 p.m.</p>	8	<p>9 (DRBC) Third Quarter 2023 Public Hearing - time TBA</p> <p>i-Tree Open Academy - 1:00 p.m.</p> <p>"Fresh, Local Foods as Medicine: Connecting the Soil & Human Health" - 7:00 p.m.</p>	10	<p>11 NOAA Webinar on Air Quality - 2:00 p.m.</p>	<p>12 NOFA NJ "FesTomato" - 11:00 a.m.</p>
13	<p>14 NJ Climate Education - Global and Local Connections (NJSOC) - 9:00 a.m.</p>	15	<p>16 NJ Clean Air Council Meeting - 9:30 a.m.</p> <p>i-Tree Open Academy - 1:00 p.m.</p>	17	18	<p>19 Social and Emotional Learning & Environmental Education: Perfect Together (NJSOC) - 9:00 a.m.</p>
20	21	22	<p>23 "Unpacking the Farm Bill" - 7:00 p.m.</p>	24	<p>25 i-Tree Open Academy - 1:00 p.m.</p>	26
27	28	29	<p>30 i-Tree Open Academy - 1:00 p.m.</p>	31	<p>SAVE THE DATE UUFANJ 2023 GALA - 9/9/2023</p>	

FUTURE EVENTS

"Framing the Media Narrative on Environmental Justice and the Climate Crisis" - Webinar 8/1/2023, 12:00 p.m. - 2:00 p.m.

This webinar is presented by Free Press, the Center for Cooperative Media, and the NJ League of Conservation Voters. "Our media shapes the public discourse about climate issues and provides life-saving information during climate-related emergencies. To that end, organizers and policymakers play an important role in providing journalists with accurate information on how to respond to it. In this interactive two-part panel discussion, participants will hear from environmental justice organizers and journalists who are knowledgeable about water and air quality issues, flooding, natural disasters, and how environmental racism impacts the health of New Jerseyans across the state." Panelists will also share information about the policy solutions being considered to combat the climate crisis and discuss how journalists can be a force for good amid these challenges. Additional information and the link to register are available here:

<https://allevents.in/online/framing-the-media-narrative-on-environmental-justice-and-the-climate-crisis/10000668237194437>.

New NJ Inland Flood Protection Rule Informational Webinar 8/1/2023, 7:00 p.m.

This Association of NJ Environmental Commissions (ANJEC) webinar will provide details on NJ's new Inland Flood Hazard Protection rules, which now are the most protective flood hazard rules in the country, and the first to use climate modeling to regulate land use to improve environmental protection, public health and safety.

Representatives from the NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) will be present to help answer questions and explain the requirements for municipalities. Registration (\$15 for non-ANJEC members) is available here:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdQgLVYtnFzC_MkP71ck-WNhNg3vrCKOyBRTKYKY9CqQFrgA/viewform.

NJBPU - Technical Conference on Reducing Emissions in the Natural Gas Sector 8/2/2023 & 8/3/2023, 9:30 a.m. - 4:45 p.m. - In-person and Livestreamed

On 2/15/2023, Gov. Murphy signed Executive Order 317, directing the NJ Board of Public Utilities (BPU) to develop recommendations regarding how the natural gas industry can reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions to meet the Governor's goal of 50 percent reduction in GHG emissions below 2006 levels by 2030. Executive Order 317 further directs the BPU to engage with stakeholders regarding the development of natural gas utility plans consistent with the Governor's directive. The purpose of this Technical Conference is to: learn about Executive Order 317, reimagine natural gas infrastructure, and explore other topics integral to NJ's reduction of emissions from the natural gas sector. It "will begin the formal stakeholder engagement in the Future of the Natural Gas Utility Proceeding, as well as frame the policy and technical considerations that underpin this planning process." Additional information, including topics under consideration, registration link, links to access the livestream, and instructions for submitting any comments (**the comment deadline is 5:00 p.m. on 9/6/2023**) are available here:

https://nj.gov/bpu/pdf/publicnotice/Notice_EO317TechConference.pdf.

Field Day at SAgE Farm Site 8/7/2023 (rain date 8/8/2023), 9:00 a.m. Andover, NJ - In-person

This day of free workshops sponsored by the Foodshed Alliance (of which **EJTF member Christine Dunbar** is the Paulins Kill Watershed Coordinator) is geared towards beginning farmers, but "ALL are welcome!" The workshops include: "Soil Analysis & Sampling," "Regenerative Cover Crop Practices and Plant Diversity," "Pollinator Habitats and Supporting Native Pollinators on your Farm," and BCS Walk-behind Tractor Demo." Additional information and the link to register are available here: <https://foodshedalliance.org/farmer-training/>.

**"Green Day" at the NJ State Fair
8/7/2023, 12:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.
Sussex County Fairgrounds, Augusta, NJ
- In-person**

On Monday, 8/7/2023, from noon to 4:00 p.m. there will be a "Green Day" at the NJ State Fair at the Sussex County Fairgrounds, in the fair's Planet Networks Performing Arts Tent. It will showcase environmental exhibits and vendors, including the NJ Sierra Club Skylands Group, whose display theme will be "Offshore Wind." Additional information, including links to purchase tickets online in advance, is available here: <http://sussexcountyfairgrounds.org>. Advance ticket prices start at \$5 for Seniors.

**"Fresh, Local Foods as Medicine:
Connecting the Soil & Human Health"
8/9/2023, 7:00 p.m. - Webinar**

This webinar and discussion will be presented by Saul Bautista MD, MPH, the Director of Lifestyle Medicine Education & Community Engagement with Ethos Primary Care. Registration is available here: <https://tinyurl.com/musttst6>.

**Delaware River Basin Commission (DRBC)
Third Quarter 2023 Public Hearing
8/9/2023, time TBA - Virtual**

The Delaware River Basin Commission (DRBC) will hold its third-quarter public hearing on Wednesday, August 9, 2023, at a time to be announced. The public hearing is open to the public and will be held virtually via Zoom Webinar. Additional information will be available here: <https://www.state.nj.us/drbc/meetings/upcoming/>.

**NOFA NJ "FesTomato"
8/12/2023, 11:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.
Ironbound Farm, Asbury, NJ - In-person**

Sponsored by the Northeast Organic Farming Association of New Jersey (NOFA NJ), this "Celebration of NJ Organic Tomatoes" will include: all-day tomato tasting (50+ varieties); a vendor marketplace featuring local farms and nature-based/outdoor organizations; live music; farm tours; garden workshops; children's activities; local food; and cider. Additional information and the link to register (\$10) are available here: <https://nofanj.org/festomato/>.

**NJ Clean Air Council Meeting
8/16/2023, 9:30 am - 12:00 pm
Virtual (ONLY if needed)**

This virtual meeting will be held "only if needed." For information about the meeting, including about accessing it virtually, contact Clean Air Council Liaison George Berdomas via email at George.Berdomas@dep.nj.gov. Additional information may be available here: <https://dep.nj.gov/event/clean-air-council-meeting-20230816/>.

**"Unpacking the Farm Bill" - Webinar
8/23/2023, 7:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.**

In this webinar sponsored by the Elders Climate Action Network, Scott Faber, Senior Vice President of Government Affairs at Environmental Working Group (EWG), will unpack the Farm Bill, "the next must-pass bill in Congress this year," including "what we need to know to protect critical funds that can help address the climate crisis." Scott Faber leads EWG's government affairs efforts, in which capacity he has frequently testified before Congress on food, farm, energy, water and chemical policy issues. Additional information and the link to register are available here: https://www.eldersclimateaction.org/event/nc_aug23/.

**The NJ School of Conservation
(NJSOC) Programs for Educators
Sandyston, NJ - In-person**

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. In August, the following three programs are being presented for educators; additional programs, of a recreational nature, can be found here: <https://friendsofnjsoc.org/events/>.

- **STEAM into Monarch Butterfly Conservation - 8/1/2023, 5:00 p.m. through 8/3/2023, 4:30 p.m.** - \$99.00 (includes cabin-style lodging at the NJSOC for two nights, food, and workshop materials)
See: <https://friendsofnjsoc.org/event/steam-into-monarch-butterfly-conservation/>.

Rutgers Climate Institute Listing of Climate Seminars

- **NJ Climate Education – Global and Local Connections - 8/14/2023, 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.** - \$40.00
See <https://friendsofnjsoc.org/event/nj-climate-education-global-and-local-connections/>.
- **Social and Emotional Learning & Environmental Education: Perfect Together - 8/19/2023, 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.** - \$40.00
See <https://friendsofnjsoc.org/event/social-and-emotional-learning-environmental-education-perfect-together/>.

Multiple online events are listed on this site. A sampling of August listings is below; check the site periodically for an updated list:
<https://climatesociety.rutgers.edu/events/all-climate-events/range.listevents/>.

"Organic Seed: Current Research in Availability, Production Challenges, and Producer Needs" - Webinar 8/1/2023, 3:00 - 4:00 p.m.

In this webinar, sponsored by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), Jared Zystro, PhD, Research & Education Co-Director, Organic Seed Alliance, Arcata, CA, "will describe findings from Organic Seed Alliance's State of Organic Seed report. Trends in organic seed sourcing and availability, needs of organic seed producers, climate change impacts, and the importance of adapted varieties will be highlighted." A link to additional information including how to register/join is available here:
<https://climatesociety.rutgers.edu/events/all-climate-events/icalrepeat.detail/2023/08/01/7894/-/organic-seed-current-research-in-availability-production-challenges-and-producer-needs>. [Note: this event uses Adobe Connect.]

NOAA Webinar on Air Quality - Webinar 8/11/2023, 2:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.

This webinar, "NOAA One Health Pre-Summit Webinar --Three Minute Thesis Webinar on Air Quality," is sponsored by the U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) One Health and NOAA's Regional Collaboration Network. The webinar is "designed to share experiences and information about NOAA's role related to air quality. From forecasting, to scented products, to volcanic ash, you will have the chance to hear straight from the experts on a wide array of topics! In addition, presenters will address questions from the audience. This is the final webinar in a series NOAA is hosting in preparation for the NOAA One Health Summit (August 15-16 in Washington DC)." Additional information and the link to register are available here:
<https://climatesociety.rutgers.edu/events/all-climate-events/icalrepeat.detail/2023/08/11/7888/-/noaa-one-health-pre-summit-webinar-three-minute-thesis-webinar-on-air-quality#TopExp317213>.

i-Tree Open Academy - Virtual Various dates, 1:00 p.m. - 2:00 p.m.

"i-Tree is a state-of-the-art, peer-reviewed software suite from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Forest Service that provides urban and rural forestry analysis and benefits assessment tools. The i-Tree tools can help strengthen forest management and advocacy efforts by quantifying forest structure and the environmental benefits that trees provide. Since the initial release of the i-Tree Tools in August 2006, thousands of communities, non-profit organizations, consultants, volunteers and students around the world have used i-Tree to report on individual trees, parcels, neighborhoods, cities, and even entire states. By understanding the local ecosystem services that trees provide, i-Tree users can link forest management activities with environmental quality and community livability. Whether your interest is a single tree or an entire forest, i-Tree provides data that you can use to demonstrate value and set priorities for more effective decision-making." The i-Tree Open Academy will provide a broad introduction to the i-Tree suite of tools. The sessions are as follows:
8/2/2023 – Introduction to i-Tree; **8/9/2023** – Online with MyTree, i-Tree Design, and i-Tree Planting; **8/16/2023** – The view from the top: i-Tree Canopy and OurTrees; **8/25/2023** - Open office hours; **8/30/2023** – i-Tree Landscape: Your data, maps, and equity portal; **9/6/2023** – i-Tree Eco: the flagship tool; **9/7/2023** - Open office hours; and **9/13/2023** – Putting i-Tree to Work. Additional information and the link to register are available here:
<https://www.itreetools.org/support/i-tree-open-academy-summer-2023>.

SAVE THE DATES!



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 a luncheon at the beautiful Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Princeton. The 2023 "Justice For All" Gala will honor the work and leadership that advances immigration justice and equity. Additional information and the link to purchase tickets are available here:

<https://www.uufaction.org/justice-for-all-2023-gala/>.

March to End Fossil Fuels
9/17/2023, 1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.
New York, NY - In-person

Planned for just before the United Nations Climate Ambition Summit, this major climate march is being organized by a coalition of local and national organizations of all shapes and sizes and has been endorsed by over 200 organizations so far, including the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA), the UU Ministry for Earth (UUMFE), and The Unitarian Society (East Brunswick). "We will demand that President Biden show real climate leadership by rejecting new fossil fuel projects and declaring a climate emergency." More details about the march schedule and location will be available closer to the date. Additional information, including a link to RSVP and to volunteer, is available here: <https://www.endfossilfuels.us>.

VIDEOS OF PAST EVENTS+

2023 Congressional Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency EXPO and Policy Forum - Videos of Panels

The Environmental and Energy Study Institute (EESI) and the Senate Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency (REEE) Caucus held the Congressional Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency EXPO and Policy Forum (EXPO 2023). Top-level speakers showcased technologies and solutions that reduce carbon emissions, save households money, improve the economy, build resilience, and protect our security interests.

EJTF member Mike Skelly virtually attended the EXPO, and noted that some of the ideas could provide inspiration for programs in NJ, and was especially heartened by the emphasis on energy efficiency. Panel topics included:

- 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."

Videos of the panel discussions are available here: <https://www.eesi.org/briefings/view/expo2023>.

"Climate Change Solutions with Bill McKibben" **- Video of Webinar**

In this webinar hosted by the Network for Responsible Public Policy (NFRPP), Bill McKibben provided an in-depth discussion on the opportunities, priorities, and diverse solutions to address the challenges of carbon emissions and climate change, including what each of us can do to make a difference. Bill McKibben founded the first global grassroots climate campaign, 350.org, is a contributing writer to The New Yorker, and is a founder of Third Act, which organizes people over the age of 60 to work on climate and racial justice. According to **EJTF member Jo Sippie-Gora**, "McKibben, at home in Vermont, was at his very best, witnessing the recent flooding suffered by his neighbors, with empathy and humility."

The video is available here:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y_iMnxfcNms&t=2s.

"Climate and Energy Resources for Faith Communities": A Briefing with the U.S. Department of Energy - Video of Webinar

In this Interfaith Power & Light (IPL)-sponsored webinar, the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) provided information about federal funding available through the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) and the bipartisan Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) for energy and climate resiliency improvements that can be used in houses of worship and homes. "This historic legislation provides people of faith and conscience with an opportunity to live our values of caring for one another and for our Sacred Earth. The IRA includes clean energy tax credits for wind and solar, EVs, efficiency upgrades, heat pumps, and much more. It also made it easier for nonprofits and houses of worship to access clean energy funds and tax credits through a program called 'direct pay.' Before the IRA, only homeowners and commercial entities with some tax liability could claim tax credits when installing solar panels or other eligible technologies on an eligible property. Now, the 'direct pay' option means non-taxable entities can also benefit from these credits." Many links to information were provided, including to the IPL website, which they plan to keep updated, available here:

<https://interfaithpowerandlight.org/federal-funding/>.

Slides from the presentation, with much information about many programs and resources, are available here:

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1BZU3Npl_hZMRPQz30qXAPFHoapFCMkQU/view. The video of the webinar is available here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=65yCU0dw8vM>.

"Ways Houses of Worship are Embracing Solar Power for Energy Needs" – Part 1 - Video of Webinar

This webinar, sponsored by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), was 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 shared 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 provided insight into

lessons learned and recommendations for faith leaders and faith-based organizations interested in exploring solar opportunities. The video is available here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2TQBNybFLrM>.

"NJ's Offshore Wind Project" WHYY - Recording of Radio Show

On its 7/19/2023 "Studio 2" program at noon, WHYY (local PBS radio in Philadelphia) focused on the Ocean Wind 1 offshore wind project. The program included NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) Commissioner Shawn LaTourette, NJ Sierra Club director Anjuli Ramos-Busot, and Bruce Afran, the attorney representing three groups suing the state, and provided a lively discussion of the issues. The offshore wind portion runs from minute 15:20 to minute 39:40 (move the blue line at the top of the page). The recording is available here:

<https://whyy.org/episodes/njs-offshore-wind-project-pittsburgh-shooting-trial-hip-hop-artist-chill-moody/>.

"The Resilience Factor: How Investors Assess Climate-Ready Governments" - Video of Webinar

The Center for Climate and Energy Solutions (C2ES) and the Vermont Bond Bank presented this webinar on the emerging landscape of climate risk assessment by investors in the \$4 trillion municipal bond market. Communities across the country are already feeling the financial impacts of climate change. Recognizing the costs of climate-related damages, municipal bond investors are beginning to assess physical climate risk in portfolio management. These changes are shifting the conventional wisdom of municipal credit, where strong economies and balance sheets are now also being weighed against vulnerability to acute and chronic climate risks. Webinar speakers outlined the physical climate risk analysis landscape; how local governments can integrate climate risks and opportunities into financial decision-making; and how investors are beginning to evaluate climate risk. They also discussed what steps can be taken to position communities and bond issuers for success. The video is available here:

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

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

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" discussed 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. The video is available here: <https://youtu.be/jdhihhy1KL4>.

"What's Impacting the Ecological and Public Health of New Jersey's Coastal Waters?" - Video of Webinar

As part of the Rutgers "Earth Day Every Day" webinar series, Bob Schuster with the NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) covered 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. The video is available here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o_pWamGsbvw.

**National Green Amendment Day
- "Why I Support the Green Amendment"
- Videos**

National Green Amendment Day featured 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. Some of the videos can be seen on the Green Amendments For The Generations Facebook page, here: <https://www.facebook.com/GreenAmendmentsForTheGenerations/videos>.

**On-Farm Composting in Maryland
- Video of Webinar**

In this webinar hosted by Clean Water Action, Keith Ohlinger, a Maryland farmer who has been at the forefront of on-farm composting in the state, told how farmers can use food scraps to create compost, and what this means for the environment. Keith has long been a proponent of regenerative farming, and of farmers creating and using compost. In 2023, Maryland passed legislation to allow farmers to add more food scraps to their on-farm compost piles, which will allow farmers to divert food waste from landfills and incinerators and create a soil amendment that can substitute for synthetic fertilizers and sequester carbon in the ground. The video is available here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3wjWiZUI1Yc>.

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 6/27/2023 – 7/26/2023]

ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

U.S. EPA Updates Environmental Justice Mapping Tool for a Third Time: EJSCREEN 2.2

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has updated its EJSCREEN environmental justice mapping and screening tool that provides "a nationally consistent dataset and approach for combining environmental and demographic socioeconomic indicators." A detailed description of the changes is available here:

<https://tinyurl.com/35xecea4>. The changes include adding a "Toxic Releases to Air" indicator, adding map layers for: cancer and persons with disabilities; critical gaps in services such as transportation; and EPA-regulated facilities that are or have been out of compliance.

<https://sidleyenergyblog.sidley.com/2023/06/29/u-s-epa-updates-environmental-justice-mapping-tool-for-a-third-time-ejscreen-2-2/>

Opinion: Is the Nestlé Plant Closure Just the First Environmental Justice Casualty in New Jersey?

This article describes an opinion piece written by Ray Cantor, the deputy chief government affairs officer at the New Jersey Business and Industry Association, that lays blame on the NJ Environmental Justice law for the pending closure of the Nestlé plant in Freehold, and warns of future similar occurrences.

<https://enviropolitics.com/opinion-is-the-nestle-plant-closure-just-the-first-environmental-justice-casualty-in-new-jersey/>

ELECTRIC VEHICLES & VEHICLE EMISSION REDUCTION

New Jersey Joining Other States in Driving Cleaner, Less Polluting Light-Duty Cars

Gov. Murphy announced the filing of the Advanced Clean Cars II (ACC II) proposal with the Office of Administrative Law (the press release is available here:

<https://nj.gov/governor/news/news/562023/approved/20230717b.shtml>), which is the first step to the proposed rule being published in the NJ Register, expected in August, in order for it to be adopted by the end of the year. NJ needs to adopt the rule by the end of 2023 in order to impact the 2027 vehicle model year. The ACC II rule, which was adopted last year by California, would require vehicle manufacturers to increase sales of light-duty zero-emission vehicles (ZEVs), reaching 100 percent sales by 2035. Environmentalists strongly advocate NJ's adopting ACC II; however, representatives of car dealers are of the opinion that it will make cars more expensive and limit choices available to consumers (see article and "Opinion" piece on p. 10). Additionally, Gov. Murphy announced that NJ has signed on to the "Accelerating to Zero Coalition" Zero Emission Vehicle (ZEV) Declaration, a global agreement launched at the 26th UN Climate Change Conference of the Parties (COP26) and signed by 41 national governments and 74 cities, states, and regional governments so far. NJ has signed on to Section 2C of the Declaration, which commits the state to a zero emission vehicle future in alignment with the Paris Agreement goals.

<https://www.njspotlightnews.org/2023/07/new-jersey-joining-other-states-in-driving-cleaner-less-polluting-light-duty-cars/>

Staying Ahead of Curve for Zero-Emission Vehicles

This article describes the benefits and potential issues associated with NJ's adoption of the Advanced Clean Cars II (ACC II) rule (see article on p. 10 and "Opinion" piece in next column). According to a Sierra Club press release (available here: <https://www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/blog/2023/07/gov-murphy-formally-proposes-clean-cars-rules-phase-ev-new-car-sales-next>), adopting ACC II in NJ this year would result in reducing light-duty CO2 emissions 72% below 2021 levels in 2035, 80% for NOx emissions, 72% for PM 2.5 and 73% for SO2. <https://www.njspotlightnews.org/2023/07/ov-phil-murphy-power-grid-recharge-recharging-stations-transportation-sector-building-sector-zero-emission-vehicles-electric-vehicles-battery-electric-vehicles-evs-plug-in-hybrid-electric-vehicles/>



NJBPU Launches Year Four of Charge Up New Jersey, the State's Electric Vehicle Incentive Program

The NJ Board of Public Utilities (BPU) announced Year Four of NJ's "Charge Up New Jersey" electric vehicle (EV) incentive program. In Year Four, the State will provide incentives of up to \$4,000 for vehicles with a Manufacturer's Suggested Retail Price (MSRP) under \$45,000 and incentives of up to \$1,500 for vehicles with an MSRP between \$45,001 and \$55,000. The BPU also opened the next application window for its three EV charging incentive programs: Clean Fleet, Multi-Unit Dwelling (MUD), and Electric Vehicle Tourism, each with new enhancements including incentives for non-profit organizations. <https://nj.gov/bpu/newsroom/2023/approved/20230712.html>

Opinion: Advanced Clean Car II Rule Isn't Right for NJ Consumers

In this opinion piece by James B. Appleton, president of the New Jersey Coalition of Automotive Retailers, the author states that "Adopting ACC II [the "Advanced Clean Car II rule - see articles in previous column and on p. 10] will have a detrimental impact on consumers by negatively impacting new vehicle affordability and choice." He describes an alternative approach: adoption of the approach described in the "Clean Car Rule" recently proposed by the Biden Administration. <https://www.njspotlightnews.org/2023/07/op-ed-advanced-clean-car-ii-rule-isnt-right-for-nj-consumers/>

LAND MANAGEMENT / AGRICULTURE / FOOD

NJ Tree Foundation Receives EPA Clean Air Excellence Award

The NJ Tree Foundation (NJTF) (of which **EJTF Chair Peggy Middaugh** is a Trustee) was honored on 6/27/2023 in Washington, D.C. with a 2023 Clean Air Excellence Award. The NJTF was one of only five organizations recognized from across the country. It received the award in the Community Action category, for the Urban Airshed Reforestation Program/ Renaissance Trees Program/ Green Streets (Jackson NJ). <https://www.epa.gov/caaac/clean-air-excellence-awards>

Food Banks Helping More People Than Ever in Camden, Volunteers Say

This 4-1/2-minute news video describes how a food bank in Camden (which was named the number one food desert community in NJ) is working with a local farm to provide fresh produce to the currently 15,000 individuals they are serving (an over-threefold-increase since before COVID). The farm, "Free Haven Farms," (their website with video and additional information is available here: <https://freehaveneducationalfarms.com>) utilizes

organic and sustainable practices and also provides experiences such as a youth summer camp and other educational experiences on the farm, as well as agricultural curricula for schools and after-school programs.

<https://www.njspotlightnews.org/video/food-banks-helping-more-people-than-ever-in-camden-volunteers-say/>

Community Supported Agriculture Program Brings Local Greens to NJIT Campus

This summer marks the third year that the New Jersey Institute of Technology (NJIT) is participating in School Lunch Farm's Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) program, which provides freshly grown vegetables weekly. The historic farm (founded in the 1600s) uses regenerative, organic practices, and is helping to battle food insecurity. NJIT is located in Newark, one of NJ's worst food deserts, and this program provides fresh produce to NJIT's Food Pantry.

<https://srhub.org/2023/07/02/community-supported-agriculture-program-brings-local-greens-to-njit-campus/>

Biden-Harris Administration Announces New Investments to Improve Measurement, Monitoring, Reporting and Verification of Greenhouse Gas Emissions for the Agriculture and Forest Sectors

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) announced that it plans to invest \$300 million through President Biden's Investing in America agenda to improve measurement, monitoring, reporting and verification of greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) and carbon sequestration related to climate-smart or regenerative agricultural practices and forestry. "The new investments, made possible by the Inflation Reduction Act, will advance priorities set by the broader Federal Strategy to Advance Greenhouse Gas Measurement and Monitoring for the Agriculture and Forest Sectors" (available here: <https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/Draft-Federal-Ag-and-Forest-MMRV-Strategy.pdf>) which has been released for public comments, due by 8/11/2023. It outlines a strategic framework and priority actions for improving accuracy and

reducing uncertainty in GHG estimates related to climate-smart agriculture and forestry.

<https://www.usda.gov/media/press-releases/2023/07/12/biden-harris-administration-announces-new-investments-improve>

RENEWABLE RESOURCES (other than Offshore Wind)

Turbulence as State Agency Rejects Solar Projects

The NJ Board of Public Utilities (BPU) rejected all proposed solar projects submitted in response to its first competitive solicitation designed to allow larger-scale installations - of at least five megawatts - to be built at a less expensive cost than in the past. The rejected projects would have accounted for more than the BPU's goal of 300 megawatts. However, none of the projects came in under the BPU's price caps, which were not disclosed to the developers. A second solicitation is planned for October.

<https://www.njspotlightnews.org/2023/07/clean-energy-policies-run-into-snags-at-nj-bpu-state-agency/>

More Than Money: What It Means for NJ Churches to Go Green

The most expensive part of a church's budget that doesn't have to do with staff is the part that pays for energy - electricity, heating and cooling. This can be significantly reduced by using renewable energy, such as solar, which can not only save money and potentially even make money, but also contributes to the NJ's goal of using 100% clean energy by 2035. The nonprofit "New Jersey Together" organization, a "broad-based, multi-faith coalition" affiliated with the national "Industrial Areas Foundation (IAF)," with chapters in Jersey City, Morristown, and Essex County, has launched a Green Energy Initiative "to help congregations go green and potentially reap rewards from state and federal incentive programs." The organization helps congregations "navigate the system and take advantage of all the incentives that are available."

<https://srhub.org/2023/07/04/more-than-money-what-it-means-for-nj-churches-to-go-green/>

Atlantic City Electric Approved for \$93M Outlay on Clean Energy, Solar

This article describes steps Atlantic City Electric has been approved by the NJ Board of Public Utilities (BPU) to take to address distribution issues including problems with connecting residential solar arrays to the power grid. This issue is expected to occur in other parts of NJ as electricity demand is expected to more than double as a result of transitioning to 100% clean energy.

<https://www.njspotlightnews.org/2023/06/atlantic-city-electric-approved-for-93m-outlay-on-clean-energy-solar/>



OFFSHORE WIND

OCEAN WIND 1 PROJECT

Murphy Signs Big Tax Break for Offshore Wind Developer

This 4-1/2-minute news video shows Gov. Murphy signing a bill that allows Ørsted, the developer of the Ocean Wind 1 offshore wind project, to use federal tax credits that had been originally supposed to go to ratepayers to help offset the costs of building the offshore wind farms. However, development costs have risen and Ørsted has maintained that the project may not be viable without the tax credits. NY and other states have allowed offshore wind companies to use the federal tax credits, putting NJ at a competitive disadvantage if it failed to do the same (see article in next column).

<https://www.njspotlightnews.org/video/murphy-signs-big-tax-break-for-offshore-wind-developer/>

Huge Win for Offshore Wind Developer Fuels Skepticism

This article provides background information about the bill Gov. Murphy signed that allows Ørsted, the developer of the Ocean Wind 1 offshore wind project, to use what could amount to up to a billion dollars in federal tax credits. An amendment to the bill requires Ørsted to put \$200 million in an escrow account for NJ to use on offshore wind-related activities such as the Paulsboro plant that builds monopiles for offshore wind turbines. The other company developing an offshore wind project off of NJ, Atlantic Shores, has requested that NJ provide it with similar support (see article in previous column). The bill passed the NJ legislature primarily along party lines, and there has been opposition to it, including from the NJ Division of Rate Counsel, because of its impact on ratepayers, who were initially supposed to receive the benefit of the tax credits. However, environmentalists want to be sure that everything is done to ensure that the offshore wind projects proceed.

<https://www.njspotlightnews.org/2023/07/skepticism-as-nj-lawmakers-give-big-win-to-offshore-wind-developer/>

Key Federal Approval for Ørsted Offshore Wind Project

After almost four years of federal review and public comment, the U.S. Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) has approved the Record of Decision (ROD) for Ørsted's Ocean Wind 1 offshore wind project, which is the final federal approval needed. The ROD includes documentation of the monitoring and mitigation measures that will be put in place to reduce potential impacts on marine species. The project includes the installation of nearly 100 giant electricity-generating wind turbines off Atlantic City. Ørsted has stated that with the BOEM approval, the project remains on track to begin onshore construction this fall and offshore construction in 2024, with commercial operations expected to begin in 2025.

<https://www.njspotlightnews.org/2023/07/feds-clear-way-for-orsted-to-move-ahead-with-ocean-wind-1-njs-first-offshore-wind-facility/>

Lawsuits Could Delay the Start of New Jersey's First Offshore Wind Power Project

Ørsted, the developer of the Ocean Wind 1 offshore wind project, is suing Cape May County and Ocean City over their delays in issuing necessary permits. In addition, three citizens' groups (Save Long Beach Island, Defend Brigantine Beach, and Protect Our Coast NJ) have filed an appeal of NJ's determination that the Ocean Wind I project is consistent with state coastal management rules. The Save Long Beach Island group is also suing the U.S. Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM), over its creation of the offshore wind lease sites off the coast of NJ.

<https://apnews.com/article/offshore-wind-lawsuits-new-jersey-orsted-c0f5890e41a3b58772f7e1d0e3e5a5f7>

ATLANTIC SHORES PROJECT

Offshore Wind Proponents, Critics Square Off at Atlantic Shores Hearing

This article describes the issues brought up by members of the public, including **EJTF Chair Peggy Middaugh** and **EJTF member Mike Skelly** at one of the two virtual public hearings held by the U.S. Bureau of Ocean Management (BOEM) on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the Atlantic Shores offshore wind project. EJTF is strongly in favor of offshore wind; see p. 1.

<https://www.app.com/story/news/local/land-environment/2023/06/27/offshore-wind-advocates-critics-atlantic-shores-hearing-shell-edf/70358910007/>

New Jersey's Other Wind Farm Developer Wants Government Breaks, Too; Says Project 'At Risk'

After Gov. Murphy signed a bill that allows Ørsted, the developer of the Ocean Wind 1 offshore wind project, to use what could amount to up to a billion dollars in federal tax credits, the other company developing an offshore wind project off of NJ, Atlantic Shores, has requested that NJ provide it with similar support. It stated that jobs and infrastructure investments related

to the project were at risk without "immediate action" on the part of NJ. In response, Gov. Murphy stated, "Are we open-minded trying to figure out some common ground with the other offshore sequences? Absolutely."

<https://apnews.com/article/offshore-wind-atlantic-shores-tax-break-4a431a49ec2fc7e5f7956e7ac63a8656>

CLIMATE CHANGE

RGGI Funds May Help Decarbonize Building Sector

The NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), NJ Board of Public Utilities (BPU) and NJ Economic Development Authority (EDA) have released the second iteration of the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI) Strategic Funding Plan (available here:

<https://www.nj.gov/rggi/docs/rggi-strategic-funding-plan.pdf>), The plan outlines how NJ plans to spend RGGI auction investment proceeds; most of the funds are planned to be used for decarbonizing buildings and electrifying the transportation sector in environmental justice communities. In addition, 10% of the RGGI proceeds will be targeted at sequestering carbon in NJ forests state tidal marshes. In conjunction with the plan's release, the DEP also announced that it is opening another competitive solicitation to invest over \$13 million in the purchase of additional electric trucks in overburdened communities.

<https://www.njspotlightnews.org/2023/07/rggi-regional-greenhouse-gas-initiative-nj-decarbonize-electrify-building-transportation-environmental-justice-communities/>

Record-Setting Global Temperatures Give Glimpse of Future

In this 5-minute news video, NJ State Climatologist David Robinson provides insight about why global temperatures are currently setting records, and what future impacts may be, particularly on NJ.

<https://www.njspotlightnews.org/video/record-setting-global-temperatures-give-glimpse-of-future/>

LEAD REDUCTION IN HOUSEHOLDS

EPA Proposes New Safety Limit for Houses With Lead Paint – Zero

This 4-minute news video shows a press event in Newark at which the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) unveiled its proposed new lead safety requirements for homes built before 1978, which lower lead allowable levels for floors and windowsills in these homes to zero. Health experts have long advised for a zero level, because there is no safe level of lead exposure. There is a 60-day comment period for the proposed rules, and it is envisioned that the rules may go into effect by the end of the year. An estimated 1.6 NJ homes may be affected. Newark Mayor Baraka stated "The City of Newark is honored to be selected by the EPA as the location for their important announcement of these new actions to protect Americans everywhere – and especially children – from the dangers of lead in paint. We moved mountains in Newark to remove lead from every water line throughout the city because we value the health and wellbeing of every resident and understand that no amount of lead exposure is acceptable. We are grateful to the EPA and the Biden Administration for strengthening regulations for lead removal and are fully committed to supporting their efforts." <https://www.njspotlightnews.org/video/epa-proposes-new-safety-limit-for-houses-with-lead-paint-zero/>



DRINKING WATER-RELATED ISSUES (other than lead)

NJ Takes \$393M to End 'Forever Chemical' Pollution Lawsuit

Representing the largest single-site natural resource damages and remediation case in NJ history, a proposed settlement has been reached with Solvay Specialty Polymers USA, LLC. It would provide \$392.7 million to: "Pay for and implement comprehensive remedial activities at and in the vicinity of its West Deptford facility; Provide financial support for certain public water system upgrades necessary to remove PFAS ["forever chemicals"] from drinking water, which will be administered by the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP); Further investigate and address certain PFAS impacts to public water systems and private potable drinking water wells in the vicinity; and Compensate the public for natural resources injured by the discharge of hazardous substances." The NJ press release is available here: <https://www.njoag.gov/attorney-general-platkin-and-dep-commissioner-latourette-announce-proposed-settlement-with-solvay-polymers-regarding-forever-chemical-pollution-in-and-around-west-deptford/>. The proposed settlement is scheduled to be published in the NJ Register on 8/7/2023 and the public comment period will end 60 days after its publication. A NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) website (available here: <https://dep.nj.gov/solvay/>) provides additional information and will provide information about commenting. If, after public comment, the proposed settlement is finalized and approved by the court, it will be entered as a binding Judicial Consent Order. <https://www.njspotlightnews.org/2023/06/new-jersey-agrees-to-settle-pfas-forever-chemical-pollution-suit-for-393-million/>

Devils in the Unknown Details in Proposed "Forever Chemicals" Settlement Between New Jersey and Solvay

NJ environmental groups are urging caution until the details are available on the proposed settlement with Solvay Specialty Polymers USA,

LLC related to PFAS "forever chemicals" (see article on p. 15). The proposed settlement is scheduled to be published in the NJ Register on 8/7/2023 and the public comment period will end 60 days after its publication.

<https://www.insidernj.com/press-release/devils-in-the-unknown-details-in-proposed-forever-chemicals-settlement-between-new-jersey-and-solvay/>

ENERGY EFFICIENCY

BPU Pulls Decarbonization Proposal From Agenda — But Big Questions Remain

In June, as part of its "Energy Efficiency Triennium 2 Straw Proposals," the NJ Board of Public Utilities (BPU) issued a "Building Decarbonization Straw Proposal." Only two virtual public meetings were held on one day, and comments were due in less than three weeks. According to BPU President Joseph Fiordaliso, there was a great response from stakeholders, so rather than considering it at the BPU meeting in July, it was taken off of the agenda and is planned to be considered at a later meeting. The plan is opposed by the NJ Division of Rate Counsel, legislators and some business lobbyists (see <https://www.njspotlightnews.org/2023/07/nj-bpu-pushes-decarbonization-of-buildings-despite-opposition/> for a description of the issues). One major reason cited in opposition is that the BPU does not have the authority to set environmental policy or to regulate carbon emissions, which would be the result of implementing this plan.

<https://www.roi-nj.com/2023/07/12/industry/energy-utilities/bpu-pulls-decarbonization-proposal-from-agenda-but-big-questions-remain/>

POLLUTION

NJ Recycling Plant Supplied Glass for Temporary I-95 Fix

The fill material that was used for the temporary roadway support after the recent I-95 collapse in Pennsylvania consisted of foam glass produced in large part from recycled glass from a plant in Burlington County.

<https://www.njspotlightnews.org/2023/07/nj-recycling-plant-supplied-glass-for-temporary-i-95-fix/>

EDUCATIONAL and YOUTH-RELATED

DEP Launches Third Annual Youth Inclusion Program to Empower Next Generation of Environmental Leaders From Overburdened Communities

The NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) has launched its third annual Youth Inclusion Initiative summer program "to engage young people from overburdened communities that have disproportionately less open space by providing hands-on training and exposure to career opportunities within the environmental field ... The DEP is partnering with five community-based organizations to provide participants ages 16 to 20 an opportunity to explore various careers within the environmental field by learning from DEP professionals in nearly all department programs such as water and air monitoring, natural resource management, and wildlife conservation. This year's partner organizations are Neighborhood Improvement Association (Trenton), Rutgers-Camden, Groundwork Elizabeth, Ironbound Community Corporation (Newark) and The Work Group (Camden). The program will include 47 participants."

https://www.nj.gov/dep/newsrel/2023/23_0042.htm

Solar Bus Shelter Unveiled at West Orange High School

West Orange High School students in Engineering, Woodworking, and other disciplines in the Technology and Engineering Department, in a cooperative project with West Orange Township, built a solar-powered bus shelter that now stands next to the school. The project took three years from its inception, and now - besides serving as a needed bus shelter - it is being used as an educational resource. Students learn how it was designed and built while gaining an understanding of the science behind solar power and sustainability.

<https://www.tapinto.net/towns/west-orange/sections/green/articles/solar-bus-shelter-unveiled-at-west-orange-high-school>

"All Things Are Possible" Turns Students Into Eco Warriors

The "All Things Are Possible (ATAP) Foundation" is a nonprofit organization based in Willingboro, NJ whose mission is "to empower youth and enhance our community through academics, athletics, awareness and arts." (Their website is available here: <https://www.atapfoundation.org>.) They have instituted an "Eco Warriors" program that encourages students in grades 7-12 "to incorporate environmental science and eco-awareness and eco-friendliness in their everyday lives, throughout their academic journey and carry it into their professional endeavors and community service." The Eco Warriors program provides hands-on experiences and education using real-world applications of environmental science, for example field trips to sites including wastewater treatment facilities, nuclear power generating stations, wind generating stations and recycling plants. According to the ATAP founder, one of the things the Eco Warriors program dispels is the myth that students of color are often not engaged in or knowledgeable about sustainability. <https://srhub.org/2023/06/30/all-things-are-possible-turns-students-into-eco-warriors/>

Community Offshore Wind Provides STEAM Field Trips to New Jersey Youth as Part of Partnership

Community Offshore Wind, a joint venture between RWE and National Grid Ventures, which has secured the offshore wind lease area OCS-A 0539 off of Beach Haven, NJ, will contribute \$15,000 to a partnership with NJ-based All Things Are Possible (ATAP) Foundation (see article above). The contribution will fund over 60 students ages 5-12 years old, from overburdened communities in Southern NJ, to attend ATAP's Summer Empowerment Experience, which provides academic enrichment and exposure to a variety of careers. The Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Math (STEAM)-focused program will provide access to museums along with environmental and marine education for hands-on learning opportunities. Community Offshore Wind is also addressing food insecurity in NJ by increasing access to fresh, healthy, sustainable seafood in overburdened communities

by donating 5,800 pounds of fresh, locally-sourced fish and over 13,000 cans of clam chowder to 10 hunger relief organizations during the summer, in partnership with NJ-based seafood processors.

<https://www.roi-nj.com/2023/06/13/industry/energy-utilities/community-offshore-wind-provides-steam-field-trips-to-new-jersey-youth-as-part-of-partnership/>

PSEG ISS at MSU Launches Its Eighth Cohort for Summer 2023

Since 2016, every year the Green Teams Program of the PSEG Institute for Sustainability Studies (ISS) has provided an internship that groups students with corporations and organizations to address local and global sustainability challenges. Students are divided into teams to work together over the course of the program to create a solution to a sustainability problem. This year, 50 students are participating, divided into 10 teams; they represent 32 distinct universities and 39 degree programs. The partnered businesses and organizations this year include PSEG, Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center, Hackensack Meridian Health, New Jersey Resources, Newark Community Food System, dsm-firmenich, NJ Transit - Energy and Sustainability, Port Authority of NY and NJ, Stryker, and MSU University Facilities.

<https://srhub.org/2023/07/01/pseg-iss-at-msu-launches-its-eighth-cohort-for-summer-2023/>

OTHER

Camden Rolls Out a New Transportation Option

This 3-1/2-minute news video shows the new \$2 public ride-sharing app "Camden Loop," that fills a need for transportation in Camden's "transportation desert" areas. It is modeled after a similar program in Jersey City. Recognizing the needs of Camden residents, the app is also available in Spanish, and some wheelchair accessible vehicles are also available.

<https://www.njspotlightnews.org/video/camden-rolls-out-a-new-transportation-option/>

Governor Murphy Signs Fiscal Year 2024 Budget into Law

Gov. Murphy's press release regarding the FY 2024 NJ budget states the following: "The budget also includes significant investments to grow New Jersey's green economy and combat climate change, including \$12 million more for the Clean Energy Program, which previously went to NJ TRANSIT, a \$40 million Green Fund to leverage both private capital and federal funds, \$20 million for the Resilience and Stormwater Planning and Infrastructure program, and an additional \$10 million to support the continued installation of EV charging infrastructure throughout the State."

<https://www.state.nj.us/governor/news/news/562023/approved/20230630f.shtml>



Governor Murphy Signs Bill Requiring Provision of Critical Flood Risk Information for Homeowners and Renters

Gov. Murphy signed bill S3110/A4783, which requires sellers of real property and landlords to disclose knowledge of a property's history of flooding, flood risk, and location in a flood zone or area, and also requires landlords to notify tenants of the availability of insurance for renters through the National Flood Insurance program. Gov. Murphy stated that "In the aftermath of Tropical Storm Ida – and as flooding events continue to increase in frequency and severity – these requirements will help better prepare New Jersey homeowners and renters for extreme storms."

<https://www.state.nj.us/governor/news/news/562023/approved/20230703d.shtml>

NJ Gas Customers Can Save Thousands With Electric Appliances, New Study Finds

A report by the Acadia Center, "The Future is Electric: Part II - How Average New Jersey Households Can Save by Electrifying" (available here:

<https://acadiacenter.wpenginepowered.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/AC-Future-is-Electric-Pt-II-Report.pdf>), finds that some residents who

upgrade to electric appliances can save up to 69% on energy bills when they pair the upgrades with weatherization. Also see "Opinion" piece below).

<https://www.insidernj.com/press-release/nj-gas-customers-can-save-thousands-with-electric-appliances-new-study-finds/>

Opinion: A Healthier, More Affordable New Jersey Starts Inside Our Homes

This opinion piece by Ben Butterworth, the director of Climate, Energy & Equity Analysis at Acadia Center and Barbara Blumenthal, the research director for the New Jersey Conservation Foundation, breaks out the findings of the Acadia Center report, "The Future is Electric: Part II - How Average New Jersey Households Can Save by Electrifying" as well as opportunities for government rebates and incentives (see article above).

<https://www.njspotlightnews.org/2023/07/op-ed-healthier-affordable-nj-starts-inside-our-homes-replacing-energy-sources/>

Opinion: Low-Income Residents Need More Support as NJ Transitions to Clean Energy

This piece, by Kelvin Boddy, director of Healthy Homes and Communities with the Housing and Community Development Network of NJ (the "Network" - a "statewide association of over 270 community-based organizations and individuals, created in 1989 to enhance the efforts of these groups to create affordable housing and revitalize their communities"), describes resources available for low-income households to address the disproportionate energy cost burden that they experience, and describes existing barriers to utilizing the resources. Links are provided to NJ programs for weatherization and utility bill

savings, along with a link to a toolkit (available here: <https://www.hcdnnj.org/weatherization-toolkit>) that provides information and links about eligibility and how to apply for NJ programs. <https://www.njspotlightnews.org/2023/06/op-ed-nj-low-income-residents-need-more-support-clean-energy/>

Harmful Algal Blooms Are Back at NJ Lakes

This 5-minute news video reports on the harmful algal blooms (HABs) that are occurring in water bodies across NJ again this summer, as shown on NJ Department of Environmental Protection's (DEP) "Algal Bloom Sampling Status" map (available here:

<https://njdep.maps.arcgis.com/apps/dashboards/49190166531d4e5a811c9a91e4a41677>). The video shows some of the measures being taken to address the issue. See <https://www.njspotlightnews.org/video/harmful-algal-blooms-are-back-at-nj-lakes/>.

One of the sites where the highest level - "Warning" status - has been posted is in Timber Creek Pond in Gloucester County. See <https://www.njspotlightnews.org/2023/07/dangerous-levels-toxic-blue-green-algae-found-in-south-jersey-ponds-and-lakes/>.

Ratepayers Remain on Hook for Nuclear Subsidies – For Now

In 2019, the NJ Board of Public Utilities (BPU) awarded \$300M in 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. However, the director of the NJ Division of Rate Counsel, along with the PJM independent market monitor, want to see confidential financial data from the three units before agreeing with the BPU's conclusion.

<https://www.njspotlightnews.org/2023/07/nj-nuclear-subsidies-pseg-pjm-clean-energy-rate-counsel-bpu-salem-1-salem-2-hope-creek-brian-lipman/>

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 - Peggy Middaugh, Chair
Visit <https://uufaithaction.org/environment/> for links and resources, and to join the EJTF
