



Environmental Justice Task Force Newsletter - March 2026

NOTE! UUFANJ ACTION HOURS (see [p. 4](#)) and NEW DAY/TIME for EJTF MEETINGS (see [p. 20](#))

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

EJTF ACTIVITIES

EJTF Welcomes New Chair, Dr. Michael Skelly, Sr.

As we move into a new legislative cycle in NJ, UU FaithAction NJ's Environmental Justice Task Force (EJTF) is moving forward with a new Chair, Dr. Michael Skelly, Sr. A member of the Dorothea Dix Unitarian Universalist Community of Bordentown, NJ (DDUUC), Mike is a long-time member of the EJTF, where he has been leading the Environmental Education Action Group. He has been instrumental in influencing legislation related to the NJ Environmental Education Commission and also the NJ Student Learning Standards, ensuring that they reflect UU values and include environmental justice and climate change. Mike has had a varied professional career with extremely valuable experience in multiple areas that directly inform the work of the Task Force.



The Task Force is highly grateful for the work of the previous Chair, Margaret ("Peggy") Middaugh, who will continue to lead the Clean Energy and Forestry Action Groups.

EJTF has also recently instituted a new meeting day and evening meeting time - the second Tuesday of the month at 7:00 p.m. (see [p. 20](#)), to accommodate those who cannot meet during the day. EJTF hopes to welcome new participants, as we reach out to congregations, coalition partners, and legislators to continue expanding our unique faith-based, environmental justice-focused input and influence into NJ issues and legislation.

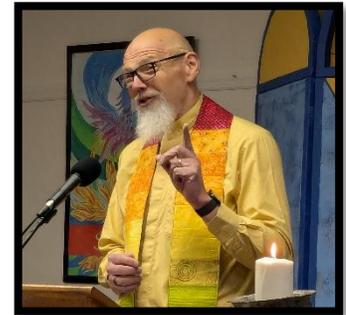
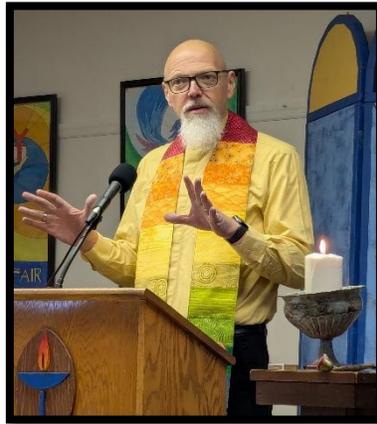
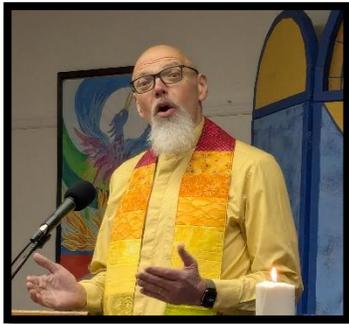
Photo by Margaret Middaugh

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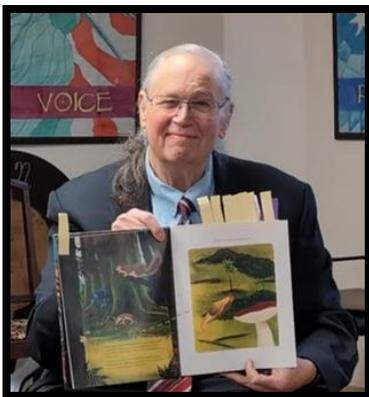
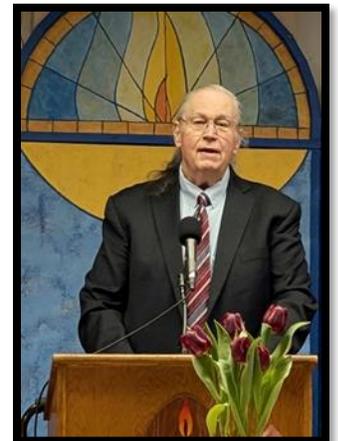
EJTF ACTIVITIES (Continued)

- **UUFANJ/EJTF** signed on to a letter to Gov. Sherrill from coalition partner EmpowerNJ and the Turnpike Trap Coalition, asking her to downsize and reimagine the \$12 billion plan to expand the NJ Turnpike from Newark to Jersey City, a project that has been characterized as an economic and environmental disaster that won't accomplish its purported goal of reducing traffic congestion.
- **UUFANJ Executive Director Rev. Charles Loflin** presented an animated and moving sermon, "The Transient and the Permanent," at the Dorothea Dix UU Community (DDUUC) on 2/8/2026. He is presenting a series of sermons at UU congregations around the state, at which he ties UU history to our present-day social justice work, and also informs congregations of all that UUFANJ is doing. When possible, members of EJTF accompany him to provide a perspective on UUFANJ's environmental justice activities. At DDUUC, **EJTF member Peggy Middaugh** accompanied Rev. Loflin.



Photos by Michael Skelly

- **EJTF Chair Michael Skelly** presented the sermon at the Dorothea Dix UU Community (DDUUC) on 2/15/2026, focusing on the Value of Interdependence and Animism: The Spirit of Life. "In 2024, our UU tradition moved from a Principle to a Value - from a description to a commitment. Our new first Value states: 'Interdependence. We honor the interdependent web of all existence. With reverence for the great web of life and with humility, we acknowledge our place in it. We covenant to protect Earth and all beings from exploitation. We will create and nurture sustainable relationships of care and respect, mutuality and justice. We will work to repair harm and damaged relationships.' Notice the shift in the wind. We aren't just 'respecting' a web anymore; we are actively vowing to



protect Earth and all beings from exploitation. We shall create and nurture relationships with our kindred spirits. We acknowledge our role is to work to repair harm and damaged relationships. This isn't just ecology; it is Animism. Animism is the sacred remembering that the world is a community of persons, only some of whom are human. It is the understanding that the water in our taps is 'living kin' we must protect, and the air in our lungs is a 'breath' we share with the trees of the forest and the phytoplankton of the oceans." Mike also highly recommends the book "Listen to the Language of the Trees: A Story of How Trees Communicate Underground" by Tera Kelley.

Photos by Margaret Middaugh

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

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

Others - send an email to uufactionejtf@gmail.com requesting to receive information about environmental issues and upcoming events.

MARCH 2026 (with hyperlinks to details on the following pages)						
Sun.	Mon.	Tues.	Wed.	Thurs.	Fri.	Sat.
1	<p>2</p> <p>"Plant Physiology, Forest Ecology, and Carbon Cycle Uncertainty in a Changing Climate" - 2:00 p.m.</p> <hr/> <p>"Climate Seminar: What (and Who) Counts? The Science, Law, and Policy of Greenhouse Gas Accounting" - 2:55 p.m.</p>	<p>3</p> <p>"Innovation: Progress and a Path Forward for Wildfire Policy" - 3:00 p.m.</p>	<p>4</p> <p>DRBC 1Q Business Meeting - 10:00 a.m.</p> <hr/> <p>LWVNJ - "Immigration Know Your Rights & Community Support" - 6:00 p.m.</p>	<p>5</p> <p>NJ Green Amendment Press Conference - 11:00 a.m.</p>	<p>6</p> <p>UUFANJ Action Hour - 12:00 p.m.</p>	<p>7</p> <p>The Native Plant Society of New Jersey 2026 Annual Meeting & Conference - 8:00 a.m.</p> <hr/> <p>37th Annual Pinelands Short Course - 9:00 a.m.</p>
8	<p>9</p> <p>"Climate Seminar: Climate Fiction and Climate Reality: Writing a Changing World" - 2:55 p.m.</p> <hr/> <p>2026 New Jersey Coastal & Climate Resilience Conference</p>	<p>10</p> <p>NJDEP Safe Drinking Water Act New Rules and Amendments - Public Hearing - 10:00 a.m.</p> <hr/> <p>"Teach the Hope: Environmental Education Inspiring Action" - 6:00 p.m.</p> <hr/> <p>2026 New Jersey Coastal & Climate Resilience Conference</p>	<p>11</p> <p>2026 New Jersey Coastal & Climate Resilience Conference</p>	<p>12</p> <p>"Strategies to Lower Utility Bills Now for Households and Small Businesses" - 3:00 p.m.</p> <hr/> <p>"Compost Cafe" - 5:00 p.m.</p>	<p>13</p> <p>UUFANJ Action Hour - 12:00 p.m.</p>	<p>14</p> <p>Bernards Twp/Basking Ridge, NJ Repair Cafe - 11:00 a.m.</p>
15	<p>16</p> <p>Climate Seminar: Zachary Labe (from Climate Central) topic TBA - 2:55 p.m.</p> <hr/> <p>"Eat Like the World Depends On It (Because it Does)" - 7:00 p.m.</p>	<p>17.</p> <p>LWVNJ - "New Jersey Budget Process 101" - 6:00 p.m.</p>	<p>18</p> <p>NJ Clean Air Council Meeting - 9:30 a.m.</p> <hr/> <p>"Information is Power": Community Advocacy Workshop - 6:30 p.m.</p> <hr/> <p>Montclair Bee City Kick-Off - 7:00 p.m.</p> <hr/> <p>"Building Team Capacity with a Friends of Green Sanctuary Group" - 7:00 p.m.</p>	<p>19</p> <p>"Leading the Change: Women Shaping a Sustainable Future" - 6:00 p.m.</p> <hr/> <p>Sierra Club NJ Monthly Building Electrification Webinar - "Your Electric Utility PAYS YOU to Reduce Electric Use" - 7:00 p.m.</p>	<p>20</p> <p>UUFANJ Action Hour - 12:00 p.m.</p> <hr/> <p>"Food as Medicine: A Webinar on Soil, Health, and the Future of Food" - 7:00 p.m.</p>	<p>21</p> <p>NJ Forestry Association 51st Annual Meeting - 8:30 a.m.</p> <hr/> <p>World Water Day - The Watershed Institute - 10:00 a.m. OR 12:30 p.m.</p>

Calendar continues on p. 4

Calendar continued from p. 3

22	<p>23 "Climate Seminar: Can Climate Change Influence the Risk of Another Pandemic?" - 2:55 p.m.</p> <hr/> <p>Science Monday - "Create Healthier, Sustainable Communities Through Clean Energy" - 6:30 p.m.</p>	24	25	26	<p>27 UUFANJ Action Hour - 12:00 p.m.</p>	28
29	30	<p>31 LWVNJ - "Reaching Marginalized Voters Training" - 6:00 p.m.</p> <hr/> <p>Comments Due: Forest Management Activities on Sparta Mountain WMA in Stand 9</p>				<p>Comments Due 4/3/2026 NJBPU Energy Competition Rules Amendments and New Rules</p> <hr/> <p>Comments Due 5/31/2026: National Urban & Community Forestry 10-Yr. Action Plan (2027-2037)</p>

FUTURE EVENTS

**UUFANJ FRIDAY "ACTION HOURS" - WHERE YOU CAN GET INVOLVED!
 Fridays, 12:00 p.m. - 1:00 p.m. - via Zoom**

UU FaithAction NJ (UUFANJ) has been hosting "Action Hours" on certain Fridays each month. Now, they have expanded to EVERY Friday, from 12:00 noon to 1:00 p.m. via Zoom. Supporters and friends gather virtually to take action and experience the joy and power of community. At the meetings, participants take action on a specific issue impacting NJ and beyond. ALL are welcome! UUFANJ welcomes not only our FaithAction NJ supporters but also any of our coalition partners. This opportunity is a "come as you are able" experience.

If you can't join on a Friday at noon, you can view the week's actions online and complete them at a time that is convenient for you. You can also share these actions with others in your congregation or community; some congregations are holding meetings so they can participate in community.

A document with all of the information is available here:
https://docs.google.com/document/d/1C_x6nMp8O4LH4XBqfLV2SvOaHJqx9DmII8vR3Lg80d4/edit.

Also, this document includes all prior Action Hour actions and serves as a useful resource document for ways to take action on key NJ issues.

Action Hours are also shown on the UUFANJ Community Calendar, available here:
<https://www.uufaithaction.org/events/month/2026-03/>

"Plant Physiology, Forest Ecology, and Carbon Cycle Uncertainty in a Changing Climate" - Webinar
3/2/2026, 2:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.

This webinar, part of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Science Seminar series, will be presented by Dr. Anna Trugman, University of California, Santa Barbara. "Abstract: Widespread tree mortality following disturbances such as droughts, fire, and pest and pathogen outbreaks has emerged as an environmentally and economically devastating 'ecological surprise'. Increases in disturbance-driven tree mortality with further climate change has the potential to massively disrupt terrestrial ecosystem productivity and biodiversity, causing Earth's forests to release carbon into the atmosphere. In this talk, I examine potential biodiversity and carbon impacts of climate change on forests in the continental United States through a fusion of historical and future climate projections, plant physiological measurements, large observational databases, and trait-based ecosystem models." Additional information, including the webinar link, is available here: <https://tinyurl.com/mr2nz3tt>.

"Innovation: Progress and a Path Forward for Wildfire Policy" - Livestreamed
3/3/2026, 3:00 p.m. - 4:30 p.m.

"One year after the catastrophic wildfires that blazed through southern California, the Environmental and Energy Study Institute (EESI) and the Federation of American Scientists (FAS) invite you to a briefing on emerging solutions to tackle the wildfire crisis, and the federal policy strategies for getting these solutions into the field.... From California to New Jersey, wildfires are taking a toll - costing the United States up to \$424 billion annually and displacing tens of thousands of people. This briefing will highlight efforts to address this crisis, including wildfire preparedness, response, and recovery policies and innovations in the United States. Panelists will identify evidence-backed approaches - from smart zoning and upgraded building codes to fuels management and early detection - and the role of federal policy in supporting the rapid development and cost-effective implementation of these tactics at scale." Additional information and links to RSVP and to access the livestream are available here: <https://www.eesi.org/briefings/view/030326fire>.

Delaware River Basin Commission (DRBC)
First Quarter 2026 Business Meeting
3/4/2026, 10:00 a.m. - Virtual

The Delaware River Basin Commission (DRBC) will hold its first-quarter business meeting on Wednesday, 3/4/2026. The business meeting is open to the public and will be held virtually via Zoom Webinar. A livestream via the DRBC's YouTube channel will also be offered. After all scheduled business has been completed and as time allows, the Business Meeting may be followed by up to one hour of Open Public Comment. This is an opportunity to address the Commission on any topic concerning management of the Basin's water resources outside the context of a duly noticed, on-the-record public hearing. Registration for open public comment does not guarantee an opportunity to speak during the 1-hour session, based on time limitations and other factors. Those interested in giving public comment should register by 5 p.m., 3/3/2026 and note that you wish to provide open public comment (you cannot provide comment if watching on YouTube). Additional information, including a link to the agenda, a link to register for the Zoom webinar and to register to provide public comment, and a link to the YouTube livestream, are available here: <https://tinyurl.com/yk737cn4>.

NJ Green Amendment Press Conference
3/5/2026, 11:00 a.m. - Virtual

"Organizations and leaders who are part of the New Jersey Green Amendment Coalition will be hosting a virtual press conference to share their messages on the continued importance of securing constitutional environmental rights for all New Jerseyans, particularly in an era of federal environmental rollbacks. Speakers will include representatives from:

- Green Amendments For The Generations
- Pinelands Alliance
- Waterspirit
- League of Women Voters of New Jersey
- Delaware Riverkeeper Network
- New Jersey Conservation Foundation
- And more to be announced soon."

Additional information is available here: <https://forthegenerations.org/events/new-jersey-green-amendment-press-conference/>.

37th Annual Pinelands Short Course
3/7/2026, 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
Galloway, NJ - In-person

The "Pinelands Short Course," a much-touted daylong event featuring educational presentations that explore the unique history, ecology, and culture of the Pinelands, is being held on 3/7/2026. This year's Pinelands Short Course will feature 39 presentations, including 20 new programs that will explore the region's unique history, ecology, culture, and music. The Short Course is co-sponsored by Stockton University and the NJ Pinelands Commission. Additional information is available here:

https://www.nj.gov/pinelands/home/news/PSC_PinelandsShortCoursePressRelease2026%20--%20FINAL.pdf and the course schedule, descriptions of sessions, and the link to register (**\$60**) are available here: <https://stockton.edu/ettc/pinelands.html>.

The Native Plant Society of New Jersey
2026 Annual Meeting & Conference
"Ecologies in Flux: Restoration, Resilience,
and Disease in a Changing Landscape"
3/7/2026, 8:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.
Toms River, NJ - In-person (members only)
& via Zoom

"Ecological disruption is no longer abstract or remote. It is unfolding daily in our yards, parks, and landscapes, manifesting itself in storms of unprecedented intensity that alter forests overnight and diseases spreading rapidly through degraded habitats. Traditional landscape management methods - rigid, manicured, and heavily dependent on constant intervention - have proven insufficient to respond to the pace and scale of change. This symposium directly engages with these evolving conditions, bringing together three distinct yet complementary perspectives rooted in ecological landscape design, infectious disease ecology, and arboretum management and horticulture. Each speaker brings practical wisdom and conceptual depth, highlighting strategies to enhance resilience, sustain biodiversity, and creatively adapt to environmental uncertainty." Additional information, including the agenda and the links to register (**in-person tickets are \$60 (members only); Zoom tickets are \$30 for non-members, \$20 for members**) is available here: <https://npsnj.org/event/2026-annual-meeting/>.

2026 New Jersey Coastal & Climate
Resilience Conference
3/9/2026 - 3/11/2026
Galloway, NJ - In-person

"The New Jersey Coastal Resilience Collaborative (NJCRC) and Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) will host the 2026 New Jersey Coastal & Climate Resilience Conference.... With a theme of 'Navigating Changing Tides,' the event will build on the success of our 2024 conference, with hundreds of coastal and climate resilience professionals to gather, learn, collaborate and celebrate during the three-day event." Registration (**\$350 plus optional \$50 Field Trip add-on**) includes access to all three days of conference activities, meals, refreshments, and networking events. Registrants may also choose to participate in an optional "Resilient by Nature" field trip on day three which includes bus transportation and lunch. Additional information, including the agenda and registration link, is available here:

<https://www.njcoastalresilience.org/nj-coastal-and-climate-resilience-conference/2026-new-jersey-coastal-and-climate-resilience-conference/>.

NJDEP Safe Drinking Water Act New Rules
and Amendments - Public Hearing
3/10/2026, 10:00 a.m. - Virtual

The New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) is proposing a new rule and amendments to the NJ Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA) Rules, to establish New Jersey-specific requirements for implementation of the Federal Lead and Copper Rule. Specifically, the DEP's proposed rule incorporates recent amendments to the SDWA and the Federal rule, including but not limited to: service line inventories; lead service line replacement; lead and copper sampling; sampling at schools and child care facilities; sampling and lead service line replacement plans; optimal corrosion control; testing protocols such as sequential monitoring and pipe scale analysis; monitoring for water quality parameters; lead and copper public education; and associated notice requirements. The proposal is available here: <https://dep.nj.gov/wp-content/uploads/rules/proposals/proposal-20260202a.pdf>. A virtual public hearing concerning the proposal is scheduled for 3/10/2026 at 10:00 a.m. Attendees should email **LeadinDW@dep.nj.gov** with their contact information (name, organization, telephone

number, and email address) to obtain a meeting link and call-in number. **Written comments are due by 4/3/2026.** Additional information, including how to submit comments, is available here: <https://dep.nj.gov/rules/notice-of-rule-proposals/20260202a/>.

**"Teach the Hope: Environmental Education Inspiring Action" - Webinar
3/10/2026, 6:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.**

This webinar, part of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Science Seminar series will be presented by author and environmentalist Patricia Newman. "Abstract: Let's face it, today's environmental headlines are depressing. Join award-winning children's book author and environmentalist Patricia Newman to experience a new philosophy in environmental education: HOPE. Together with Claire Fackler, National Education Liaison for the NOAA Office of National Marine Sanctuaries, we'll emphasize gratitude for and connections to the natural world, including the ocean, and identify effective role models to emulate and actions that can be taken. Then we'll put your new-found knowledge to work with several activities that Patricia will demonstrate. Participants will leave with ready-to-use resources." Additional information, including the link to view the webinar, is available here: <https://tinyurl.com/4fsucuar>.

**"Strategies to Lower Utility Bills Now for Households and Small Businesses"
3/12/2026, 3:00 p.m. - 4:30 p.m.
- Livestreamed**

"The Environmental and Energy Study Institute (EESI) invites you to a briefing about readily-available solutions to help reduce energy costs for homes and small businesses. This briefing will convene experts from around the country with on-the-ground experience in bolstering energy efficiency and delivering savings to consumers. These panelists will explore the benefits of energy-saving solutions available to households and small businesses. They will also identify key federal programs that support these initiatives, such as the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program and the Weatherization Assistance Program. Additional information and the links to RSVP and to access the livestream are available here: <https://www.eesi.org/briefings/view/031226energy>.



**"Compost Cafe"
3/12/2026, 5:00 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.
Trenton, NJ - In-person**

The Compost Cafe is hosted by the NJ Composting Council, Inc. (NJCC), "a nonprofit [501(c)(6)] industry group, [that] advances compost manufacturing, compost utilization, and Organics Recycling to benefit our members, society, and the environment in the state of New Jersey." Registration is available here: <https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSe-0RtaAoK5Ce46iY78kIy5z-eFoJ0ZcMcOTZCnLh5Lw-aAhA/viewform>.

REPAIR CAFE

YOUR BROKEN ITEMS FIXED FOR FREE!

Repair Cafes in NJ Various Dates and Locations - In-person

The "Repair Cafe Garden State" website (available here: <https://www.repaircafegs.org>) states: "Why throw away broken items? A simple fix may make them good as new, and keep them from filling our landfills. Sustainability can be taught while building social bonds within our communities at every Repair Cafe event." **The website includes a calendar of most Repair Cafe events in NJ in the coming months.** The event taking place in March, with links for information, is shown below:

Bernards Twp/Basking Ridge, NJ Repair Cafe

3/14/2026, 11:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

<https://www.repaircafegs.org/our-locations/bernardsbasking-ridge>

"Eat Like the World Depends On It (Because it Does)"

3/16/2026, 7:00 p.m.

Clinton, NJ - In-person

This event is organized by the Hunterdon Warren Group of the NJ Sierra Club. "Learn how to become a vegan and how it's good for the planet as guest speaker Kimberly Winters guides us through the journey. Kimberly Winters is a dedicated advocate for veganism, both as a lifestyle choice and a social justice movement. She is the host of the 'Did You Bring the Hummus' podcast, where she shares her journey and inspires others to adopt a vegan lifestyle." Additional information and the link to RSVP are available here: <https://tinyurl.com/2u5jf5vj>.

NJ Clean Air Council Meeting - Virtual 3/18/2026, 9:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

The NJ Clean Air Council (CAC) provides advice to the NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) on air quality matters. The March meeting will be held virtually. Contact George Berdomas,

609-940-5654 (George.Berdomas@dep.nj.gov) regarding an invitation for the monthly meeting. Additional information is available here: <https://dep.nj.gov/event/clean-air-council-meeting-20260318/>.

"Information is Power": Community Advocacy Workshop 3/18/2026, 6:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m. Camden, NJ - In-person

"Join the Delaware Riverkeeper Network and The Center for Environmental Transformation for a FREE Community Advocacy Workshop. Each of us can play an important role in protecting our communities by learning about proposed projects that might impact our families, neighborhoods, and environment. Local, county, and state officials consider potential impacts based on documents provided by developers. You and your community have a right to know what is being proposed. You have the right to be heard and provide comments on those proposals. Public participation is an important part of our democratic process. Learn how to Exercise Your Right-To-Know." Additional information and the link to register are available here: <https://givebutter.com/RightToKnow2026>.

Montclair Bee City Kick-Off 3/18/2026, 7:00 p.m. - 8:30 p.m. Montclair, NJ - In-person

"Learn about Montclair's new designation as a Bee City and how you can get involved! Join us on March 18 at 7 pm to learn how the NEEC [NorthEast Earth Coalition], as Montclair's official Bee City facilitator, will be working with the township and local organizations, including the Montclair Garden Club and the Native Plant Society of NJ, to make the town more bee- and pollinator-friendly. All are welcome to come, find out about local pollinator garden projects - from meadows to corner gardens to sidewalk planters - and explore simple ways to make your own space a haven for native bees, butterflies, and other pollinators. No space is too small!" Additional information and the link to register are available here:

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/montclair-bee-city-kick-off-tickets-1983579484635>.

"Building Team Capacity with a Friends of Green Sanctuary Group": Green Sanctuary Community Meeting - Webinar
3/18/2026, 7:00 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.

Learn how the Bradford Community Church in Wausau, WI is organizing a "Friends of Green Sanctuary Group" to engage the congregation in Green Sanctuary 2030 work. In addition, Side With Love Leadership Development Specialist Cathy Rion Starr will provide ideas on how to Nourish your Team by Mapping Your Universe. Additional information and the link to register are available here:

<https://secure.everyaction.com/hZK8KXRkYUOHay2neiNaQ2>.

"Leading the Change: Women Shaping a Sustainable Future"
3/19/2026, 6:00 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.
Westhampton, NJ - In-person

"Women are at the forefront of building a more sustainable future by redefining systems to create lasting, positive change across our environment, economy, education and society. This initiative recognizes the vital role women play in leading with equity, justice and vision. Through advocacy, reform, organizing and policy innovation, women are not only addressing today's challenges, they are shaping a stronger, more inclusive and sustainable future for generations to come. This program is presented by the League of Women Voters and Maya K. van Rossum. Maya is the founder of the national Green Amendments for The Generations." Additional information and the link to register (to be available 3/5/2026) are available here:

<https://bclsnj.bibliocommons.com/events/69810f7a94297d3600a9722c>.

Sierra Club NJ Monthly Building Electrification Webinar - "Your Electric Utility PAYS YOU to Reduce Electric Use"
3/19/2026, 7:00 p.m. - 8:15 p.m.
- Webinar

This session of the touted NJ Sierra Club's monthly Building Electrification webinars will cover "Join the NJ bandwagon! - have your electric company pay YOU for electricity you supply. NJ is planning to create programs where you sell your surplus electricity to the electric company, or to an 'aggregator' during times of peak electrical loads

on the grid. This could allow the 'aggregator' to temporarily turn off your water heater and (if you have electric heat) temporarily adjust your house temperature (down in winter; up in summer). [An expert] demonstrates a home control system which monitors his heating system behavior, operating costs, and carbon reduction." Additional information and the link to register are available here:

<https://act.sierraclub.org/events/details?formcampaignid=701Po00001XjzbnkIAB&mapLinkHref=>.

"Food as Medicine: A Webinar on Soil, Health, and the Future of Food"
3/20/2026, 7:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.

This webinar is hosted by NOFA-NJ (Northeast Organic Farming Association of NJ) in partnership with Eating For Your Health. "On March 20, 2026, at 7:00 pm, the webinar will bring together nationally respected voices to explore the connection between soil health, food quality, and human health. Featured speakers include David Montgomery and Anne Biklé, authors of What Your Food Ate, alongside Dr. Ron Weiss, who will discuss how whole-food diets can help prevent and treat chronic illness. David and Anne will draw from their latest book What Your Food Ate as well as their others to present the connections between soil health and human health. They'll share the science underpinning soil health in gardening and farming and how it influences crops, livestock, and ultimately the human diet and human health. It turns out that what's good for the land is good for us too. Dr. Weiss will explore why a nontoxic, nutrient-dense, locally and conscientiously grown diet matters for both human and planetary health, and share the story behind the creation of Ethos Farm as a living model of farm-based healthcare." Additional information and the link to register are available here:

<https://tinyurl.com/3m6u4t7f>.

NJ Forestry Association 51st Annual Meeting - "The Courage to Care: Elevating the Art of Forest Stewardship"
3/21/2026, 8:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
New Brunswick, NJ - In-person

Although primarily geared toward those who are connected to forests, forestry and stewardship in their employment, the meeting will include the following topics, which may be of interest:

- "NJ's Forests – the long history – ecologically, culturally, economically, and politically"
- Keynote Address: "Tending Your Forest Through Ecological Forestry"
- "Adventures in Forest Stewardship: A Landowner's Tale"
- "Legislative & Regulatory / 2025 Review-2026 Outlook / Impacts on Woodland Owners"
- "NJFS Update – Key Issues for State and Private Lands"
- "Deer In Balance – Support for Meeting Your Land Management Goals"
- Panel Discussion / "Ethics in Forestry"

Additional information, including links to the agenda and to register (**\$103.22**, which includes the full program plus a continental breakfast and luncheon) are available here: <https://njforestry.org>.

World Water Day - The Watershed Institute
3/21/2026, 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. session
OR
12:30 p.m. - 2:30 p.m. session
Pennington, NJ - In-person

These two identical "World Water Day" sessions are sponsored by The Watershed Institute. "Each session will offer games, explorations in our lab, water-themed arts and crafts, a vernal pool exploration hike, visits with critters that live in our water, and so much more! Try a sample from our Water Bar - small cups filled with drinking water from local towns and wells - and vote on which one you think tastes the best. Learn about the importance of protecting our local waterways and the various actions you can take to keep our water clean, safe and healthy. World Water Day is an annual United Nations event, started in 1993, focusing on the importance of water. This year the UN is focused on water and gender." Additional information and registration for the 10:00 a.m. session are available here: <https://tinyurl.com/mw64m7j9> and for the 12:30 p.m. session are available here: <https://tinyurl.com/53czwzk9>.

Science Monday - "Create Healthier, Sustainable Communities Through Clean Energy"
3/23/2026, 6:30 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.
Lincroft, NJ - In-person

This event is organized by the Jersey Shore Group of the NJ Sierra Club and will be presented by Ben Haygood, Director of Isles, Inc.'s Johnson Center

for Learning & Policy. It will cover "revitalizing communities by working alongside local residents to plan their neighborhood's future and to develop energy infrastructure, affordable and healthy homes, parks, gardens, shared facilities, and more.... [and] the use of community-based planning to steer redevelopment of energy infrastructure and healthy homes, former factories, open spaces, and safe streets." Additional information and the link to RSVP are available here:

<https://act.sierraclub.org/events/details?formcampaignid=701Po0001WmoJGIAZ&mapLinkHref=>

Forest Management Activities on Sparta Mountain WMA in Stand 9
Comments Due March 31, 2026

In accordance with the NJ Division of Fish and Wildlife (DFW) Addendum to the 2017 Sparta Mountain Forest Stewardship Plan (issued in July 2021 and available here:

<https://dep.nj.gov/njfw/wp-content/uploads/njfw/sparta-fsp-addendum-final-7-9-21.pdf>), forest management activities planned for 2026/27 are now open for comment. **Please email comments about this specific activity to sharon.petzinger@dep.nj.gov by 3/31/2026.** Additional information about the planned forest management activities, including a link to the 2017 Sparta Mountain WMA Forest Stewardship Plan, is available here: <https://dep.nj.gov/njfw/news-2026-01-29-comment-period-open-for-forest-management-activities-on-sparta-mountain-wma-in-stand-9-comments-due-march-31-2026/>.

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

The League of Women Voters of New Jersey (LWVNJ) (of which **EJTF member Nancy Griffeth** is co-chair of the Natural Resources Committee) has been 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 March 2026 sessions are listed on p. 11 [here](#), [here](#), and [here](#).

**LWVNJ - "Immigration Know Your Rights & Community Support" - via Zoom
3/4/2026, 6:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.**

"This Know Your Rights (KYR) training is designed to equip community members with clear, accurate information about the current immigration landscape....[It will include] an overview of your constitutional rights and how to assert them safely. In addition, the session will highlight available community resources, support networks, and ways neighbors can support one another during enforcement actions or emergencies." Additional information and registration are available here: <https://tinyurl.com/2vev28ky>.

**LWVNJ - "New Jersey Budget Process 101" - via Zoom
3/17/2026, 6:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.**

"Each year the Executive and Legislative Branches work together to approve a new state budget and determine how the state's resources will be allocated. This process is complex and can be difficult to follow. During this training experts will walk you through how government agencies and the Office of Management and Budget collaborate to determine policy and program priorities, review important fiscal deadlines, and help you understand the ins-and-outs of this important government exercise." Registration is available here: <https://tinyurl.com/yerkc2k6>.

**LWVNJ - "Reaching Marginalized Voters Training" - via Zoom
3/31/2026, 6:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.**

"A strong democracy is a democracy where every eligible voter is empowered to actively engage in the electoral process. During this training we will discuss key voting populations that often face barriers to the ballot. We will share strategies for how to reach marginalized voters and how to help these voters exercise their voting rights." Registration is available here: <https://tinyurl.com/2kuutjrw>.

**Cornell "Perspectives on the Climate Change Challenge" Seminars - via Zoom
Various dates**

The Cornell Atkinson Center for Sustainability presents a seminar series that "provides important views on the critical issue of climate change,

drawing from many perspectives and disciplines. Experts from Cornell University and beyond present an overview of the science of climate change and climate change models, the implications for agriculture, ecosystems, and food systems, and provide important economic, ethical, and policy insights on the issue." Talks scheduled for March 2026 are listed below. Links for additional information and to attend via Zoom are shown after each title.

- **"Climate Seminar: What (and Who) Counts? The Science, Law, and Policy of Greenhouse Gas Accounting"** - 3/2/2026, 2:55 p.m. - 4:10 p.m.,
<https://events.cornell.edu/event/climate-seminar-leehi-yona>

- **"Climate Seminar: Climate Fiction and Climate Reality: Writing a Changing World"** - 3/9/2026, 2:55 p.m. - 4:20 p.m.,
<https://events.cornell.edu/event/climate-seminar-alexandra-kleeman>

- **Climate Seminar: Zachary Labe (from Climate Central) topic TBA** - 3/16/2026, 2:55 p.m. - 4:10 p.m.,
<https://events.cornell.edu/event/climate-seminar-zachary-labe>

- **"Climate Seminar: Can Climate Change Influence the Risk of Another Pandemic?"** - 3/23/2026, 2:55 p.m. - 4:10 p.m.,
<https://events.cornell.edu/event/climate-seminar-raina-plowright>

**NJBPU Energy Competition Rules Amendments and New Rules
Comments Due 4/3/2026**

The NJ Board of Public Utilities (BPU) "is proposing to amend its existing energy competition rules at N.J.A.C. 14:4 and to adopt new rules to be added to the provisions at N.J.A.C. 14:4. The amendments and new rules are intended to strengthen customer protection against third party supplier slamming, deceptive advertising, and significant billing errors. The amendments are also intended to provide clarity, including on the applicability of the Board's regulations for public utilities owned by non-traditional holding companies." The proposal is available here: [https://www.nj.gov/bpu/pdf/rules/PRN%202026-012%20\(58%20N.J.R.%20980a\).pdf](https://www.nj.gov/bpu/pdf/rules/PRN%202026-012%20(58%20N.J.R.%20980a).pdf). **Comments are due by 5:00 p.m. on 4/3/2026.**

**National Urban & Community Forestry
10-Yr. Action Plan (2027-2037)
Comments Due: 5/31/2026**

"The National Urban and Community Forestry Advisory Council (NUCFAC)... announced that the National Urban and Community Forestry Ten-Year Action Plan... is ...available for public comments/suggestions.... This Action Plan serves as a guidance document for the U.S. Forest Service's Urban and Community Forestry Program. State, Urban and Community Forestry Programs also use [it] as a guidance document for their Urban and Community Forestry Programs and State Forest Action Plans. Annual ... accomplishments and recommendations are reported to the Secretary of Agriculture and applicable Congressional committees." **Comments are due 5/31/2026.** Additional information, including links to the previous Action Plan and to provide comments, is available here: <https://sites.google.com/view/nucf-plan-update-2027/home>. The Action Plan website, which includes tabs that link to State plans and a tutorial video, is available here: <https://actionplan.urbanandcommunityforests.org>

VIDEOS+ OF PAST EVENTS

**Eco-Logic Radio Shows:
"Geoengineering Explained" &
"Save the Whales: Protect the Oceans" -
Recordings of Radio Shows**

The Eco-Logic radio/internet program on WBAI (cohosted by **EJTF member Sally Gellert**) aired these recent shows related to EJTF's priorities.

- **"Geoengineering Explained"** - "The ETC Group's [an advocacy organization based around 'the conservation and sustainable advancement of cultural and ecological diversity and human rights'] Big Bad Fix report notes that 'in the post-Paris era of climate change studies, conferences and intergovernmental policy fora, geoengineering is becoming normalized, not as a prudent Plan B but as a virtually inevitable techno-tool despite the lack of public understanding, and with disregard for the relevant moratoria agreed by United

Nations (UN) bodies. We believe the world is sleepwalking toward a geoengineered future and that meaningful critical debate about geoengineering is urgent." The recording is available here:

<https://www.wbai.org/archive/program/episode/?id=62698>.

- **"Save the Whales: Protect the Oceans"** - "Save the Whales' has been an environmental rallying cry for many decades - and for good reason. Whales are beautiful and majestic and an important part of the entire ocean ecosystem that so many people in the world depend on.... Yet, whales are especially vulnerable to boat strikes and pollution and the countries that still hunt and kill them. In recent years, an unusually high number of mortality events and an elevated number of whale strandings have occurred. Whales are facing significant threats in addition to ship strikes, including warming waters due to climate change, entanglement in ghost fishing gear, marine noise pollution from fossil fuel surveying and military activities, port activities and more. And many of these threats are interwoven, compounding their impact on whales." The recording is available here:

<https://www.wbai.org/archive/program/episode/?id=63610>.

Note: The Eco-Logic radio show airs Wednesdays from 10:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m. on WBAI 99.5 FM, and can also be accessed on <https://wbai.org>.

**"Whale Tales and Real Facts 2026"
- Video of Webinar**

This webinar was presented by Citizens Campaign for the Environment. "Did you know several species of whales feed, breed, and migrate throughout New York's waters each year?.... This unique virtual forum feature[d] whale experts that have decades of experience in tracking individual whales, conducting necropsies on deceased whales, and monitoring emerging threats to whales and other marine mammals." According to **EJTF member Peggy Middaugh**, this was a fabulous webinar on what's going on with whales on the east coast - mostly in the NY Bight, with three very credible and cogent scientists as presenters. The video is available here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X4agQGikNwA>.

"Democratizing Solar: What Balcony Plug-In Systems Mean for Energy Access" **- Video of Webinar**

This webinar sponsored by Elders Climate Action was presented by Cora Stryker, who is "the serial founder of several mission-driven organizations including Bright Saver, the first and only nonprofit dedicated to making plug-in 'balcony' solar a reality in the United States. She is a former tropical field biologist, and a graduate of Brown University with Honors." The video is available here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hKFIQuEYss0>.

"Green Sanctuary 2030 Celebration" **- Video of Webinar**

This annual celebration of the UU Association's congregational climate justice program with Side with Love - Green Sanctuary 2030 (GS2030) - was "a time for our Active Green Sanctuary Teams to come together to share what they're working on [in] a fast-paced, inspirational review of all the good work our congregations are doing... transforming our congregations through climate justice." The video is available here:

<https://tinyurl.com/uva7m8xt>.

"Green Sanctuary for our Kids": Green Sanctuary Community Meeting **- Video of Webinar**

This was the monthly meeting of the UU Association's congregational climate justice program with Side with Love - Green Sanctuary 2030 (GS2030). "Creating Climate Justice is not just for adults! Our Green Sanctuary activities can engage with our children and youth programs, and those programs can also shape our Green Sanctuary work.... Julie Rigano, Director of Family Ministry at the UU Church at Washington Crossing in New Jersey, share[d] her experiences on how the GS work with children and youth, especially the Climate Justice Revival materials, has enhanced programming for all." The video is available here: <https://vimeo.com/1166732348>.

"Powering the Economy: Generation Innovation, Grid Optimization, and Energy Efficiency" - Video of Webinar and Slides

This webinar was sponsored by the Environmental and Energy Study Institute (EESI) and the National Association of State Energy Officials (NASEO). It covered "state-led energy solutions to meet rapidly increasing power demand needed to grow America's economy, support energy security and resilience, and put downward pressure on electricity costs. Attendees [heard] from State Energy Office leaders about the 11-state Advanced Nuclear First Mover Initiative, 13-state Geothermal Power Accelerator, hydropower, advanced transmission reconductoring and grid optimization, and energy storage. Panelists also discuss[ed] energy efficiency solutions that are lowering energy bills for consumers and businesses, and the latest on state energy security initiatives designed to improve reliability and speed the recovery of energy systems following physical, weather, and cyber incidents. Speakers highlight[ed] key federal policies that can help states in their efforts to catalyze energy innovation and address energy affordability." The video is available here:

<https://www.eesi.org/briefings/view/020526grid> and the Oregon presentation slides are available here: https://www.eesi.org/files/Janine_Benner_020526_Slides.pdf.

"Frozen Infrastructure: Winter Storm Impacts on Communities and the Power Grid" - Video of Webinar and Slides

"The Environmental and Energy Study Institute (EESI) held a Rapid Readout on energy resilience and recovery after Winter Storm Fern in late January. Many on the East Coast and in the South took weeks to dig out from this storm.... [and some] were without electricity for more than a week.... Building on lessons from past devastating winter storms, such as Winter Storm Uri that impacted Texas in February 2021, this Rapid Readout examined Fern's impacts on power grids and potential resilient solutions to help residents weather future storms." The video is available here:

<https://www.eesi.org/briefings/view/022026winter> and the presentation slides are available here: https://www.eesi.org/files/Carlos_Gamarras_022026_Slides.pdf.

NJBPU Energy Efficiency Stakeholder Meeting - Video of Webinar and Slides

The NJ Board of Public Utilities (NJBPU) monthly Clean Energy Program Energy Efficiency Stakeholder meeting for February 2026 included a presentation by Deane Evans, Executive Director of the NJ Institute of Technology (NJIT) Center for Building Knowledge on Grid-Interactive Efficient Buildings (GEBS), including homes. A GEB is "an energy efficient building with smart technologies characterized by the active use of distributed energy resources (DERs) to optimize energy use for grid service, occupant needs and preferences, and cost reductions in a continuous and integrated way." The video is available here:

<https://tinyurl.com/4wefdvue>; the NJIT presentation begins at minute 01:05.00. Slides from the webinar are available here: <https://tinyurl.com/3me3jxve>.

"How Mobilizing Voters Can Make a Difference in 2026" with Environmental Voter Project's Nathaniel Stinnett - Video of Webinar

In this webinar sponsored by Elders Climate Action, Nathaniel Stinnett of the Environmental Voter Project (EVP) provided "a sneak peek at their data for the 2026 midterm elections, and where EVP thinks climate voters (and the activists who mobilize them) could make a big difference in 2026." The video is available here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cDke2s9ex2U>.

NOAA CSI Impact Series: "Compounding and Cascading Risk Reduction" - Video of Webinar

This webinar was part of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Climate and Societal Interactions (CSI) Division Impact Series. The primary goal of this series is "to highlight the ways in which research on adaptation moves successfully to action at a local and state scale." This webinar explored "best practices and applied action for reducing impacts from multiple weather and environmental hazards (such as flood, heat, or wildfire/smoke risks) that interact with other physical, economic and/or social factors." The video is available here:

<https://tinyurl.com/3ur6m7hy>.

City of Paterson EJ NJDEP Community Engagement Session - Video of Session

The NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) partnered with Paterson Alliance to hold the Paterson Environmental Justice Community Engagement Session. DEP Commissioner Shawn LaTourette and DEP Office of Environmental Justice Director Kandyce Perry met with residents in Paterson's overburdened communities to discuss environmental justice concerns, share resources, and answer questions. Member organizations of Paterson Alliance's newly established Environmental Justice Working Group highlighted efforts to address environmental justice issues locally, and how residents can get involved. The video is available here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wE4ObC1c5iQ>.

NEWS RELATED TO EJTF ISSUES [covering 1/26/2026 – 2/25/2026]

ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

NJDEP's Environmental Justice Advisory Council Releases 2026 Work Plan

From the NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) Office of Environmental Justice news release: "The DEP Office of Environmental Justice (OEJ), in partnership with the Environmental Justice Advisory Council (EJAC), is pleased to share the release of the 2026 EJAC work plan. This plan outlines the key priorities and initiatives that EJAC and its four working groups (Air, Water, Land, and Environmental Education & Communication (EEC)) will advance throughout the year to strengthen environmental justice efforts across New Jersey. Key focus areas for 2026 include community air monitoring, adoption of a catch basin guide, lead service line notification improvements, fish advisory signage, community engagement sessions, expanded EJ resources and educational materials." The workplan is available here: <https://tinyurl.com/4swubdyc>.

ELECTRIC VEHICLES & VEHICLE EMISSION REDUCTION

Judge Protects Billions for Reliable EV Charging; Cleaner Air, & Lower Driving Costs Across the Country

NJ had been allocated over \$104 million in Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) National Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (NEVI) Formula Program funds. On 2/6/2025, the FHWA sent a memo to states informing them that the underlying guidance used by the program was being frozen and no new obligations could take place. As of then, the New Jersey Department of Transportation (NJDOT) had committed \$31 million of the funds, leaving \$73 million at risk. A group of 20 jurisdictions including NJ filed a lawsuit asserting that the FHWA did not follow the law when they rescinded the program. A U.S. District Court Judge of the Western District of Washington has issued a final judgment that "permanently bars the U.S. Department of Transportation from withdrawing States' funds, canceling implementation plans, or otherwise interfering with the program in violation of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act." The Judge's ruling (available here: https://www.njoag.gov/wp-content/uploads/2026/01/2026-0126_NEVI-decision.pdf) makes it clear that "such capriciousness runs counter to the Administrative Procedure Act; it is simply not how things are lawfully done." <https://tinyurl.com/45au9x96>.

RENEWABLE RESOURCES

Opinion: NJ Families Need Relief From High Energy Prices. Community Solar Can Deliver

This piece is by Robert Halsch, the CEO of Greater Bergen Community Action (GBCA), "a not-for-profit organization working throughout north Jersey to build more sustainable families, community institutions, and neighborhoods," and a member of Gov. Sherrill's Interdisciplinary Advisory Task Force. He describes the role trusted Community Action Partners like GBCA can play in implementing community solar, and provides

figures illustrating its success, particularly in identifying residents who could most benefit. <https://www.njspotlightnews.org/2026/01/op-ed-nj-families-need-relief-from-high-energy-prices-community-solar-can-deliver/>

LAND MANAGEMENT/ AGRICULTURE/FOOD



NJ Office of Food Security Advocate Releases "New Jersey Food Security 3-Year Strategic Plan 2026"

The NJ Office of the Food Security Advocate (OFSA), which is the first and only state-level food security office in the U.S. housed within a Governor's Office and with its own independent team and budget, has released the first-ever New Jersey Food Security 3-Year Strategic Plan (available here: https://www.nj.gov/foodsecurity/documents/strategic-plan/NJ_FoodSecurity_3Yr_StrategicPlan_010726_FINAL.pdf). "This three-year, statewide framework was developed through a collaborative, cross-sector, and community-informed process. Grounded in the six dimensions of food security (availability, access, utilization, stability, agency, and sustainability) the Strategic Plan provides a shared foundation to align policies, programs, funding, data, and partnerships across the state. OFSA convened partners across sectors to co-develop the Plan. To support implementation of the Strategic Plan, OFSA is releasing an accompanying Implementation Tactics and Action Planning Toolkit... in early 2026.... The Implementation Toolkit will provide guidance and practical tools for organizations, coalitions, and sectors to implement relevant strategies through implementation tactics that take into account the assets, challenges, and

priorities of their communities." Interested parties can sign up to receive updates on implementation resources, toolkits, and commitment opportunities here:

https://unmcnutrition.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_4ZcCetXWLYjzDQa. Additional information about the Strategic Plan is available here: <https://nj.gov/foodsecurity/food-security/strategic-plan/>.

NJ Office of Food Security Releases Newly-Updated Resources on Food Security in NJ

The following resources have recently been updated:

- The State of Food Security in New Jersey: A Data Chart Book - "Food security is a complex social condition with continually changing and interacting factors with underlying causes. Focusing on a single metric of food security can give an incomplete understanding of the issue. This data chartbook, last updated in December 2025, provides a guided summary of a select few food security metrics, including determinants, measures, and impacts, to provide a nuanced yet streamlined overview of the state of food security in New Jersey." Available here: <https://tinyurl.com/4twbsfub>.

- Primer on the Six Dimensions of Food Security in New Jersey - "'Food security exists when all people, at all times, have physical, social, and economic access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food that meets dietary needs and cultural preferences for an active and healthy life.' This definition grounds New Jersey's food security work and encompasses the six dimensions of food security, which provide an expanded and nuanced understanding of this complex social issue. The six dimensions of food insecurity include availability, access, utilization, stability, agency, and sustainability. Read the primer to learn more about the six dimensions of food security and current food security work in New Jersey that have impact across the dimensions." Available here: <https://tinyurl.com/mr48tx5u>.

(Federal) Opportunities in Organic Act Reintroduced with Strong Bicameral Support

This federal legislation is cosponsored in the U.S. Senate by NJ Senator Booker, and is endorsed by the Northeast Organic Farming Association of NJ (NOFA NJ). "The Opportunities in Organic Act would expand and strengthen existing U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) programs to better support farmers and producers navigating organic transition and certification. Specifically, the bill would:

- Increase technical assistance to help producers adopt and maintain organic practices
- Modernize and expand organic certification cost-share, including an increased reimbursement rate of \$1,500 per operation per scope and flexibility for USDA to exceed these levels for underserved producers and regions
- Provide additional support for institutions and NGOs that help farmers transition to organic and build organic supply chains."

<https://www.nationalorganiccoalition.org/blog/2026/1/29/opportunities-in-organic-act-reintroduced-with-strong-bicameral-support>

CLIMATE CHANGE

NJDEP Releases Updated Comprehensive Climate Action Plan

From the NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) news release: "The NJ Comprehensive Climate Action Plan, developed with support from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's [EPA] Climate Pollution Reduction Grant (CPRG) program, provides an updated strategic framework for reducing statewide greenhouse gas [GHG] emissions and air pollution to reach statutory climate change targets set forth in the 2024 Energy Master Plan. Informed by extensive research, community engagement, and intergovernmental collaboration, the plan identifies specific measures and actions across all major sectors of the economy. **Since its initial release [in 12/2025], the plan has been updated to include an addendum entitled Overburdened Communities Benefits Analysis.** In efforts to supplement the community benefits analysis of reduced greenhouse emissions statewide and further incorporate environmental

justice considerations into the plan, the addendum provides an analysis of GHG emission reduction benefits specific to New Jersey's Overburdened Communities (OBC) and Adversely Impacted Overburdened Communities (AIOBC). In particular, it highlights the impacts of reduced greenhouse gas and co-pollutant (e.g., PM2.5, NOx and NO2, SO2, VOCs, air toxics) emissions in OBCs and AIOBCs." The plan is available here: <https://dep.nj.gov/wp-content/uploads/climatechange/new-jerseys-comprehensive-climate-action-plan.pdf>; the Overburdened Communities Benefits Analysis addendum is available here: <https://dep.nj.gov/wp-content/uploads/climatechange/overburdened-communities-benefits-analysis-addendum-to-njs-ccap.pdf>.

NJ Senate Advances Climate Task Force Bills

From *EnviroPolitics Blog*: "The New Jersey Senate today [2/24/2026] passed bills sponsored by Senator Bob Smith that would establish two task forces to study, and make recommendations on, how the State can reduce greenhouse gas emissions from motor vehicle fleets and ease the negative effects of climate change on property insurance rates for residents across New Jersey.... The first bill, S685, sponsored by Senator Smith, would establish the Fleet Conversion Task Force to study and make recommendations on the process of converting motor vehicle fleets from fossil fuel-powered to zero-emission vehicles.... The second bill, S687, sponsored by Senators Smith and McKeon, would create the Joint Blue Ribbon Task Force on Impacts of Climate Change on Property Insurance. The task force would assess the current and predicted impacts of climate change on residential and commercial property insurance." Information about the bills' progress and links to the bills are available here: **S685**: <https://nileg.state.nj.us/bill-search/2026/S685>; **S687**: <https://nileg.state.nj.us/bill-search/2026/S687>.

LEAD REDUCTION IN HOUSEHOLDS

Trenton Water Works Launches New Phases of Lead Service Line Replacements

This article describes the status of a number of lead service line replacement projects in Trenton, along with their sources of funding. <https://trentonjournal.com/trenton-water-works-launches-new-phases-of-lead-service-line-replacements>

POLLUTION



Photo by Marc Newberry on Unsplash

ACUA Receives National Recognition for Wastewater Microplastics Removal Project

The Atlantic County Utilities Authority (ACUA) received a 2026 National Environmental Achievement Award, in the Research & Technology category, from the National Association of Clean Water Agencies (NACWA) for its microplastics removal project developed in partnership with PolyGone Systems. The NJ start-up PolyGone's Microplastic Removal Pilot Project became operational in 9/2024. It was founded by two Princeton University graduate students, who developed a prototype microplastic filtration technology that is being tested at a one-year pilot at ACUA. This first-of-its-kind system captures microplastics from treated wastewater before it is discharged into the ocean. <https://breakingac.com/news/2026/feb/06/acua-receives-national-recognition-for-wastewater-/>

OTHER

DEP, BPU and EDA Joint Statement on Executive Order #1

The NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), the NJ Board of Public Utilities (BPU), and the NJ Economic Development Authority (EDA) issued a statement that they "are committed to helping tackle energy costs head on. To do so, our agencies discussed using available uncommitted Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI) proceeds within existing statutory authority to help deliver on the Governor's mission to make energy more affordable for New Jersey ratepayers while continuing to make prudent and strategic investments that get more energy online, reduce energy usage, spur economic development and innovation, and bolster green and natural spaces to protect our communities against flooding."
https://dep.nj.gov/newsrel/26_00219/

NJ Calls on Power Companies to Send Grid Improvement Plans

This article, with a 1-1/2-minute news video, describes the NJ Board of Public Utilities' (BPU) request to four electric companies in NJ to submit their plans to modernize the supply grid, bring new power sources online and ultimately lower energy costs. This request is in accordance with Gov. Sherrill's Executive Order No. 2 (available here: <https://www.nj.gov/infobank/eo/057sherrill/pdf/EO-2.pdf>), signed on her first day in office. <https://www.njspotlightnews.org/video/nj-calls-on-power-companies-to-send-grid-improvement-plans/>

New Jersey LCV Launches 2026 'Common Agenda' with Advocates and Legislators to Protect Working Families, Advance Clean Energy and Safeguard Democracy

The NJ League of Conservation Voters (LCV) has joined with partners and legislative champions to launch its Common Agenda for the Environment for the 2026-2027 legislative session, "a comprehensive policy roadmap designed to advance commonsense solutions that protect our communities and natural resources while expanding opportunities for New Jersey's working

families." The key parts of the Agenda are: 1. Strengthening Our Democracy: John R. Lewis Voter Empowerment Act of New Jersey (S282/A1715) [Note: the bill has passed out of the Assembly State and Local Government Committee]; 2. Keeping Public Lands in Public Hands: Liberty State Park Protection Act (S2924); 3. Delivering an Equitable Clean Energy Future: Making Large Users Pay their Fair Share (S732/A796); and 4. Protecting Our Health: Safeguarding New Jersey's Clean Water. <https://www.insidernj.com/press-release/new-jersey-lcv-launches-2026-common-agenda-with-advocates-and-legislators-to-protect-working-families-advance-clean-energy-and-safeguard-democracy/>

Acting AG Davenport Sues Trump Administration to Protect Energy Affordability Programs in New Jersey

From the press release: "Acting Attorney General Jennifer Davenport joined a coalition of 13 attorneys general in filing a lawsuit [complaint available here: https://www.njoag.gov/wp-content/uploads/2026/02/2026-0218_DOE-and-OMB-Complaint-Conformed.pdf] challenging the Trump Administration's unlawful policy that resulted in the termination of billions of dollars in funding for energy affordability programs designed to save consumers money on their utility bills. The unlawful cuts target hundreds of energy and infrastructure projects in 16 states with Democratic governors. The lawsuit, filed in the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of California, alleges that the Trump Administration's actions are unlawful and asks the court for a permanent injunction. As the states argue, the decisions by the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE), DOE Secretary Chris Wright, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), and OMB Director Russell Vought violate the U.S. Constitution's separation of powers as well as the Administrative Procedure Act." Additional information, including a description of NJ projects affected, is available here: <https://www.njoag.gov/acting-ag-davenport-sues-trump-administration-to-protect-energy-affordability-programs-in-new-jersey/>.

Commentary: Liberty State Park Dirty Deal on Hold

This piece from *The Jersey Vindicator*, by former NJ Sierra Club Director Jeff Tittel, describes how the expansion of a luxury yacht storage warehouse in Liberty State Park can still be stopped even though the New Jersey State House Commission voted to approve it. The lease has not been signed, and under NJ law, a lease involving parkland owned by the NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) is not valid unless it is fully executed, including the signature of the DEP commissioner. Because of that, "the fate of Liberty State Park now rests squarely with Governor Mikie Sherrill and her nominee for DEP commissioner, Ed Potosnak. This should be a central issue in the confirmation process and an early test of whether this new administration will protect public land or side with the privatization of our precious public lands."

<https://jerseyvindicator.org/2026/02/04/liberty-state-park-dirty-deal-on-hold/>

Commentary: Sherrill Transitions to Rolling Back Environmental Protections

This piece from *The Jersey Vindicator*, by former NJ Sierra Club Director Jeff Tittel, dissects Gov. Sherrill's initial Executive Orders and the Transition Team Reports and finds that "they reveal a troubling direction: a steady rollback of environmental protections at the very moment New Jersey should be standing as a bulwark against the national assault on the environment."

<https://jerseyvindicator.org/2026/02/24/sherrill-transitions-to-rolling-back-environmental-protections/>

Data Centers

These articles describe the NJ municipal redevelopment loophole that is enabling data centers to move in without public input, and delineate the data centers' potential myriad impacts, including on the power grid, as well as major areas in which public input is lacking and impacts are unknown.

- Data Centers Invading NJ Through Redevelopment Loophole

<https://pinelandsalliance.org/data-centers-invading-nj-through-redevelopment-loophole/>

- A Town Hall Too Late - Vineland Data Center

<https://pinelandsalliance.org/dataone-vineland-town-hall/>

Opinion: Make AI Data Centers Bear the Cost of Power Grid Pressure

<https://www.njspotlightnews.org/2026/02/op-ed-make-ai-data-centers-bear-the-cost-of-power-grid-pressure/>

MORATORIUM MONDAYS CONTINUE

Please continue to contact Gov. Sherrill every Monday and urge her 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 Sherrill to enact a moratorium on all new fossil fuel projects in NJ until there are rules in place to achieve 100% clean energy goals.

NEW DATE/EVENING TIME for EJTF MONTHLY MEETINGS!

2nd TUESDAY, 7:00 p.m. via Zoom

If you work, or cannot otherwise make daytime meetings, the UUFANJ Environmental Justice Task Force (EJTF) will now be meeting on the second Tuesday of each month at 7:00 p.m.

Contact environment@uufaihaction.org for more information

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