



Environmental Justice Task Force Newsletter - November 2023

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

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

EJTF and CONGREGATIONAL ACTIVITIES - UUFANJ FALL ISSUES CONFERENCE

Unitarian Universalists from congregations throughout New Jersey gathered in-person at the UU Church in Cherry Hill, and via Zoom, for the UU FaithAction NJ Fall Issues Conference on 10/21/2023. After the general program, keynote speaker, and lunch, each task force convened for its own in-depth breakout session.



UUFANJ President Mia Morse (above) and Executive Director Rev. Charles Loflin (below)



EJTF breakout session - Chair Peggy Midaugh at front



Photos by Michael Skelly

NEWSLETTER CONTENTS

EJTF and Congregational Activities	1	- Offshore Wind	17
Future Events	3	- Climate Change	18
Videos of Past Events+	10	- Lead Reduction in Households	20
News Related to EJTF Issues	14	- Forest Health	21
- Environmental Justice	14	- Educational & Youth-related	22
- Electric Vehicles/Vehicle Emission Reduction	15	- Other	23
- Fossil Fuel Infrastructure	16	EJTF's Goals for 2022/2023	24
- Land Management/Agriculture/Food	17	Moratorium Mondays	24

EJTF and CONGREGATIONAL ACTIVITIES (continued)



Zoom view of the UUFANJ Fall Issues Conference EJTF Breakout Session

- EJTF made substantive comments (thanks to the **EJTF Clean Energy Action Group and its Chair, Nancy Griffith**) on the NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) Strategic Climate Action Plan and the DEP Rulemaking for Advanced Clean Cars II (comments submitted by UUFANJ). The comments are available here: <https://www.uufaithaction.org/policy-briefs-and-positions/>.
- **EJTF Chair Peggy Middaugh** has been attending meetings of the NJ Wind Works, of which **UUFANJ is a member**; the coalition is a great source of information about offshore wind, especially in NJ (see box on p. [17](#), which also includes an Action Item). Also, Peggy was instrumental in **UUFANJ's co-sponsoring** the screening of the "Winds of Change" documentary and panel discussion (the video is available on p. [11](#)).
- **Morristown Unitarian Universalist Fellowship (MUUF)**

The Morristown Unitarian Universalist Fellowship (MUUF) recently donated nearly \$300 - their 1/2 Sunday collection - to the NJ Tree Foundation. The New Jersey Tree Foundation is a state-wide nonprofit organization dedicated to planting trees in NJ's most underserved neighborhoods. Through tree planting, volunteerism and

partnerships, they assist numerous communities in improving their environment and quality of life. One of their inspiring, socially responsible programs is the planting of trees in NJ cities that are known as "heat islands". For example, their Urban Airshed Reforestation Program has served the City of Camden and other surrounding South Jersey cities since 2002 (see Tree Planting event in Trenton under "Future Events" on p. [7](#)). This work is designed to improve air quality, manage stormwater, and provide shade.

NJ Legislature Lame Duck Session

The NJ legislature will be in session after the election (at which all 120 seats in the legislature are on the ballot), from late November to early January. "Lame duck" sessions such as this are opportunities for quick passage of bills - both favorable and unfavorable to our goals. For example, a bill (S2978/A4658) has been introduced with the stated goal of achieving 100% clean electricity by 2035 (see the related Rally planned for 11/20/2023 in Trenton under "Future Events" on p. [7](#)). You can follow legislation on the NJ Legislature's very accessible website, available here: <https://njleg.state.nj.us>.

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

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

NOVEMBER 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 2023 NJ Complete Streets Summit - 8:30 a.m. NJ WasteWise Business Network Meeting - 10:00 a.m.	2 "Time for Turbines 6" - 12:00 p.m. & 5:00 p.m.	3 "Time for Turbines 6" - 9:00 a.m.	4 Maywood Green Fair - 11:00 a.m. Abundance Fest at Down Bottom Farms - 12:00 p.m.
5	6	7	8 DRBC 4th Quarter Public Hearing - 1:30 p.m. "Equatic: The Development of Seawater-Based Atmospheric Carbon Removal" - 12:30 p.m. "Nature Knows Best: Restoring our Forests" - 7:00 p.m. "The Jersey Pinelands: More than Meets the Eye" - 7:00 p.m.	9 "Key Issues to Watch at COP28" - 7:00 p.m. "Creating Hubs of Climate Resilience with Federal Clean Energy Funding" - 7:00 p.m.	10	11
12 "Climate on My Campus: Using Field-Based Data in the Classroom" (NJSOC) - 1:30 p.m.	13 "Climate on My Campus: Using Field-Based Data in the Classroom" (NJSOC) (cont.) - 9:00 a.m.	14 LWVNJ "Introduction to Organizing" - 6:00 p.m. "Electrify Your Life" - 7:00 p.m.	15 Rutgers Climate Symposium 2023: "In Search of Solutions" - 9:00 a.m. NJ Clean Air Council Meeting - 9:30 a.m. "PFAS: 'Forever Chemicals' Contaminating Our Water" - 3:00 p.m.	16 "Learn How to Plan Your Home Electrification" - 7:00 p.m.	17 NJ Tree Foundation Urban Tree Planting - 9:00 a.m. Comments due: Liberty State Park Phase 1B Comments due: NJBPURules Establishing Permanent Community Solar Energy Program	18 NJ Tree Foundation Urban Tree Planting - 10:00 a.m.
19	20 Rally For Real Clean Energy! - 9:00 a.m. LWVNJ "Understanding NJ Local Government" - 6:00 p.m.	21	22	23	24	25
26	27 "Building a Healthy, Sustainable Urban Community in New Jersey" - 6:30 p.m.	28	29 "Forging a Future with Nature" - 2:00 p.m.	30 "Voices from the Land: Exploring Landscape and Language, Art and Culture" (NJSOC) - 4:00 p.m. (cont. to 12/2)		

FUTURE EVENTS

2023 NJ Complete Streets Summit 11/1/2023, 8:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. New Brunswick, NJ - In-person

The 2023 New Jersey Complete Streets Summit, sponsored by the NJ Department of Transportation (DOT), will be held on Wednesday, November 1, 2023. "Complete Streets" balance the needs of all road users in a community, regardless of who they are and how they travel. This biennial Summit brings together planners, engineers, public officials, health professionals, advocates, and others involved with shaping NJ communities. Summit session topics include local success stories, transit-friendly planning, and advancing clean streets initiatives in NJ. **Note: the Summit is currently at capacity, but you can register to reserve a spot on the waitlist and event organizers will contact you if space becomes available.** Additional information, including links to the agenda and to reserve a spot on the waitlist, are available here: <https://njbikeped.org/2023-nj-complete-streets-summit/>.

NJ WasteWise Business Network Meeting 11/1/2023, 10:00 a.m. - 11:45 a.m. - Virtual

The New Jersey WasteWise Business Network is a free educational program designed to help businesses and other organizations learn how waste reduction, recycling, and recycled product procurement not only help the environment, but also their bottom line. Some of the topics to be presented at this webinar/meeting are "Booksmiles Donation Program – Advancing the Causes of Reading and Reuse," "Innovative Reuse and Recycling Programs Emanating from the Plastic Bag Ban – Reusable Bag Program," and "Bergen New Bridge Medical Center's Food Waste Reduction Initiatives and Other Successful Waste Reduction and Recycling Initiatives." Links to the agenda and to register are available here: <https://www.nj.gov/dep/dshw/recycling/wastewise/ww-events.htm>.

"Time for Turbines 6" - In-person 11/2/2023, 12:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m. (Field trips - Central & South NJ); 5:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m. (Reception - Atlantic City, NJ) 11/3/2023, 9:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. (Forum - Atlantic City, NJ)

"Time for Turbines 6" hosted by Jersey Renews will feature field trips and a networking reception on 11/2/2023 and a full-day forum on 11/3/2023. "The forum will feature speakers and panels from leading voices in the offshore wind space including federal and state government officials, wind developers, and labor leaders discussing the most pressing topics related to the offshore wind industry." **General admission is \$350 and nonprofit admission is \$200.** Additional information including descriptions of field trips, the agenda, and the registration link, are available here: <https://www.timeforturbines.org>.



Maywood Green Fair 11/4/2023, 11:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. Maywood, NJ - In-person

The Maywood, NJ Green Team is hosting a Green Fair, in conjunction with the Maywood Fall Festival and the Maywood Arts Collective "Art in the Park." The NJ Department of Environmental Protection's (DEP) DriveGreen team will be participating. Additional information is available here: <https://tinyurl.com/4rrkw9n5>.

Abundance Fest at Down Bottom Farms 11/4/2023, 12:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m. Newark, NJ - In-person

Down Bottom Farms is the newest and largest addition to **EJTF partner** Ironbound Community Corporation's (ICC) Urban Agriculture Program. Located on a half acre of land at the corner of Ferry and St. Charles Streets, the farm includes: a 30 ft. x 72 ft. hoop house; a fruit tree orchard consisting of apple, pear and peach trees; blueberry and strawberry patches; a growing urban vineyard; and murals and community art pieces. The Abundance Fest will include a

Compost 101 demonstration, free fall harvest veggie bags, herb bundling, planting soil/compost bin giveaway, raffles, and a book exchange. Additional information and the link to register are available here:

<https://njeja.org/event/abundance-fest-down-bottom-farm/>.

**Delaware River Basin Commission (DRBC)
Fourth Quarter 2023 Public Hearing
11/8/2023, 1:20 p.m. - Virtual**

The Delaware River Basin Commission (DRBC) will hold its fourth-quarter public hearing on Wednesday, November 8, 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://tinyurl.com/yvtrcb4u>.

**"Equatic: The Development of a Seawater-Based Atmospheric Carbon Removal and Hydrogen Co-production Platform"
11/8/2023, 12:30 p.m. - 1:30 p.m.
Princeton, NJ - In-person**

This seminar is hosted by the Princeton University Andlinger Center for Energy and the Environment, and will be presented by Dr. Gaurav Sant, Director of the UCLA Institute for Carbon Management. The seminar will cover "an approach to rapidly precipitate Ca- and Mg-carbonates and hydroxides from seawater to achieve large-scale, cost-effective CO2 removal. This Equatic process electrolytically forces mineral carbonate precipitation – from seawater – thereby consuming CO2 that is dissolved in seawater by locking it within carbonate minerals, and simultaneously producing alkaline mineral hydroxides that when dissolved in seawater enable the drawdown of atmospheric CO2." The seminar will also describe "the translational design, fabrication, commissioning and operations of pilot plants in Singapore and Los Angeles." Note: lunch will be provided at 12:00 noon. Additional information is available here: <https://acee.princeton.edu/events/highlight-seminar-gaurav-sant/>.

**"Nature Knows Best: Restoring our Forests" - Hybrid
11/8/2023, 7:00 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.
Clinton, NJ - In-person & on Zoom**

This program organized by the NJ Sierra Club Hunterdon Warren Group will be presented by Leslie Sauer, member and recent award recipient of the NJ Highlands Coalition (**of which UUFANJ is a member**). The program description states: "Proforestation enables continuous forest growth uninterrupted by active management or 'timber harvesting'. There is little protection for our large trees and forests in NJ or the rest of the country. Every governmental plan proposed to mitigate climate change relies on natural landscapes to remove CO2 from the atmosphere...." Leslie is a founder emeritus of Andropogon Associates and a pioneer in the field of restoring and managing native landscapes. Her book, "The Once and Future Forest" (Island Press, 1998), is a guidebook for restoring and managing natural landscapes-especially remnant deciduous forests." Additional information and the link to RSVP are available here:

<https://act.sierraclub.org/events/details?formcampaignid=7013q000001rMQCAA2>.

**"The Jersey Pinelands: More than Meets the Eye" - Webinar
11/8/2023, 7:00 p.m. - 8:15 p.m.**

This webinar, part of the "Option Green" series co-sponsored by the Friends of the East Brunswick Environmental Commission and funded by the EB Friends of the library, will be presented by Jim Peck, education director of the American Littoral Society. He will present a program "on a wide variety of Pineland topics including carnivorous plants, the pygmy pine forest, Atlantic white cedar bogs, glass and charcoal production, orchids, rare tree frogs, the indigenous curly grass fern, the Greenwood boardwalk, the need for fire, the 17 trillion gallon Cohansey aquifer, pitch pines, the importance of the cuesta, Apple Pie Hill and much more." Additional information and the registration link are available here:

<https://ilove.ebpl.org/adults/events/option-green-jersey-pinelands/2023-11-09-000000-2023-11-09-011500>.

"Creating Hubs of Climate Resilience with Federal Clean Energy Funding" - Webinar
11/9/2023, 7:00 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.

"How can we use IRA [Inflation Reduction Act] funding to create hubs of community resilience? Join Denise Abdul-Rahman, Black Sun Light Sustainability; Shina Robinson, Asian Pacific Environmental Network; and Miguel Yanez-Barnuevo, Environmental and Energy Study Institute for an informative discussion on ways you can turn your faith into action to create hubs of climate resilience for our communities." This is part of the Clean Energy as a Human Right webinar series of the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA) Side with Love's Create Climate Justice Campaign. Additional information and the registration link are available here: https://secure.everyaction.com/AZRTykn33U2bpMe5RMg_3Q2.

"Electrify Your Life" - Webinar
11/14/2023, 7:00 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.

This webinar sponsored by Elders Climate Action will be presented by Brian Stewart, a co-founder of Electrify Now, a volunteer organization devoted to educating energy consumers and homeowners about the benefits of electrification and the role they can play in accelerating the world to clean renewable energy and a sustainable future. "Our individual actions are a critical part of building a clean energy future: this workshop will help you to understand what you can do NOW, and the incentives and resources that are available to help you take action." Additional information and the link to register are available here: <https://www.eldersclimateaction.org/event/electrifyyourlife/>.

NJ Clean Air Council Meeting - Hybrid
11/15/2023, 9:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
Trenton, NJ - In-person & 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://tinyurl.com/m9bv4t4s>.

"PFAS: The 'Forever Chemicals' Contaminating Our Water" - Webinar
11/15/2023, 3:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.

"PFAS - the toxic 'forever chemicals' found in almost everything from food packing to non-stick pans are a major polluter of our drinking water. More and more studies are uncovering PFAS's health risks, including cancers, and immune system and reproductive system harm. The corporations that make PFAS, including 3M and Dupont, have known about these dangers for decades. Food & Water Watch is fighting on multiple fronts to regulate - and ultimately ban - PFAS and hold manufacturers accountable for cleaning up their pollution. Join us to learn more about how, together, we can protect public health from toxic PFAS chemicals." This event is part of Food & Water Watch's "Livable Future LIVE" monthly virtual event series. Additional information and the link to register are available here: <https://www.mobilize.us/fww/event/575580/>.

"Learn How to Plan Your Home Electrification" - Webinar
11/16/2023, 7:00 p.m. - 8:15 p.m.

In this webinar presented by the Sierra Club NJ Chapter and the NJ 50x30 Building Electrification Team, Professional Energy Consultant Matt Kavanagh will provide examples and data to create a complete plan to electrify your household. Matt will cover "EVs, EV chargers, battery backup (includes integration of EV battery into home solutions), heating/cooling, hot water, solar PV, extra insulation, electrical panel upgrades, and lawn/property maintenance equipment." Additional information and the registration link are available here: <https://act.sierraclub.org/events/details?formcampaignid=7013q000001rjmOAAQ&mapLinkHref=>.

NJDEP Liberty State Park Revitalization Plan Phase 1B: Northern Area Recreation, Arts & Culture
Comments Due 11/17/2023

The NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) comprehensive Liberty State Park Revitalization Program includes "improvements" along the Audrey Zapp Drive corridor at the Park's northern end, where the DEP "will plan,

**NJ Tree Foundation Urban Tree Planting
11/17/2023, 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
& 11/18/2023, 10:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.
Trenton, NJ - In-person**

Join with the NJ Tree Foundation (of which **EJTF Chair Peggy Middaugh** is a Trustee) to plant trees in Trenton, NJ as part of its Urban Airshed Reforestation Program. The program is designed to improve air quality, manage stormwater, and provide shade, and has removed approximately 89,944 square feet of impervious surface to plant 7,930 trees along city streets. All tree planting events are rain or shine; tools and gloves will be provided. For additional information or to volunteer, contact Crystal at cwessel@njtreefoundation.org, or call (856)287-4488.

**NJBPU Rules Establishing Permanent
Community Solar Energy Program
Comments Due 11/17/2023**

The NJ Board of Public Utilities (BPU) has published rules (available here: [https://www.nj.gov/bpu/pdf/rules/PRN%202023-095%20\(55%20N.J.R.%201985\(a\)\).pdf](https://www.nj.gov/bpu/pdf/rules/PRN%202023-095%20(55%20N.J.R.%201985(a)).pdf)) "to establish the permanent Community Solar Energy Program (CSEP) based on the framework of the Pilot Program and set new standards for participation. This includes registration of eligible projects to provide solar energy to participating subscribers through the community solar mechanism. The proposed rules establish the specifics of the CSEP design, including eligibility standards, registration processes, standards for subscriptions and low- to moderate income (LMI) subscribers, billing procedures, consumer protection, and reporting requirements." **Comments are due 11/17/2023.** [Note: a "Notice of Administrative Corrections" to the above published rules (available here: [https://nj.gov/bpu/pdf/rules/BPU%20NOAC%2014_8%20\(PRN%202023-095\)%20\(55%20N.J.R.%202048\(a\)\).pdf](https://nj.gov/bpu/pdf/rules/BPU%20NOAC%2014_8%20(PRN%202023-095)%20(55%20N.J.R.%202048(a)).pdf)) corrects several errors; comments on the Notice of Administrative Corrections are due 12/1/2023.] Instructions for submitting comments are included in the documents linked above.

**Rally For Real Clean Energy!
11/20/2023, 9:00 a.m. - 1:45 p.m.
Trenton, NJ - In-person**

"In response to the deepening climate emergency and our growing calls for action, new legislation in New Jersey (S2978/A4658) has been introduced with the stated goal of achieving 100% clean electricity by 2035. This bill can be a huge step forward in our fight against climate change and environmental injustice. However, the fossil fuel industry and its allies are hard at work, waging a massive lobbying and misinformation campaign for expensive new subsidies in the bill for more dirty energy development. With this legislation expected to be prioritized shortly after election day, we need our elected officials to hear from us loud and clear." Join EmpowerNJ at the NJ state capitol on 11/20 for a BIG rally and lobby day for 100% truly clean energy by 2035. Additional information and the link to RSVP are available here: <https://actionnetwork.org/events/nj-needs-100-truly-clean-energy-by-2035/>.

**"Building a Healthy, Sustainable Urban
Community in New Jersey"
11/27/2023, 6:30 p.m.
Lincroft, NJ - In-person**

In this event organized by the Jersey Shore Group of the Sierra Club NJ Chapter, "Jonathan Phillips, Executive Director of Groundwork Elizabeth, will explain how the organization builds

sustainable, healthy urban communities with an emphasis on community participation. The group is dedicated to reducing community climate risks and cumulative impacts, such as urban heat, flooding, and poor air and water quality. Groundwork Elizabeth is a locally based non-profit focusing on Union County, and is part of a national network of environmental urban non-profits." (See the article on p. [21](#).) Additional information is available here:

<https://act.sierraclub.org/events/details?formcampaignid=7013q000001rcp4AAA&mapLinkHref=https://maps.google.com/maps&daddr=Science%20Monday:%20Building%20a%20Healthy,%20Sustainable%20Urban%20Community%20in%20New%20Jersey@40.32705,-74.133997>.

"Forging a Future with Nature" - Webinar
11/29/2023, 2:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.

This is the third of a three-part "Beyond Pesticides" webinar series. (A link to videos of the first two webinars is available on p. [12](#).) "A future supported by the natural environment depends on our effective involvement in decisions in our homes, communities, states, and at the federal level to ensure that we are taking the steps necessary to protect against existential threats to health, biodiversity, and climate. The Forum is an important opportunity to hear from those working as scientists, advocates, land managers (from gardens, parks, play fields to farms), and public decision makers about steps being taken and action needed to prevent catastrophic collapse of the natural systems that sustain life." Additional information and registration are available here:

<https://www.beyondpesticides.org/programs/national-pesticide-forum/2023-national-forum-series/program>.

League of Women Voters of New Jersey (LWVNJ) Activist Trainings - Virtual
Various dates

The League of Women Voters of New Jersey (LWVNJ) (of which **EJTF member Nancy Griffeth** is co-chair of the Natural Resources Committee) is presenting a public series of virtual activist training sessions designed to equip participants "with the knowledge and skills needed to carry out dynamic organizing strategies that can effectively influence public policy and the state of democracy in New Jersey." The sessions

scheduled for November 2023 are listed below; descriptions of these and additional sessions, along with the links to register for all sessions, are available here: <https://www.lwvnj.org/training>.

LWVNJ "Introduction to Organizing"
- Via Zoom
11/14/2023, 6:00 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.

"Grassroots organizing happens when everyday people come together to identify common problems faced by their community and work together to address the issue or advocate for change. This training will provide you with an understanding of grassroots organizing principles, an overview of organizing strategies, and guide you through the process of creating a campaign plan to mobilize your supporters and reach critical goals." Registration is available here: <https://tinyurl.com/fa77vtyb>.

LWVNJ "Understanding NJ Local Government" - Via Zoom
11/20/2023, 6:00 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.

"Most people know that the actions that federal and state governments take can have major implications on the lives of millions of Americans. But what about local government? In New Jersey, thousands of municipal and county government officials are responsible for making critical daily decisions and delivering essential services to the communities they serve. Despite the tremendous power that local government has over our daily lives, most people know little to nothing about what it does or how it works. Join this training to learn about the structures and powers of the local government bodies that are making decisions for your community." Registration is available here: <https://tinyurl.com/yrbx5ae>.

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 is providing programs. In November, the two programs shown on p.9 are being presented for educators (formal and informal).

"Climate on My Campus: Using Field-Based Data in the Classroom"
Friends of the NJ School of Conservation (NJSOC) Program
Sandyston, NJ - In-person
11/12/2023, 1:30 p.m. (optional) through 11/13/2023, 4:00 p.m.

"Increase your knowledge and classroom resources to implement the New Jersey Climate Change Standards across the curriculum workshop sessions will focus on learning about how and why data is collected in order to help you incorporate near/real-time data into your curriculum." Additional information and registration are available here:

<https://friendsofnjsoc.org/event/climate-on-my-campus-using-field-based-data-in-the-classroom/>.

Cost is \$90.00 (for both days - includes cabin-style lodging at the NJSOC for one night, 3 meals, and workshop materials) or \$40.00 (for 11/13/2023 only - includes lunch and workshop)

"Voices from the Land: Exploring Landscape and Language, Art and Culture"
Friends of the NJ School of Conservation (NJSOC) Program
11/30/2023, 4:00 p.m. (optional) through 12/3/2023, 2:00 p.m.
Sandyston, NJ - In-person

"Voices from the Land' is a creative process that encourages students to explore the connection between nature, art, language and culture. The Voices process is standards-based and experiential Voices builds 'community' among people of different backgrounds, ages and abilities: social and emotional learning are integral to the process. Communication, speaking and listening skills, compromise and respect... are essential elements Voices has been used in schools across the US, Canada and Europe, with groups ranging from pre-school to adult, and special-needs. Additional information and registration are available here:

<https://friendsofnjsoc.org/event/voices-from-the-land-exploring-landscape-and-language-art-and-culture/>.

Cost is \$99.00, which includes cabin-style lodging for two nights, five meals (bring dinner if arriving on 11/30/2023), and all workshop materials.

Rutgers Climate and Energy Institute Listing of Climate Events

Multiple events are listed on this site. A sampling of November listings is below; check the site periodically for an updated list, here:

<https://rcei.rutgers.edu/events/> and here:

<https://rcei.rutgers.edu/news-events/external-events/>.

"Key Issues to Watch at COP28"
11/9/2023, 7:00 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.
- Webinar

Join Second Nature, University Climate Change Coalition, and the Research and Independent Non-Governmental Organizations (RINGO) constituency of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) to discuss key issues on the negotiation agenda at COP28 in Dubai, United Arab Emirates.

<https://rcei.rutgers.edu/event/key-issues-to-watch-at-cop28/>.

Rutgers Climate Symposium 2023:
"In Search of Solutions" - Hybrid
11/15/2023, 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.
New Brunswick, NJ - In-person & Virtual

This symposium focuses on "Fostering collaboration among researchers and students from institutions in the greater NJ, NY, and Philadelphia region who are interested in climate change, renewable energy, energy efficiency, or other approaches to reducing greenhouse gas emissions across disciplines representing climate science, human dimensions, technology, the arts, communications, and humanities." It is intended for students, faculty, and staff of academic and research institutions, with a limited number of in-person registrations available for unaffiliated members of the public upon request. Additional information including links to the agenda and to register are available here:

<https://ruclimatesymposium.rutgers.edu>. **Note: the virtual portion covers the morning presentations only, not the afternoon poster session. For the in-person session, there is registration and breakfast at 8:15 a.m.**



**Jersey Water Works
Conference 2023**
**12/13/2023, 8:00 a.m. -
3:00 p.m.**
Ewing, NJ - In-person

Jersey Water Works (JWW) is presenting its Ninth Annual Jersey Water Works Conference, with the theme "The Value of Water - New Jersey Edition." Topics will include PFAS and emergent contaminants, climate resilience and green infrastructure, and shared services to reduce cost and improve efficiency, among others. The JWW Conference is an event that will bring together state and local decision makers, practitioners, and stakeholders. It will be a full-day event including a keynote speaker, featured speakers, six workshops, a utility track, and lunch. Additional information including the agenda and the registration link, are available here: <https://www.jerseywaterworks.org/events/annual-conference/2023/>.

VIDEOS OF PAST EVENTS+

"Farm Bill - Important to All of Us"
- Recording of Radio Show

This Eco-Logic radio/internet show, co-hosted by **EJTF member Sally Gellert**, reported on the recent Farm Bill Conference in Washington, DC which Sally attended. Lloyd Wright of the Natural Resources Conservation Service and Joe Van Wye of Farm Action discussed the Farm Bill, which is authorized every 5 years. "This is a once-in-5-years chance to make the farm bill work for the people who need it." The recording is available here: <https://wbai.org/archive/program/episode/?id=44665>.

"Mobilizing Voters"
with Environmental Voter Project's
Nathaniel Stinnett - Video of Webinar

Sponsored by Elders Climate Action, in this webinar Nathaniel Stinnett from the Environmental Voter Project (EVP) discussed how EVP identifies inactive environmentalists and

transforms them into consistent voters to build the power of the environmental movement. Nathaniel Stinnett is the Founder and Executive Director of EVP, a non-partisan nonprofit using data analytics and behavioral science to identify and mobilize non-voting environmentalists. The video is available here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nw7aKhMWdeQ>.

**NJDEP Hudson County EJ Community
Engagement Session - Video of Session**

The NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) held an EJ Community Engagement Session in Hudson County. It provided residents, community groups, and other members of the public a chance to meet DEP Commissioner LaTourette and EPA Region 2 Administrator Garcia and discuss environmental justice issues in Hudson County. It was one of a series being conducted by DEP in communities across NJ. The video is available here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BINzEVjAA4Q>.

**"What's Happening with Offshore Wind Off
New Jersey?" - Video of Webinar**

As part of Rutgers' "Earth Day Every Day" webinar series, Dr. Douglas Zemeckis of Rutgers Cooperative Extension, and Dr. Josh Kohut of Rutgers University, Department of Marine and Coastal Sciences, provided an overview of offshore wind energy development off the coast of NJ, including information about individual windfarms. A summary of related research, education, and workforce development initiatives at Rutgers University was also provided. The video is available here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AnmQ46D8-RM&t=31s>.

**"Using Locally Sourced Herbs for Good
Taste and Good Health" - Video of Webinar**

In this webinar sponsored by the Foodshed Alliance (of which **EJTF member Christine Dunbar** is the Paulins Kill Watershed Coordinator), herbalist and forager Reid Giacomarra showcased the benefits of using

seasonal herbs from local farms in cooking as well as in creating tinctures, infusions, and balms, focusing on using herbs for good health. The video is available here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eBTbyK0nzLA>.

**"Securing Climate Justice Through Green Amendments:
The Held v. Montana Victory and What It Means for the Nationwide Movement"
- Video of Webinar**

In the *Held v. Montana* case, a Montana District Court Judge ruled in favor of the sixteen youth plaintiffs, finding that the limitations on considering environmental factors when deciding oil and gas permits violated their right to a safe environment included in Montana's constitution (its "Green Amendment"). The case "set a huge precedent, affirming Montanan's constitutional right to a clean and healthful environment. For the first time ever, it declared that their fundamental right includes the right to a safe and stable climate." In this webinar, leading environmental minds, including Maya K. van Rossum, the founder of the national Green Amendment movement and the Green Amendments For The Generations, discussed how *Held v. Montana* and Green Amendments intersect to provide unparalleled protections for present and future generations. The video is available here:

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

**"The 1973 Energy Crisis: The Arab Oil Embargo and the New Age of Energy"
- Video of Livestream**

In this event, the Center on Global Energy Policy (CGEP) and the Institute of Global Politics at Columbia University's School of International and Public Affairs (SIPA) marked the fiftieth anniversary of the Arab Oil Embargo. There was a keynote address by Pulitzer Prize-winning author Dr. Daniel Yergin that examined the historical significance of the Embargo. Then, a panel discussion examined the details of the Embargo, how it shook up geopolitics and the global economy including producing lasting effects that have guided policymakers in the decades since, and what lessons it holds for the current

geopolitical situation. The video is available here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y0-OhbCfGio>.

**"Winds of Change" Documentary
- Videos of Film & Q&A Panel**

The NJ League of Conservation Voters (LCV) sponsored (**and UUFANJ co-sponsored**) a virtual film screening and a Q&A panel for "Winds of Change," a "thought-provoking documentary that delves into the potential impact and benefits of Offshore Wind farms in the state of New Jersey. This groundbreaking audiovisual masterpiece aims to bridge the communication divide between developers and our local communities, shedding light on the transformative power of renewable energy." The film is available here:

<https://vimeo.com/830668820> and a video of the Q&A session is available here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YYUn6cM8An8>.

"Residential Rooftop Solar for a Greener Garden State" - Video of Webinar

As part of the Rutgers "Earth Day Every Day" ReNew New Jersey webinar series, Dr. Dunbar Birnie, Rutgers University Department of Materials Science and Engineering, "shed light on the technical, financial, and policy aspects of adding solar to your house in New Jersey. Is it a scam? What are your options? How should you move forward with new solar?" The video is available here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aAhr-uFTqxc>.

**"Overview of Energy Use in NJ and Renewable Energy's Role in Meeting NJ's Carbon Reduction Goals"
- Video of Webinar**

As part of the Rutgers "Earth Day Every Day" ReNew New Jersey webinar series, Dave Specca, Assistant Director of the Rutgers EcoComplex, provided a summary of overall energy use, and the amount of clean energy currently produced in NJ. The webinar covered "A discussion of the future mix of renewable energy production in New Jersey, and the role it will play in meeting the State's greenhouse gas reduction goals [and] the need to utilize renewable energy technologies

that conserve our valuable land." The video is available here:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OYsQROu0ymw>.

"America 2050: Our Most-Likely Climate Future" - Video of Webinar

This webinar, sponsored by Unitarian Universalists for a Just Economy (UUJEC), was presented by Dr. Emily Schoerning, "an internationally recognized educator whose research on socially controversial science helps bring people together." She is the founder of American Resiliency, the first nonprofit focused on communicating climate resilience information to the general public. "Do you want to know how the climate is likely to change where you live? When we understand what's coming, we can get ready for a future that contains opportunities as well as challenges. Using high-consensus federal resources, this conversation helps you understand America's projected climate by 2050 in terms of changes to summers, winters, precipitation patterns, and where people may want to move." The video is available here:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jZ2U-yGGTmk>.

ANJEC Environmental Congress - Videos of Selected Sessions

The 50th Association of NJ Environmental Commissions (ANJEC) Environmental Congress took place in a hybrid format. Videos are available of the following selected sessions:

- Video of Welcome & Keynote Address by Olivia Glenn, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Region 2, Chief of Staff, available here:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MRu7jVPaezg>;
- Video of Municipal Awards, and Featured Speaker Shawn LaTourette, NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) Commissioner, available here:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5sAjtvdIOTc>; and
- Video of session on "Tackling Climate Change In NJ's Urbanized Coastal Communities," available here:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aR7yAYdwNwA>.

"Green Banks: Financing Climate Solutions" - Video of Webinar

This forum, sponsored by Elders Climate Action, was "a full, informative discussion about green banks on the national level, the workings of an actual green bank, and the plans for the new green bank in Massachusetts." Speakers included: Paul Mark, State Senator from Western Mass., Nynea Young, Director of Policy and Network at the Coalition for Green Capital, and Bert Hunter, Chief Investment Officer of the Connecticut Green Bank. The video is available here:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0zXKWHql_rw.

"Option Green: Invasive Plants" - Video of Webinar

As part of the East Brunswick Public Library's "Option Green" series, Hubert Ling, Ph.D., of the Native Plant Society of NJ, discussed what the government and scientists are doing, and what you as an individual can do, to address invasive plants. "Invasive plants decrease the ecological health of our world, decrease available food and nesting areas, reduce biological diversity, and are 130 billion dollar problem for the US." Some of the common invasives in NJ were covered and alternative noninvasive native replacements were described. An introduction into the world of native plants was also provided, and information was given as to how to add novelty and interest to a garden. This event was co-sponsored by the Highland Park Chapter of the Native Plant Society of NJ. The video is available here:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C_K84J4Sf-c.

"Forging a Future with Nature" - Video of Webinar

This was the second of a three-part "Beyond Pesticides" webinar series which will continue through November. "A future supported by the natural environment depends on our effective involvement in decisions in our homes, communities, states, and at the federal level to ensure that we are taking the steps necessary to protect against existential threats to health, biodiversity, and climate. The Forum is an important opportunity to hear from those working

as scientists, advocates, land managers (from gardens, parks, play fields to farms), and public decision makers about steps being taken and action needed to prevent catastrophic collapse of the natural systems that sustain life." The video of this webinar - as well as the video of the first webinar - is available here:

<https://www.beyondpesticides.org/programs/national-pesticide-forum/2023-national-forum-series/session-recordings-and-materials>.

"Creating Sustainable Systems: Soil, Carbon, and Food" - Video of Webinar

In this webinar sponsored by Elders Climate Action, the panel highlighted "some of the technical/economic/political/practical challenges and opportunities that we need to honestly face in order to make nature-based climate-improving strategies actually work at scale." Panelists included: David Montgomery, Professor of Geology at University of Washington and an expert on regenerative agriculture, who focused on farming for soil quality as a way to both feed our growing population and reduce greenhouse gases; Walter Willett, Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, Professor of Epidemiology and Nutrition, currently the co-chair of the EAT-Lancet Commission on sustainable nutrition; and Ilan Zugman, 350.org's Latin America Director. The video is available here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pxiF2U1Wc0M>.

"Mysteries and Challenges of Agricultural Emissions to the Atmosphere" - Video of Webinar

This webinar, part of the Princeton University High Meadows Environmental Institute (HMEI) Faculty Seminar Series, was presented by Dr. Mark Zondlo, Professor of Civil and Environmental Engineering. "Agriculture is one of the largest sectors contributing greenhouse gases and air pollutant emissions to the atmosphere, but it receives relatively little attention compared to its outsized influences on climate, human health, and ecosystem degradation. Emissions from agriculture are extremely heterogeneous in space and time within a large number of individual source locations, so traditional methods of quantifying emissions from sectors with tailpipes or smokestack emissions simply cannot be used.

This talk featured the integration of new measurement approaches and sensor technologies to constrain methane, nitrous oxide, and ammonia emission inventories from agricultural activities." The video is available here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W3Hkn5mw2k0>.

"How a New Climate Language Can Create a Compelling Story of Humanity's Restoration of a Safe Climate" - Video of Webinar

"Telling compelling climate stories requires a rich climate language." This webinar, sponsored by the Security and Sustainability Forum and George Washington University's Environmental and Energy Management Institute, was presented by Herb Simmens, former Executive Director of the NJ State Planning Commission. The webinar celebrates the launch of the second edition of his book, "A Climate Vocabulary of the Future." The video is available here:

<https://vimeo.com/858205550>.

"Media's Impact on Climate Action" - Video of Webinar

"With 'climate change' a hot-button phrase that brings backlash and even death threats, how can reporters and meteorologists do their job - ensure that the public is engaged and informed? Meteorologist Chris Gloninger didn't just want to warn people about the latest record-breaking storms. He wanted to talk about the science behind the changing weather. As scientists draw ever-clearer connections between climate change and extreme weather, Gloninger believes meteorologists should present this science to viewers. Bernadette Woods Placky and John Morales agree." In this webinar sponsored by the Samuel Lawrence Foundation, these award-winning meteorologists and climate defenders "describe[d] the challenges the media faces when reporting on climate change, and envision[ed] how the media can bridge the gap between scientists and the public to drive climate literacy and civic action." The video is available here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ingfWpflHss&list=PLmlmU6aWhTt9i6oUR0FT2mUS2GflH97mL&index=2>.

The NJ State Development and Redevelopment Plan is Being Updated - Videos of Webinars

The NJ State Planning Commission hosted a series of webinars to gather input on how to update the NJ State Development and Redevelopment Plan. Last adopted in 2001, the State Plan provides a comprehensive framework intended to guide future development, redevelopment, conservation, preservation, and restoration efforts. Issuance of a preliminary update of the State Plan is targeted for Winter 2024. Webinars included: "Infrastructure Strategies for Transportation, Water and other Utilities in an Updated State Plan," "Housing Strategies in an Updated State Plan," "Environmental Protection and Natural Resource Restoration Strategies in an Updated State Plan," "Open Space, Historic and Cultural Preservation Strategies in an Updated State Plan," "Establishing Goals for Social Justice in an Updated State Plan," "Establishing Goals for Climate Change & Resilience in an Updated State Plan," "Economic Development and Workforce Strategies in an Updated State Plan," and "Sound & Integrated Planning in an Updated State Plan." Videos of the webinars, as well as links for commenting and instructions to leave voicemail comments, are available here: <https://tinyurl.com/mws99ac6>.

NEWS RELATED TO EJTF ISSUES

[covering 9/27/2023 – 10/26/2023]

ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

Biden-Harris Administration Announces Nearly \$128 Million for Environmental Justice Projects in Communities Across the Country

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) announced nearly \$128 million to fund 186 projects selected through its "Environmental Justice Collaborative Problem Solving" (EJCPS) and "Environmental Justice Government-to-Government" (EJG2G) programs. The funds will be used "to ensure disadvantaged communities that have historically suffered from

underinvestment have access to clean air and water and climate resilience solutions in alignment with the Biden-Harris Administration's Justice40 Initiative." NJ groups including **EJTF partners** the Ironbound Community Corporation (ICC) and the NJ Environmental Justice Alliance (NJEJA) received awards (descriptions available here:

https://www.epa.gov/system/files/documents/2023-10/2023-the-environmental-justice-collaborative-problem-solving-ejcps-program-project-summaries_0.pdf) from the EJCPS program, and

the County of Hudson, the City of Newark, the City of Jersey City, and the NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) received awards (descriptions available here:

https://www.epa.gov/system/files/documents/2023-10/2023-government-to-government-ejg2g-project-summaries_1.pdf) from the EJG2G program.

<https://www.epa.gov/newsreleases/biden-harris-administration-announces-nearly-128-million-environmental-justice>

AG Platkin and DEP Commissioner LaTourette Announce Resolution of Four Environmental Lawsuits and Announce Six Recent Enforcement Actions in Environmental Justice Communities

This press release describes a number of recent case outcomes and enforcement actions handled by the Environmental Enforcement and Environmental Justice (EEEJ) Section within the NJ Division of Law's Affirmative Civil Enforcement Practice Group, whose "work is guided by the principles of environmental justice, ensuring that all communities across New Jersey have access to a safe and clean environment. Consequently, the Section frequently pursues enforcement efforts in communities that are overburdened by a history of environmental neglect." In one of the recent settlements, "A court order directed the shutdown of unsafe wells and the drilling of new wells to provide safe drinking water for migrant workers and their families housed on the Blueberry Bill farm in Hammonton."

https://www.nj.gov/dep/newsrel/2023/23_00928.htm



NJIT Researchers Launch Project to Improve Energy and Climate Justice in New Jersey

The NJ Institute of Technology (NJIT) received a grant from the NJ State Policy Lab of Rutgers University for a year-long study of the attitudes and behaviors of under-resourced neighborhoods in Newark toward the adoption of renewable energy, with the goal of helping to NJ's lower-income homeowners take advantage of the state's clean energy programs. The particular focus of the study will be on encouraging residents to engage in NJ's Community Solar Program, and will utilize online open discussions to collect insights into region-specific barriers viewed as discouraging the Newark's homeowners from participating in that program and other relevant energy justice programs.

<https://news.njit.edu/njit-researchers-launch-project-improve-energy-and-climate-justice-new-jersey>

New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection Implements Green, Sustainable, and Resilient Guidance for the Remediation of Contaminated Sites

The NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) has a library of dozens of guidance documents related to the Site Remediation Program. Interestingly, they have only recently published the first administrative guidance that "formally encourages the use of GSR [i.e. green and sustainable remediation] during the remediation of contaminated sites and acknowledges its alignment with the Department's initiatives on addressing climate change, increasing resilience, and prioritizing environmental justice." The guidance document is

available here:

https://www.nj.gov/dep/srp/guidance/srra/gsr_remediation_guidance.pdf. With respect to environmental justice, the document states: "If the site is located in an overburdened community, the person responsible for conducting the remediation should develop an understanding of the current environmental stressors, consider partnering with local stakeholders, and help address environmental justice concerns." The guidance also includes GSR language to be inserted into Contaminated Site Remediation & Redevelopment (CSRR) contracts.

<https://www.jdsupra.com/legalnews/new-jersey-department-of-environmental-2988023/>

Interview: Environmental Justice and the Cumulative Impacts of Pollution

This recently-issued transcript of a previous "Resources Radio" podcast (a production of Resources for the Future) of an interview with **EJTF partner and NJ Environmental Justice Alliance (NJEJA) Board Member Ana Baptista**, provides the background and a description of NJ's Environmental Justice Law, as it focuses on the effects on overburdened communities of cumulative impacts, which had not been considered in the past. A recording of the podcast is also included.

<https://www.resources.org/archives/environmental-justice-and-the-cumulative-impacts-of-pollution/>

ELECTRIC VEHICLES & VEHICLE EMISSION REDUCTION

DEP Commissioner Touts Extra State Funding for Electric Vehicles, Infrastructure

In this 4-minute news video, NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) Commissioner LaTourette describes the \$10 million in NJ's FY2024 budget for electric vehicle (EV) purchase incentives and charging infrastructure installation, emphasizing the impacts changing to this clean transportation method will have on community health.

<https://www.njspotlightnews.org/video/dep-commissioner-touts-extra-state-funding-for-electric-vehicles-infrastructure/>

NJBPU Awards \$12.7M in Electric Vehicle and Charger Grants

The NJ Board of Public Utilities (NJBPU) has announced awards of NJ FY2023 grant funds for "three of the State's electric vehicle and charging infrastructure incentive programs. Over 100 awardees at 405 locations throughout the state, nearly 38 percent of which are located in overburdened municipalities, will expand public charger access for current and prospective electric vehicle (EV) buyers. These awards will be provided to applicants to the Multi-Unit Dwelling (MUD), EV Tourism and Clean Fleet Programs. In addition to the grants for chargers, NJBPU has also provided grants for the purchase of electric vehicles for municipalities and other government entities through the Clean Fleet program."

<https://www.nj.gov/bpu/newsroom/2023/approved/20231002.html>

Duke Farms Unveils New Jersey's First Electric Vehicle Fast Charging Station Powered By Electricity From On-Site Solar

Duke Farms, a center of the Doris Duke Foundation, has opened NJ's first electric vehicle (EV) fast charging station powered by electricity from its own on-site solar energy system.

"Located along the busy Route 206 corridor, this facility will serve Duke Farms visitors and the local community while also supporting EV drivers passing through the area. The project will not only help Duke Farms reduce its carbon footprint, but also contribute to the clean energy and climate goals of the state."

<https://www.dukefarms.org/research/duke-farms-unveils-new-jerseys-first-electric-vehicle-fast-charging-station-powered-by-electricity-from-on-site-solar-demonstrating-leadership-in-the-transition-to-clean-transportation/>

Opinion: Setting the Record Straight on Clean Cars

In this opinion piece, Pamela Frank, the CEO of ChargEVC, describes the benefits from NJ's adopting California's Advanced Clean Cars II (ACCII) rules as well as the "fearmongering and mischaracterization of facts" from opponents of the rules. She finds that vehicle electrification

coupled with increased renewable energy use delivers nearly \$100 billion in net benefits to NJ residents after considering costs.

<https://www.njspotlightnews.org/2023/10/advanced-clean-cars-ii-accii-standards-fearmongering-new-york-massachusetts-virginia-washington-oregon-maryland-delaware-vermont-rhode-island-connecticut-california-electricity-prices-electric-bills/>

FOSSIL FUEL INFRASTRUCTURE

Hotly Debated 2nd Power Plant Proposed for Low-Income N.J. Area Is Withdrawn

For years, plans by Competitive Power Ventures (CPV) to build a second fracked gas-fired power plant in the Keasbey section of Woodbridge have been opposed by environmental activists and 16 elected local and county governing bodies alike. According to CPV's air permit application, the new plant would have emitted hundreds of tons of toxic air pollutants every year, including sulfur dioxide, volatile organic compounds, and lead, into neighborhoods that are already suffering from poor air quality. CPV cited "market conditions" for their decision.

<https://www.nj.com/news/2023/10/hotly-debated-2nd-power-plant-proposed-for-low-income-nj-area-is-withdrawn.html>

BPU Approves PSE&G's \$900M Plan to Replace Aging Gas Pipelines

The NJ Board of Public Utilities (BPU) has approved a little over one-third of the Public Service Gas & Electric's (PSE&G) proposal for replacing gas pipelines and also for moving ahead with pilot hydrogen and "renewable natural-gas" (RNG) projects. The hydrogen and RNG portions were not approved. The BPU is currently directed by a NJ Executive Order to conduct a comprehensive review of the future of the natural gas sector, and is expected to issue the findings of that review in August 2024.

<https://www.njspotlightnews.org/2023/10/powering-progress-kim-hanemann-tropical-storm-ida-cast-iron-steel-pipeline-pipe-gov-phil-murphy-fossil-fuels-methane-natural-gas-sector/>

LAND MANAGEMENT/ AGRICULTURE/FOOD

\$3M = State Grant to Increase Food and Nutrition Security Among Low-Income Communities

The Hackensack Meridian Health system has received a \$3 million grant from the state which it is using to launch a "Fresh Match" program aimed at making fresh produce more accessible to families in need. It is partnering with grocery retailers in seven NJ counties to enable families participating in NJ's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) to buy fresh produce at a participating grocery store and receive a dollar-for-dollar match to buy fresh produce on their next shopping trip.

<https://www.njspotlightnews.org/2023/10/3m-state-grant-to-increase-food-nutrition-insecurity/>

OFFSHORE WIND

GENERAL

OFFSHORE WIND REGIONAL RESOURCES

- "Offshore Wind Info" Facebook group - <https://www.facebook.com/groups/225614753742418/>
 - "NJ Wind Works" Facebook group - <https://www.facebook.com/NJWindWorks>
 - "The Headwinds and Tailwinds Affecting Offshore Wind in the Northeast, Explained" - <https://www.wbur.org/news/2023/10/05/offshore-wind-massachusetts-vineyard-climate-whale-deaths-lawsuits>
 - "Winds of Change" Documentary Film and Q&A Panel (see p. [11](#))
 - **TAKE ACTION** - "Urge Ocean City Officials Not to Stand in the Way of our Clean Energy Future" - send a "FastAction" message via the NJ League of Conservation Voters (LCV) here: <https://action.njlcv.org/a/osw-action?ms=Event>.
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Attentive Energy Brings to 4 the Number of NJ Offshore Wind Developers

in 8/2023, four proposals were submitted to NJ as a result of the latest solicitation for offshore wind projects. At that time, information was only available about three of them; now, information has been released about the fourth developer.

"The Attentive Energy project, a joint venture between Total Energies, which is based in France, and Corio Generation, in the United Kingdom, aims to build a 1,342-megawatt wind farm in an offshore wind tract it secured in 2022." The project includes a facility to manufacture offshore wind towers at the NJ Wind Port and investment in a monopole manufacturing facility in Paulsboro. <https://www.njspotlightnews.org/2023/10/attentive-energy-is-fourth-developer-seeks-to-join-nj-offshore-wind-development/>

Buying Offshore Wind 'In Bulk'

This article describes an approach being taken for the first time in which several states are going to join together on procuring power from offshore wind projects. These smaller states (CT, MA, RI) are hoping to expand benefits and reduce costs by developing projects at scale. Doug O'Malley, director of Environment NJ stated "Hopefully, this could be a model for more collaboration between New Jersey and New York." Issues related to increased borrowing costs, supply chain problems, and inflation are impacting offshore wind developers, who in a number of cases are asking for increased subsidies. In one case in CT, a developer is paying a \$16 million penalty to terminate a wind farm project after failing to negotiate a higher price with the state. [Also see the related story, "New York Rejects Offshore Wind, Onshore Renewables Request for Larger Subsidies," available here: <https://www.wind-watch.org/news/2023/10/13/new-york-rejects-offshore-wind-onshore-renewables-request-for-larger-subsidies/>.] So far, NJ has agreed to a subsidy requested by one developer.

<https://www.njspotlightnews.org/2023/10/avangrid-memorandum-of-understanding-11000-megawatts-affordable-energy-for-new-jersey-environment-new-jersey-glenrock-associates-massachusetts-and-rhode-island-connecticut-special-initiative-for-off-2/>



OCEAN WIND 1 PROJECT

Another Legal Challenge to NJ Offshore Wind Project

A number of Cape May county groups, including the County itself, the county Chamber of Commerce, the Clean Ocean Action nonprofit group, a hotel/motel association, and a number of seafood-related groups including the Garden State Seafood Association, have filed a lawsuit (available here:

<https://capemaycountynj.gov/DocumentCenter/View/11321/Cape-May-Complaint-Oct-16-2023>) against the U.S. and its agencies including the Department of the Interior (DOI), the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM), the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) and their Directors. The lawsuit requests "An order holding unlawful, vacating, and setting aside Defendants' July 3, 2023 decision approving the Construction and Operations Plan for the Ocean Wind 1 Project, and Incidental Harassment Authorization, as arbitrary, capricious, and otherwise not in accordance with law", alleging that the actions are not in accordance with a number of federal laws, including the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

<https://www.njspotlightnews.org/2023/10/initial-nj-offshore-wind-project-faces-another-legal-challenge-federal-agencies-involved/>

Ørsted Pledges New Jersey's First Offshore Wind Farm Will Operate by 2025

As a condition of NJ's allowing Ørsted to keep federal tax credits that would otherwise have

gone to NJ ratepayers, the developer was required to put \$100 million in an escrow account as a guarantee that the Ocean Wind 1 project will be operational by 12/2025. However, "Ørsted would be able to recoup the money if it does not receive all of the necessary government approvals to complete Ocean Wind 1. If the company fails to build the project, that money could be returned to New Jersey ratepayers." Ørsted deposited the funds in the escrow account on 10/4/2023.

<https://www.phillyvoice.com/new-jersey-offshore-wind-farm-orsted-2025-100-million/>

CLIMATE CHANGE

NJDEP Publishes "State Agency Actions to Increase Resilience to Extreme Heat Due to Climate Change"

The NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) has extended the release of the Extreme Heat Resilience Action Plan to Spring 2024 "to maximize its value and the collective efforts of the state agencies." However, in the interim, DEP is proceeding with other extreme heat-related initiatives, including the publication of the "State Agency Actions to Increase Resilience to Extreme Heat Due to Climate Change" document, which summarizes some of actions NJ agencies are taking to advance extreme heat resilience in New Jersey. DEP has also launched "Heat Hub NJ" (available here: <https://heat-hub-new-jersey-njdep.hub.arcgis.com/>), to provide information on extreme heat and the impact it will have on people, communities, and the environment in NJ. That website contains a Cooling Center Survey, to help assess the current state of cooling centers and how they can be improved. The only references to outdoor workers refers to federal Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) guidelines (available on the NJ Department of Health (DOH) website here: <https://www.nj.gov/health/workplacehealthandsafety/peosh/>), which do include new Heat Illness Prevention Resources including "Water. Rest. Shade. A Guide for Employers." [See box on p. 19 related to NJ farmworkers.] The DEP document is available here: https://dep.nj.gov/wp-content/uploads/climatechange/docs/iac-extreme-heat-actions-underway_092023.pdf.

They Pick Your Blueberries and Peppers. But NJ Doesn't Protect Farmworkers From Rising Heat

This collaborative piece between NJ Spotlight News and WNYC, the first in a series on "Climate Change and NJ Agriculture," focuses on the effects of climate change - primarily increasing heat - on NJ's farmworkers, many of which are undocumented immigrants, seasonal workers from other states or migrants on special work visas from Mexico or Central America. A 2022 "Impacts of Climate Change and Heat Stress on Farmworkers' Health: A Scoping Review" review of studies (available here: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC8861180/>) reported that "occupational heat-related mortality is 35 times higher among agricultural workers compared to workers from other industries." There are no heat-specific federal or state laws regulating conditions for NJ's nearly 25,000 farmworkers, and in NJ there are no requirements for employers to provide paid breaks and access to shade during excessively hot days, and there is no legislation proposed to address this. In addition, farmworkers in NJ do not have the right to unionize.

EJTF plans to become involved in this issue, as it is an intersection of climate change, agriculture, and a unique kind of community experiencing environmental injustice.

<https://www.njspotlightnews.org/special-report/nj-farmworkers-have-few-protections-against-extreme-heat/>

Feds' Clean-Energy Plans Include Hydrogen Hub Serving NJ and Its Neighbors

The Biden administration has selected seven regional "clean hydrogen hubs" to receive \$7 million in Bipartisan Infrastructure Law funding; the Mid-Atlantic Hydrogen Hub (MACH2) that was

chosen would serve portions of southern NJ, PA and DE. A community briefing was held on that program - the briefing slides are available here: https://www.energy.gov/sites/default/files/2023-10/H2Hubs_Mid_Atlantic_Community_Briefing.pdf. The Administration's press release (available here: <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2023/10/13/biden-harris-administration-announces-regional-clean-hydrogen-hubs-to-drive-clean-manufacturing-and-jobs/>) states that "Roughly two-thirds of total project investment are associated with green (electrolysis based) production, within the hubs." This is in contrast with "blue hydrogen" that is derived, in part, from natural gas. However, environmental advocates including Maya van Rossum, the Delaware Riverkeeper, are not in favor of the hubs (see article below), fearing that they could increase pollution from fracked gas and divert clean energy from other uses. The hubs are covered under the the Biden administration's "Justice40 Initiative," which aims to ensure that 40 percent of the overall benefits flow to disadvantaged communities that are marginalized by underinvestment and overburdened by pollution. <https://www.njspotlightnews.org/2023/10/feds-clean-energy-plans-include-hydrogen-hub-serving-nj-and-its-neighbors/>

Energy Experts Debate Clean-Energy Alternatives for NJ

At Rowan University's second energy conference, "The Road to Zero Emissions: The Future of Nuclear, Hydrogen and Emerging Energy Technologies in New Jersey," the question was debated of "how to produce enough energy, in a clean fashion, that meets the rest of our goals, and that's going to continue to support our life." (A 4-minute news video of the conference is available here:

<https://www.njspotlightnews.org/video/environmentalists-skeptical-amid-push-for-hydrogen-power/>.)

There was an emphasis on hydrogen, as Rowan University is a partner in the Mid-Atlantic Hydrogen Hub (MACH2), which was selected to receive \$750 million in federal funds. PSEG, also a partner, praised the hydrogen hub plan. However, many environmentalists are not in favor, maintaining that it perpetuates the use of fossil fuels. In a press release (available here: https://www.delawariverkeeper.org/sites/default/files/20231013_Press_DRN%20Condemns%20Hydrogen

[%20Hub%20Awards%20in%20Region%20%26%20Nationally.pdf](#)) the Delaware Riverkeeper Network condemns hydrogen hub awards in our region and nationally.
<https://www.njspotlightnews.org/2023/10/nj-forum-explores-clean-energy-choices-hydrogen-hub/>

Several Areas in NJ Designated by FEMA as 'Disaster Resilience Zones'

The federal Community Disaster Resilience Zones Act signed in 2022 requires the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to use its National Risk Index (map available here: <https://hazards.fema.gov/nri/map>) to identify the most at-risk and in-need communities to be designated "Disaster Resilience Zones." Designated zones will be prioritized for targeted federal support such as grant funding and adjusted cost-share for resilience and mitigation projects. Eight zones in NJ were designated in the initial round of 483 designations nationwide, with most NJ designated zones being in coastal areas.
<https://www.njspotlightnews.org/2023/09/fema-designates-several-nj-areas-community-disaster-resilience-zones/>



1,034 = NJ Wildfires to Date in 2023

In the past, the wildfire season in NJ was considered to be from mid-March to mid-May, but climate change has lengthened it and wildfires have increased from February to well into the summer. This year, with 1,034 fires, had the busiest wildfire season in over a decade. A list of the 14 fires that burned 100 acres or more is provided in this article.
<https://www.njspotlightnews.org/2023/09/1034-nj-wildfires-2023/>

Opinion: Taking Strategic Action to Fight Climate Change

This piece by Tom Gilbert, Co-Executive Director, NJ Conservation Foundation, includes descriptions of the key areas of the NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) Climate Action Plan, and applauds the DEP for its commitment to creating a broad-ranging plan, especially commending the high value placed on protecting and stewarding NJ's natural lands. However, the author states that "the recommendations related to forests are missing two important points: the need to reduce the deer population to sustainable levels so that our forests will regenerate ... and the importance of letting intact middle-aged forests continue to mature into old-growth to store large amounts of carbon."
<https://www.njconservation.org/taking-strategic-action-to-fight-climate-change/>

LEAD REDUCTION IN HOUSEHOLDS

Chatham Borough Council Introduces Ordinance to Make Sure Residents 'Get the Lead Out' with Replacement of Water Lines

An ordinance unanimously introduced by the Borough of Chatham Council will give residents 180 days to register with the Borough and show proof that there is not a lead or galvanized water pipe servicing their home.
<https://www.tapinto.net/towns/chatham/sections/government/articles/chatham-borough-council-introduces-ordinance-to-make-sure-residents-get-the-lead-out-with-replacement-of-water-lines>

Jersey City MUA Begins Lead Service Line Replacements as Part of 'Lead Free JC' Program

The Jersey City Municipal Utilities Authority (MUA) has begun proactively removing residential lead service lines, with the goal of replacing all of the nearly 16,000 lines by 6/2031. Property owners have the option of either having their service lines replaced by the MUA or hiring their own

contractor and they applying for a credit to recoup the costs.
<https://hudsoncountyview.com/jersey-city-mua-begins-lead-service-line-replacements-as-part-of-lead-free-jc-program/>

FOREST HEALTH

New 'Microforests' Grow in Elizabeth

This 4-minute news video describes two (of four planned) "microforests" that have been planted in Elizabeth - the first such forests in NJ. The project is a partnership between Groundwork Elizabeth, the City of Elizabeth, Kean University, and the NJ Conservation Foundation, and financed by a Climate Preparedness Land Restoration Grant from Groundwork USA (with support from the Bezos Earth Fund). The project uses the Miyawaki method of dense plantings of diverse native species, which has been shown to result in high plantings' survival rate and "zero maintenance after planting," and is designed to address climate risks in formerly redlined neighborhoods and brownfield areas. These microforests will improve soil permeability, mitigate flooding, improve air quality, reduce the heat island effect, and help replenish biodiversity.

<https://www.njspotlightnews.org/video/new-microforests-grow-in-elizabeth/>

Princeton Gets Grants to Plant Native Trees at Community Park North

Princeton has received a grant of \$552,000 from the NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI) Natural Climate Solutions Grants, which are designed to fund projects that "create, restore and enhance New Jersey's natural carbon sinks." Princeton's Community Park North had experienced a significant loss of trees in major storms and due to other factors. The grant will be used to remove invasive species from the area and then plant "thousands of native trees and shrubs to substantially increase the amount of carbon sequestered by the forest in future years, and to make it more resilient to climate change [and] also provide better habitat for

birds and other animals and an improved aesthetic experience for park users."
<https://patch.com/new-jersey/princeton/princeton-gets-grants-plant-native-trees-community-park-north>



Rain Gardens, New Trees, Youth Ambassadors will Help Make Jersey City Greener, Healthier

Last month's newsletter reported on the award of federal Urban and Community Forestry program funding from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). Jersey City received \$2 million of that funding, and plans to use it for "Youth Tree Ambassador Programs for community building, workforce development, expanding the Forestry team to sustain and grow the City's tree canopy, and over 160 tree plantings for beautification, stormwater absorption, and improving public health. Jersey City is prioritizing neighborhoods where additional trees will help with flood mitigation, lower energy costs, improve air quality, and reduce heat-related health concerns."
<https://www.tapinto.net/towns/jersey-city/sections/green/articles/rain-gardens-new-trees-youth-ambassadors-will-help-make-jersey-city-greener-healthier>

EDUCATIONAL and YOUTH-RELATED

What Are the A-B-Cs of Teaching Climate Change in Math, Language Arts?

Last May, a NJ Department of Education public hearing was held 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 public hearing, organized right-wing activists outnumbered supporters of climate change. At the first meeting of the State Board of Education ("Board") since that public hearing, at which those learning standards were voted upon, the Board uncharacteristically only narrowly approved the Mathematics and English Language Arts standards by a 6-4 vote, with climate change education being the main point of contention. The Board had already approved the addition of climate-change learning standards in 21st Century Life and Careers, Comprehensive Health and Physical Education, Science, Technology, Visual and Performing Arts and World Languages. <https://www.njspotlightnews.org/2023/10/what-are-the-a-b-cs-of-teaching-climate-change-in-math-language-arts/>

Q&A: Teaching About Climate Change in All Classrooms

In 9/2023, NJ established the first-in-the-nation Office of Climate Change Education within the NJ Department of Education's (DOE) Office of Innovation "to further climate literacy and environmental awareness among students and educators across the state and to prepare students for the future jobs created by the green economy." This article is a Q&A between NJ Spotlight News and Sarah Sterling-Laldee, who was hired as Senior Climate Change Education Advisor to lead the Office. She will lead a team of Climate Awareness Innovation Specialists that will oversee NJ's climate change education work. <https://www.njspotlightnews.org/2023/10/nj-education-climate-change-qa-all-classrooms/>

Rutgers Launches Climate and Energy Institute With Wide-Reaching Goals

Rutgers University is combining and expanding upon the activities of three existing institutes on climate, environment, and energy research at the university to form the new "Rutgers Climate and Energy Institute" (RCEI). The new institute will combine the Rutgers Climate Institute (RCI), the Rutgers Energy Institute (REI) and the Rutgers Institute of Earth, Ocean and Atmospheric Sciences (EOAS). "The formation of RCEI brings together scholars working on the social and physical dimensions of climate change, low carbon energy transitions, and climate and energy communication ... It also creates physical and virtual spaces for faculty, staff, students and stakeholders to collaborate and innovate across these areas."

<https://rcei.rutgers.edu/rutgers-launches-climate-and-energy-institute-with-wide-reaching-goals/>

Biden's American Climate Corps Sees More than 42,000 Sign-Ups since Launch

In 9/2023, the Biden-Harris administration launched the "American Climate Corps" to train young people in clean energy, conservation, and climate resilience skills, with a focus on equity and environmental justice (the fact sheet, with a link to sign up to learn about the Corps, is available here: <https://tinyurl.com/rsnk92nz>). This article describes the program, and reports that "According to newly released numbers, the White House has received more than 42,000 interested sign-ups for the program. More than two-thirds of respondents are between the ages of 18-35." <https://mashable.com/article/biden-american-climate-corps-sign-up-numbers-application>

Nearly \$4M in Grants to Support Offshore Wind Workforce Training Approved by NJEDA Board

In a 6/2023 press release, the NJ Economic Development Authority (EDA) announced the award of more than \$3.7 million in grants under the Offshore Wind Workforce and Skills Development Grant Challenge. One of the grants, in the amount of \$700,000, was awarded to **EJTF partner** the NJ Environmental Justice Alliance (NJEJA) and they have announced that the first

cohort of their 6-week training course will begin 11/9/2023. The flyer with information about the training and the link to apply is available here: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1F567UUCird6T4HkQwiEQ03LNOI3fjkLH/view>. Information about the other grantees is available in the EDA press release, here: <https://www.njeda.gov/nearly-4m-in-grants-to-support-offshore-wind-workforce-training-approved-by-njeda-board/>.

OTHER

NJ Elections: Environmental Issues Surprise in Contested Districts

This article describes the pushback that some environmental issues seem to be getting in some closely contested NJ election districts, which is contrary to the bipartisan support the environment has received in recent memory. Opposition is related to the implementation of NJ's clean energy goals in areas such as offshore wind, phasing out natural gas for home heating, and banning the sale of new gas-powered cars beginning in 2035. Although some environmentalists feel the perception of pushback is overblown, the NJ League of Conservation Voters (LCV) is planning to invest a record \$400,000 in this year's elections. <https://www.njspotlightnews.org/2023/10/environmental-issues-could-be-big-factor-in-close-nj-election-contests/>

State Deal for Toms River Cleanup Faces New Challenge

This 4-1/2-minute news video describes the latest challenge to NJ's recent settlement with BASF, the current owner of the Ciba/Geigy site in Toms River. The Township of Toms River has joined with the Save Barnegat Bay group in a lawsuit aimed at blocking the settlement deal. The

Township is objecting to a provision granting the company 250 acres that can be marketed as commercial real estate, and Save Barnegat Bay has said that the settlement violates NJ's Spill Act, and that state officials did not give them the legally-mandated time to respond to the settlement announcement.

<https://www.njspotlightnews.org/video/state-deal-for-toms-river-cleanup-faces-new-challenge/>



Cleanup of Pollution Begins at Liberty State Park

This 4-1/2-minute news video shows the groundbreaking of the cleanup of "legacy pollution" in the 235-acre section of Liberty State Park (LSP) that has been closed to the public for decades. It will be restored as a natural ecosystem. The video also describes the process for design of the rest of the park, including "Phase 1B," (on which comments will be accepted until 11/17, here:

<https://dep.nj.gov/revitalizelsp/comment-on-phase-1b/>), which envisions revamping the park's northern area with projects such as an athletics hub, an amphitheater, and a marketplace and community space in the historic train sheds. See <https://www.njspotlightnews.org/video/cleanup-of-pollution-begins-at-liberty-state-park/>. A press release with additional information about the LSP Revitalization Program is available here: https://www.nj.gov/dep/newsrel/2023/23_0056.htm.

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.**

UU FaithAction NJ - Environmental Justice Task Force - Peggy Middaugh, Chair
Visit <https://uufaithaction.org/environment/> for links and resources, and to join the EJTF

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.