



Environmental Justice Task Force Newsletter - April 2026

**SAVE THE DATE! UUFANJ ANNUAL MEETING
5/16/2026 - See p. 16.**

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

Happy Earth Month!!

CONGREGATIONAL ACTIVITIES

Fellow environmentalists!

This is the perfect time to emphasize the Unitarian Universalist Purpose and Covenant of 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..."

There are a myriad of Earth Day celebrations planned in NJ this year - for example, the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Ocean County (UUOCC) is planning an Earth Day & Arbor Day celebration at Murray Grove in Lanoka Harbor. It will feature a tree planting! bee hive! crafts! speakers! and a Nature Walk coordinated by Save Barnegat Bay!

See the many Earth Day activities highlighted in the "[Future Events](#)" calendar, and on the "[Earthday.org](#)" website map.

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EJTF/UUFANJ ACTIVITIES

EJTF/UUFANJ Recent Involvement in Key Issues

With Mike Skelly becoming the new EJTF Chair, after the post having been vacant for a year, EJTF/UUFANJ has been very active on a number of recent issues.

- **Victory on NJ Turnpike Extension Project that EJTF/UUFANJ has actively opposed for years** as part of the EmpowerNJ Coalition. The Sherrill administration cut back the Turnpike Expansion project significantly. As quoted in the Coalition's press release (available here: <https://tinyurl.com/mxt96axv>) **UUFANJ Executive Director Rev. Charles Loflin** stated, "Scaling back this expansion is a victory for clean air and the health of our 'Gateway' communities. By choosing fiscal restraint over more pavement, the Sherrill administration is honoring our shared responsibility to the planet. This decision reflects our interdependence and protects the world we leave for the next generation." Also see the article on [p. 22](#).
- **EJTF Chair Mike Skelly (representing UUFANJ) wrote to the NJ Senate Environment Committee in support of the Liberty State Park Protection Act**, urging the Committee "to move this Act and its amendments forward to ensure that this invaluable public space remains a place of peace, recreation, and environmental integrity for generations to come." The Committee subsequently unanimously approved the Act and amendments. See the article on [p. 28](#).
- **UUFANJ/EJTF joined other coalition partners in signing on to a letter to be sent to Gov. Sherrill**, drafted by Third Act NJ. The letter expresses concern over the fact that Gov. Sherrill did not address climate change either in her campaign messaging or in her budget speech, and raises points related to this and other energy and environmental issues, including a request to support the Polluters Pay to Make New Jersey Affordable Act - formerly called the Climate Superfund Act - (S2338/A3735). All of the points raised in the letter are consistent with our long term advocacy efforts to uphold and live our Values of "Justice" and "Interconnectedness" with the web of life of which we are all a part.
- **UUFANJ/EJTF has joined the DivestNJ Coalition**, which calls for an end to fossil fuel investment by the New Jersey State Pension Fund. The Coalition's current strategy does not solely focus on the moral imperative of divestment, but also emphasizes financial threats to the state pension and advocates for in-state renewable energy investments, which aligns closely with our mission to advance environmental justice and climate accountability in New Jersey.
- **EJTF Chair Mike Skelly (representing UUFANJ) made extensive comments on the New Jersey Science Student Learning Standards**, submitted to the State Board of Education, the State Commissioner of Education, and the Standards office. In the comments, NJ was commended for its nation-leading mandate to include climate change across all subject areas. However, the comments identified a critical need to evolve the proposed standards from technical proficiency toward an ethical, "socioscientific" framework grounded in environmental justice and civic action, urging the State Board to bridge the gap between scientific mechanics and holistic environmental literacy. By doing so, New Jersey will prepare students not just for technical careers, but to be the ethical leaders required for a sustainable and equitable future.
- **EJTF and the NJ Commission on Environmental Education (NJ CEE) sent transition recommendations** to Gov. Sherrill and the Commissioner of the NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) on Strategic Alignment and Modernization of the NJ CEE, and the Governor's Office and DEP Commissioner have set meetings to discuss these proposals.

EJTF/UUFANJ ACTIVITIES (Continued)

- **UUFANJ Executive Director Rev. Charles Loflin participated in a Green Amendment press conference** on Zoom that featured comments by a number of Green Amendment Coalition leaders supporting a Green Amendment in our NJ Constitution. The video is available here:

<https://www.youtube.com/live/2UmQ3i5fwt0>. Rev. Loflin's comments are time-stamped as starting at minute 37:28. See [p. 18](#) for additional information. Rev. Loflin's comments are also highlighted in the article "New Jersey Legislators & Organizations Say It's Time For A Green Amendment - NOW!" available here: <https://pinelandsalliance.org/new-jersey-legislators-organizations-say-its-time-for-a-green-amendment-now/>.



Screenshot from the virtual press conference

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 uufathactionejtf@gmail.com requesting to receive information about environmental issues and upcoming events.

APRIL 2026 (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 NJDEP Tidelands Hearing to Oppose NESE Pipeline License Approval - 10:00 a.m.	2	3 UUFANJ Action Hour - 12:00 p.m. Comments Due: NJBPU Energy Competition Rules Amendments and New Rules - 5:00 p.m. Comments Due: NJDEP Safe Drinking Water Act New Rules and Amendments	4
<i>Calendar continues on p. 4</i>						

Calendar continued from p. 3

<p>5</p>	<p>6 "Climate Seminar: Emotions on Our Screens: Evaluating Emotions About Climate Change Online" - 2:55 p.m.</p>	<p>7</p>	<p>8</p>	<p>9 "Data Center Development: Understanding The Risks of AI in New Jersey" - 7:00 p.m.</p> <p>"Save the Farm Save the Future" Film and Panel Discussion - 7:00 p.m.</p>	<p>10 UUFANJ Action Hour - 12:00 p.m.</p> <p>"Get the Facts on New Jersey's New Resilient Environments and Landscapes Rule" - 12:00 p.m.</p>	<p>11 NJ Tree Foundation Planting, Irvington - 9:00 a.m.</p> <p>NJ Tree Foundation Planting, Camden - 9:00 a.m.</p> <p>NJ Grassroots Organizing Conference - 10:00 a.m. (see p. 30)</p>
<p>12</p>	<p>13 Climate Seminar: Dr. Steven Mana'oakamai Johnson (Cornell University) topic TBA - 2:55 p.m.</p> <p>"Using the Earth as a Role Model for Building Personal Resilience" - 4:00 p.m.</p>	<p>14</p>	<p>15 "Rolling out a Mobile Resiliency Hub in Atlanta, Georgia" - 7:00 p.m.</p>	<p>16 "Food Security Strategic Plan Implementation Toolkit Tour" - 3:00 p.m.</p> <p>"Your Electric Utility PAYS YOU for Your 'Virtual Power Plant'" - 7:00 p.m.</p>	<p>17 UUFANJ Action Hour - 12:00 p.m.</p>	<p>18 Friends of Hopewell Valley Open Space 1st Community Conservation Conference - 8:30 a.m.</p> <p>NJ Tree Foundation Planting, Irvington - 9:00 a.m.</p> <p>"The Art of Being Human: Observing Our Nature Within" (NJSOC) - 9:30 a.m.</p> <p>Roxbury Repair Cafe in Landing, NJ - 11:00 a.m.</p> <p>EARTH DAY Hunterdon County Earth Day Festival - 9:30 a.m.</p> <p>Cape May County Earth Day Celebration - 10:00 a.m.</p> <p>Drive Electric Earth Month EV Showcase in Sewell - 10:00 a.m.</p> <p>Hoboken Earth Day Citywide Gate Sale - 10:00 a.m.</p> <p>North Brunswick Earth Day at Pulda Farm - 10:30 a.m.</p> <p>The New Weis Center Earth Day Celebration, Ringwood - 11:00 a.m.</p>

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Calendar continued from p. 4

<p>19 Bloomfield, NJ Repair Cafe - 2:00 p.m.</p> <hr/> <p>EARTH DAY Gloucester County Spring Fest & Earth Day Celebration - 11:00 a.m.</p> <hr/> <p>UUOCC Earth Day & Arbor Day Celebration, Lanoka Harbor - 12:00 p.m.</p> <hr/> <p>Princeton Earth Day Celebration - 12:00 p.m.</p>	<p>20 Climate Seminar: Dr. Sara Constantino (Stanford University) topic TBA - 2:55 p.m.</p>	<p>21 2026 NJDOT Complete Streets Summit - 8:30 a.m.</p> <hr/> <p>NJ Clean Air Council Meeting - 9:30 a.m.</p> <hr/> <p>"Teach the Hope: Environmental Education Inspiring Action" - 6:00 p.m.</p>	<p>22 NJ Tree Foundation Planting, Newark - 9:00 a.m.</p> <hr/> <p>LWVNJ - "Holding Local Government Accountable: Observer Corps 101" - 6:00 p.m.</p> <hr/> <p>EARTH DAY "Sentience Surrounds Us" - An Earth Day Worship Ritual - 8:00 p.m.</p>	<p>23 "Tracking Down Data: Where to Find Climate and Environmental Information in 2026" - 4:00 p.m.</p>	<p>24 NJ Tree Foundation Planting, Paramus - 9:00 a.m.</p> <hr/> <p>UUFANJ Action Hour - 12:00 p.m.</p> <hr/> <p>Pinelands Alliance Spring Native Plant Sale - 3:00 p.m. (Alliance members only)</p> <hr/> <p>Applications Due: To Join the NJDEP Environmental Justice Advisory Council (EJAC) - 5:00 p.m.</p> <hr/> <p>EARTH DAY Earth Day Green Market, Smithville - 4:00 p.m.</p>	<p>25 Pinelands Alliance Spring Native Plant Sale - 9:00 a.m. (open to the public)</p> <hr/> <p>Madison, NJ Repair Cafe - 11:00 a.m.</p> <hr/> <p>EARTH DAY Annual Essex County Environmental Center Earth Day Celebration - 11:00 a.m.</p> <hr/> <p>Somerville Earth Day Green Fair - 11:00 a.m.</p> <hr/> <p>Point Pleasant Boro Earth Day Celebration - 12:00 p.m.</p>
<p>26 EARTH DAY ACUA's 34th Earth Day Festival - 10:00 a.m.</p> <hr/> <p>Hoboken Earth Day Celebration & Music Festival - 11:00 a.m.</p> <hr/> <p>Drive Electric Earth Month @ Wild Earth Fest in Mountainside - 11:00 a.m.</p> <hr/> <p>Montclair Earth Day and EV Expo - 12:00 p.m.</p>	<p>27 "Climate Seminar: Accelerating Climate Science With Machine Learning: Earth System Emulation" - 2:55 p.m.</p> <hr/> <p>East Windsor, NJ: Public Hearing on QTS Data Center - 5:00 p.m.</p>	<p>28 2026 Hackensack River Nation Summit and Environmental Fair - 8:30 a.m.</p>	<p>29 LWVNJ - "Preparing for the Census Training" - 6:00 p.m.</p>	<p>30</p> <p>HAPPY EARTH DAY 2026! Link to information and map of additional EARTH DAY EVENTS</p> <hr/> <p>SAVE THE DATE: UUFANJ ANNUAL MEETING 5/16/2025</p> <hr/> <p>Comments Due 5/31/2026: National Urban & Community Forestry 10-Yr. Action Plan (2027-2037)</p>		

HAPPY EARTH DAY 2026!



For Earth Day 2026, EARTHDAY.ORG's theme is "Our Power, Our Planet." As stated on their website, EARTHDAY.ORG is "inviting everyone around the globe to unite behind renewable energy, and to triple the global generation of clean electricity by 2030." **See the "EARTH DAY" events shown on the "Future Events" calendar.** Additional events are listed on the map on the EARTHDAY.ORG website available here: <https://www.earthday.org/earth-day-2026/>.

FUTURE EVENTS

NJDEP Tidelands Hearing to Oppose NESE Pipeline License Approval - Virtual 4/1/2026, 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

From the Sierra Club NJ: "Stop a polluting compressor station & fracked gas pipeline expansion coming to Somerset & Middlesex Counties! Attend the Tidelands Resource Council [virtual] meeting and voice your concerns!.... Tell the NJ Tidelands Resource Council to DENY the NESE Tidelands utility license!" Williams Transco needs one final approval, a utility license from the Tidelands Resource Council, in order to build their destructive Northeast Supply Enhancement (NESE) pipeline. The NESE pipeline was originally proposed in 2016 and rejected by environmental regulators in both New Jersey and New York. Williams Transco has revived their proposal and secured approvals to begin construction. This may be the final public hearing on the project. From the NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) website: "The management of tidelands in New Jersey is overseen by the Tidelands Resource Council, a board of twelve Governor-appointed volunteers, along with DEP staff at the Bureau of Tidelands Management. The Tidelands Resource Council, however, makes all ultimate decisions with regards to tidelands." Additional information is available here: <https://act.sierraclub.org/events/details?formcampaignid=701Po00001YznFrIAJ&mapLinkHref=>. The link to register directly with the Tidelands Resource Council to join the meeting on Teams is available here: <https://tinyurl.com/493nfysx>.

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](#). **Comments are due by 5:00 p.m. on 4/3/2026.**

NJDEP Safe Drinking Water Act New Rules and Amendments Comments Due 4/3/2026

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>. **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/>.

"Data Center Development: Understanding The Risks of AI in New Jersey" - Webinar 4/9/2026, 7:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.

This webinar is sponsored by **EJTF partner** the NJ Environmental Justice Alliance (NJEJA). "From AI chatbots to Google Drive, data centers are the hidden infrastructure that powers everyday life on the internet. Their rapid expansion over the past few years is creating a new set of environmental justice problems in New Jersey. Join us for this webinar to discuss the risks of data center development and hear from organizers on the ground about their experience opposing a data center in their community." Additional information and the link to register are available here: <https://njeja.org/event/webinar-understanding-ai-risks/>.

**"Save the Farm Save the Future" Film
Screening and Panel Discussion
4/9/2026, 7:00 p.m. - 8:30 p.m. - Webinar**

This webinar is presented by Elders Climate Action. "Farming in America is harder than ever. Drought, extreme weather, rising costs, development pressures, and labor challenges are pushing farmers to their limits. Meanwhile, climate change - the very force behind many of these struggles - is driving a surge in demand for clean energy, transforming farmland into solar fields. Can Agrovoltatics be a scalable solution that could save the livelihoods of small farmers? Join us for a one-hour film and short panel discussion to follow." Additional information and the link to register are available here:
<https://tinyurl.com/yc2wr9b>.

**"Get the Facts on New Jersey's New
Resilient Environments and Landscapes
Rule" - via Zoom
4/10/2026, 12:00 p.m.**

This webinar is presented by The Watershed Institute. "The Resilient Environments and Landscapes Rule [REAL] is part of New Jersey's Protecting Against Climate Threats [PACT] initiative. The Rule has been six years in the making and yet there is significant misinformation being spread about the impacts of the rule and a misunderstanding of the science underlying the rule. Join [The Watershed Institute's] Technical Friday on April 10 at noon to learn more about what the rule does and does not do. We will address the misinformation and misconceptions of the rule. Additionally, municipalities will learn what actions they have to take now that the rule has been adopted." Additional information, including the list of speakers and the link to register (required), is available here:
<https://tinyurl.com/bdevacns>.

**"Using the Earth as a Role Model for
Building Personal Resilience"
4/13/2026, 4:00 p.m. - Webinar**

This webinar is presented by ISEEN (Independent Schools Experiential Education Network) + Diversity Education in Nature. "This webinar will provide practitioners with a values-centered approach to intrapersonal exploration within their

professional and personal development. The presence of identity-conscious and resilient educators in school communities uplifts the work of DEIB (Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging) initiatives and advancements. These educators can more easily stand at the forefront of advocating for young people in ways that center their voices and experiences because these adults have a greater capacity for awareness, empathy, and compassion toward others and themselves.... The webinar will help to answer these questions:
- How can deepening your personal relationship with the earth fortify your resilience, as you continue your journey as an agent of change in your school community?
- What can nature teach/help us to more fully understand diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging? Additional information and the link to register are available here:
<https://tinyurl.com/3uftneb4>.

**"Rolling out a Mobile Resiliency Hub in
Atlanta, Georgia" - Webinar
4/15/2026, 7:00 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.**

This is the monthly meeting of the UU Association's congregational climate justice program with Side with Love - Green Sanctuary 2030 (GS2030). "As congregations consider how to turn our buildings into hubs of climate resilience, the UU Congregation of Atlanta is taking the idea on the road with a Mobile Resiliency Trailer. Powered by solar panels with battery backup, the trailer will include a refrigerator, a water filtration system, induction burners for cooking, a washer and dryer, portable shower, and a mini-power station. The Mobile Resiliency Trailer is designed to meet emergency response needs, wherever that may be . . . but that's not all! When not in use, the Trailer will also serve as a microgrid to supplement the congregation's electricity and lower their carbon footprint. UUCA's David Stewart will share their planning process and budget spreadsheet which you can use to replicate the idea in your local context. Don't miss this conversation to take your resiliency planning to the next level." Additional information and the link to register are available here:
<https://secure.everyaction.com/dpZIUmHd9US2NMuqtDLi5w2>.

**"Food Security Strategic Plan Implementation Toolkit Tour" - Webinar
4/16/2026, 3:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.**

The NJ Office of the Food Security Advocate (OFSA) just released a companion "Implementation Toolkit" for the recently-released NJ Food Security 3-year Strategic Plan. "Join Dr. Jenny Schrum, New Jersey Office of the Food Security Advocate (OFSA) Director of Research and Evaluation and lead author of the Strategic Plan, for an in-depth tour of the Food Security Strategic Plan Implementation Toolkit in a special webinar. During this webinar, Dr. Jenny will take participating partners through the Implementation Toolkit and discuss its practical uses in everyday and longer-term strategic work to build and sustain food security for all New Jerseyans. Registration is required, and a recording of the webinar will be shared following the session." The plan and the toolkit are available here: <https://nj.gov/foodsecurity/food-security/strategic-plan/>. Additional information about the webinar and registration are available here: <https://form.jotform.com/260695041820050>.

**Sierra Club NJ Monthly Building Electrification Webinar -
"Your Electric Utility PAYS YOU for Your 'Virtual Power Plant'" - Webinar
4/16/2026, 7:00 p.m. - 8:15 p.m.**

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 creating 'Virtual Power Plants' (VPP) where you sell your surplus electricity to the electric company, or sell 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), plus receive money for providing electricity from solar panels and electricity from home & EV batteries." Additional information and the link to register are available here: <https://act.sierraclub.org/events/details?formcampaignid=701Po00001Xk34KIAR&mapLinkHref=>. **[Note: the previous month's webinar gave an overview of "Virtual Power Plants" which might be useful to view before attending this webinar; see link to the video on [p. 17](#).]**

**Friends of Hopewell Valley Open Space
1st Community Conservation Conference
4/18/2026, 8:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.
Pennington, NJ - In-person**

"Join [Friends of Hopewell Valley Open Space - FoHVOS] on Saturday, April 18th for our first-ever Community Conservation Conference! This inspirational and educational half-day event is designed for homeowners and the public that are interested in and committed to at-home habitat restoration. Our keynote speaker, Doug Tallamy, is the founder of the Homegrown National Park movement, whose groundbreaking work has inspired thousands to transform their yards into thriving ecosystems. This conference will be packed with resources, inspiration and expert advice, from our presenters to exhibitors." Additional information, including the agenda and the link to purchase tickets (**\$49**), is available here: <https://www.fohvos.info/event/cc-conference/>.

**Hunterdon County Earth Day Festival
4/18/2026, 9:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.
Flemington, NJ - In-person**

"Join us for the Division of Parks & Recreation's 22nd Earth Day event! Help us celebrate the one, the only, Planet Earth! Meet live animals with Rizzo's Wildlife World at 11:00 AM. Enjoy a high-energy musical experience with recycled instruments with Bash the Trash at 1:30 PM.... All day, meet animals and do other activities with local 4-H clubs. Make and take home a recycled or natural craft. Visit the tables of local environmental organizations to find out what they do [including the Sierra Club NJ]. See what critters live in the stream (bring water shoes or boots), and try out casting a fishing line. <https://nj-hunterdoncounty.civicplus.com/2636/Earth-Day-Festival>

**Cape May County Earth Day Celebration
4/18/2026, 10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.
Cape May County, NJ - In-person**

The theme of this year's celebration is "From Dunes to Deep Blue" - raising awareness of the full coastal ecosystem; dunes, marshes, reefs and open water. "The Cape May County Park and Zoo is the perfect location for this day of fun and learning. Hands on educational exhibits, children's amusements, live entertainment, a variety of

environmental eco-shops, scavenger hunt; all of which will guarantee a day of earth friendly fun. Large tents on the center field will showcase educational exhibits. The Bandstand nearby will feature the entertainment for the day. Crafters, wares, and a food court surround the field and complete the venue." Additional information is available here:

<https://capemaycountynj.gov/1614/Earth-Day-Celebration-2026>.

Drive Electric Earth Month EV Showcase in Sewell, NJ - In-Person
4/18/2026, 10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

This event is hosted by Tri County Sustainability, the New Jersey Electric Vehicle Association, and the South Jersey Electric Vehicle Club. "Join us at New Jersey's newest Museum, the Edelman Fossil Park of Rowan University as we celebrate their commitment to sustainability!.... We'll be showing several models of Electric Vehicles [EVs] and telling our stories of making the switch to electric fueled driving. Learn about the benefits of switching to an EV, and even see how easy public charging is with the Museum's 3 on site ChargePoint Level 2 Chargers." Additional information and the link to register to bring your EV are available here:

<https://driveelectricearthmonth.org/event?eventid=5114>.

"The Art of Being Human: Observing Our Nature Within" -
NJ School of Conservation (NJSOC)
4/18/2026, 9:30 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.
Sandyston, NJ - In-person

"This program offers a deep, personal experience in learning to still the mind, open the heart, open the eyes, and use our higher senses to observe within ourselves and around us at all times. This popular program is now in its fifth year, designed and led by Peter Del Vecchio, sharing his decades of training and life experiences as both a keen observer of the natural world and yogic mindfulness guide. Instructor-led activities include simple and powerful mindfulness and deep relaxation techniques, nature walks (some silent), journaling, discussions, and cell phone nature photography – a favorite!.... Throughout our lives from early childhood, we are guided toward intellectual learning: facts, dates, calculations, etc. The Art of Being Human: Observing Our Nature

Within offers a practical, deeper type of learning to help free us from that 'mental gerbil wheel'. We learn to focus inwardly in order to better focus outwardly. The benefit is a much cleaner, happier, giving, and more fulfilling life. This program is designed for ages 12* to adult (*children under 18 must be accompanied by an adult). No prior experience is required – just a love of nature and learning." Additional information, including a link to purchase tickets (\$99.00 + \$8.40 Fee), is available here: <https://njsoc.org/event/observing-nature-inward-and-outward-6/>.

Hoboken Earth Day Citywide Gate Sale
4/18/2026, 10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.
Hoboken, NJ - In-person

"The City of Hoboken and the Hoboken Green Team invite residents and visitors to celebrate Earth Day with a community-wide gate sale on Saturday, April 18, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. This citywide event encourages residents to sell gently used, secondhand items directly from their gates or stoops, promoting reuse, reducing landfill waste, and advancing sustainability. Shoppers will be able to explore participating locations using an online city map, making it easy to discover unique items throughout Hoboken. Reducing waste is a component of the City's Climate Action Plan which aims to reach carbon neutrality by 2050 and net zero energy by 2030." Additional information is available here: <https://hobokennj.gov/news/city-of-hoboken-hoboken-green-team-announce-earth-day-citywide-gate-sale>.

North Brunswick Earth Day at Pulda Farm
4/18/2026, 10:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
North Brunswick, NJ - In-person

The Township of North Brunswick Department of Parks, Recreation and Community Services is hosting this Earth Day celebration at Pulda Farm, featuring free hayrides and the following groups:

- North Brunswick Township Open Space Committee
- North Brunswick Gardening Club
- NBTHS Environmental Committee
- North Brunswick Township DPW
- North Brunswick/ New Brunswick Girl Scout Troop
- North Brunswick Township Environmental Commission
- North Brunswick Youth Municipal Alliance
- Rutgers Master Gardeners

- North Brunswick Humane Association
- Fresh Pond Farm

Additional information is available here:
<https://northbrunswicknj.gov/wp-content/uploads/2026/03/Updated-Earth-Day-Flyer.pdf>.

The New Weis Center Earth Day Celebration
4/18/2026, 11:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.
(rain date: 4/19)
Ringwood, NJ - In-person

This Earth Day Celebration will include "guided nature walks and hikes, community partner tables, volunteer opportunities, environmental groups, educational displays, native plant giveaway, nature crafts and activities, games and scavenger hunts, and scheduled programs!" Additional information, including the schedule of events, is available here:

<http://www.highlandsnaturefriends.org/2026-earth-day.html>.

Gloucester County Spring Fest & Earth Day Celebration
4/19/2026, 11:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
Rain or Shine
National Park, NJ - In-person

"Come out to Red Bank Battlefield and celebrate Spring and Earth Day! There will be plenty of fun activities for the whole family. Enjoy sheep shearing demonstrations, Earth Day presentations, magic shows and more!" Additional information is available here:

<https://www.gloucestercountynj.gov/1217/Spring-Fest-Earth-Day-Celebration---New->

UUOCC Earth Day & Arbor Day Celebration
4/19/2025, 12:00 p.m.
Lanoka Harbor, NJ - In-person

The Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Ocean County (UUOCC) is celebrating Earth Day and Arbor Day at Murray Grove in Lanoka Harbor. After the Sunday service (that begins at 10:30 a.m.), the celebration will include a tree planting, bee hive demonstration, crafts, speakers, and a Nature Walk coordinated by Save Barnegat Bay. See [p. 1](#) for additional information.

Princeton Earth Day Celebration
4/19/2026, 12:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.
Rain or Shine
Princeton, NJ - In-person

"Join Sustainable Princeton and Morven Museum & Garden for a day of sustainable, Earth-friendly fun!" Events include the "Trashion Show," garden tours, Helpsy collecting clothing and textiles for recycling, and the following:

- Morven Museum open for free during event
- Road Maestro Bike Repairs
- Friends of Princeton Open Space
- Princeton Environmental Commission
- Princeton Shade Tree Commission
- Walk Bike Princeton
- Marquand Park
- Center for Modern Aging
- The Watershed Institute
- Composting chickens
- Photo booth
- Princeton schools offering activities and crafts for the whole family
- All-Ages Book & Puzzle swap hosted by Community Park's Green Team.

Additional information, including the schedule of events, is available here:

<https://www.sustainableprinceton.org/event/earth-day-celebration-2026/>.

2026 NJDOT Complete Streets Summit
4/21/2026, 8:30 a.m. - 3:40 p.m.
New Brunswick, NJ - In-person

The 2026 NJDOT Complete Streets Summit, sponsored by the New Jersey Department of Transportation, will be held on Tuesday, April 21, 2026. "Complete Streets are streets designed for all road users based on the specific context and needs of your community. The Complete Streets Summit brings together planners, engineers, public officials, health professionals, advocates, and others involved with shaping communities throughout New Jersey. Summit session topics will include institutionalizing Complete and Green Streets policies, lessons learned from implementation, and what is in store for the Complete Streets movement." Additional information, including links to the agenda and to register, is available here:

<https://njbikeped.org/2026-nj-complete-streets-summit/>.

NJ Clean Air Council Meeting - Hybrid
4/21/2026, 9:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
Trenton, NJ - In-person & via Microsoft
Teams

The NJ Clean Air Council (CAC) provides advice to the NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) on air quality matters. The April meeting will be held in person and virtually on Microsoft Teams. 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-20260421/>.

"Teach the Hope: Environmental Education Inspiring Action" - Webinar
4/21/2026, 6:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.

This webinar, part of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Science Seminar series, was rescheduled from March and 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/ahyzkdzr>.

"Sentience Surrounds Us" - An Earth Day Worship Ritual - via Zoom
4/22/2026, 8:00 p.m.

"UUMFE's annual Earth Day Worship Service is our most anticipated and attended event of the year. This year our featured speakers include members of our UU Ministry for Earth [UUMFE] community as well as special guests from UU Animal Ministry.... Our service will weave music,

meditation, poetry, storytelling, and theological reflection on this year's theme, "Sentience Surrounds Us." Join UU Ministry for Earth and other partners to honor Earth Day and celebrate this international day of protest and praise, as we use our love for Earth and all beings to ignite our passion for protecting and preserving our planetary home, for the sake of all beings and future generations." Additional information and the link to register are available here: <https://www.uumfe.org/earth-day-2026/>.

"Tracking Down Data: Where to Find Climate and Environmental Information in 2026" - Livestreamed
4/23/2026, 4:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.

"The Environmental and Energy Study Institute (EESI) and Climate Central invite you to a briefing to discuss a key underpinning of the U.S. economy: publicly-available weather and climate data. Federal data is used as an input to weather models that are essential to public safety and helps businesses...make daily decisions.... But today, hundreds of federal scientific datasets and reports, like the national climate assessments, have been removed from public access, altered, or buried. Popular climate webpages (e.g., climate.gov and EJScreen) have been taken down or archived. In this new information environment, universities, nonprofits, and national associations are stepping up to fill the gaps in maintaining weather and climate data left by the federal government. Panelists will share where to look for these datasets and explore how these organizations are maintaining public access to critical information without the resources afforded by the federal government. They will also describe the implications of these changes for end users, from individuals using weather apps to multinational corporations making significant business decisions. Additional information, including the links to RSVP and to access the Livestream, is available here: <https://www.eesi.org/briefings/view/042326data>.

Apply to Join the NJDEP Environmental Justice Advisory Council (EJAC)
Applications Due 4/24/2025

From the NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) Office of Environmental Justice (OEJ) public notice: "Join the Environmental

Justice Advisory Council (EJAC) and make a difference in New Jersey's environmental justice initiatives! NJDEP is seeking applications to fill six (6) vacancies for 3-year terms through 2029. The EJAC advises the DEP Commissioner on environmental justice matters, coordinates with the Department's Office of Environmental Justice, and provides guidance to Executive Branch departments and agencies. Members represent diverse sectors and have contributed to crucial initiatives like the Environmental Justice Law, the Environmental Justice Seminar series and the What's in My Community Tool.... To apply, you must have a current connection to the sector you're interested in. **Submit your application, resume/CV, outside employment questionnaire, and one letter of recommendation by [5:00 p.m.] April 24, 2026.** Additional information is available here: <https://dep.nj.gov/ej/ejac-membership-application/>.

Pinelands Alliance Spring Native Plant Sale
4/24/2026, 3:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.
(Pinelands Alliance members only)
4/25/2026, 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. (open to the public)
Southampton, NJ - In-person

"Get wild with native plants this spring! Native plants are great for your yard and for wildlife but they can be hard to find. We can help. Find plants native to the Pine Barrens and South Jersey at our spring native plant sale." Additional information and plant sale list (when available) here: <https://pinelandsalliance.org/explore-the-pinelands/pinelands-events-and-programs/spring-native-plant-sales/>.

Earth Day Green Market
4/24/2026, 4:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.
Smithville, NJ - In-person

This event is hosted by "Go Green Galloway - a group of dedicated volunteers committed to educating our community on living a more sustainable life." The Earth Day Green Market includes: native plant nurseries that will guide visitors on selecting plants for various conditions; crafts; artwork; food; and a Swap Stop. Inspired by the concept of Buy Nothing/Sell Nothing groups on Facebook, the Swap Stop encourages attendees to bring items they no longer need or find treasures for free. Anything left at the end will

be donated to a local thrift shop, aligning with the event's commitment to environmental and financial friendliness." Additional information is available here: <https://www.historicsmithville.com/uncategorized/go-green-galloway-earth-day-market-2024/>.

Annual Essex County Environmental Center
Earth Day Celebration
4/25/2026, 11:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.
(rain date: 4/26)
Roseland, NJ - In-person

"For all ages. Yay, it's EARTH DAY! Bring your family, friends, and neighbors to our annual outdoor festival honoring beautiful planet EARTH, the sustainer of all life! On this special day, the Essex County Environmental Center will make extra efforts to share its wonder and appreciation of the natural world with patrons, partners, and friends. Enjoy a day filled with crafts, games, and recreational opportunities, such as canoeing and hiking. Enjoy demonstrations, information, a local eco-vendors' sale. Environmental Center staff and partner groups will be on hand to guide you throughout this exciting Earth-centric day!" The Sierra Club NJ will also be participating, and an EV owner display will form part of the Fair. Additional information, including how to sign up to share your EV experience and/or show your vehicle, is available here: <https://driveelectricearthmonth.org/event?eventid=5180>. Additional information about the Fair is available here: <https://essexcountyparks.org/facilities/environmental-center/calendar/earth-day-2026>.

Somerville Earth Day Green Fair
4/25/2026, 11:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.
Somerville, NJ - In-person

"Whether you're interested in learning about beekeeping, solar energy, or browsing sustainable goods, this family-friendly event has something for everyone. You'll connect with various local organizations that put sustainability and our environment first. Meet members of the Environmental Commission and learn about ways you can get involved in our sustainable initiatives, including our Home Energy Efficiency Campaign, the new Fairy Trail, and volunteering with the Green Team. Meet passionate folks from the NJ Beekeepers Association, Sierra Club of Raritan Valley, SeedEd, Nature at Heart School, and many

more. Explore their booths, engage in kid-friendly activities, and discover how you can make a positive impact on the planet, right here in our community. Join us in celebrating sustainability this Earth Day and empower our community to embrace sustainable living practices!" Additional information is available here:

<https://www.somervillenj.org/save-the-dates-for-earth-day-2026/>.

Point Pleasant Boro Earth Day Celebration
4/25/2026, 12:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.
(rain date: 4/26)
Point Pleasant, NJ - In-person

The Point Pleasant Boro Environmental Commission is sponsoring "Celebrate Earth Day 2026 - Learn about the environment and have fun too! Free admission." It will take place at Riverfront Park on River Road. Additional information is available here:

<https://www.facebook.com/events/1526106982195869/>.

ACUA's 34th Annual Earth Day Festival
4/26/2026, 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
Rain or Shine
Egg Harbor Township, NJ - In-person

"Join ACUA [Atlantic County Utilities Authority] for our 34th Annual Earth Day Festival! There will be lots of free, fun and educational activities for everyone. The celebration has many exciting events and entertainment options throughout the day, and more than 150 vendors, crafters, food vendors and exhibitors will be part of the celebration." Interactive exhibits include: Wind, Solar and Wastewater Facility Tours; Touch a [Recycling] Truck; Eco Hayrides; and Recycling Center Tours. Additional information is available here: <https://www.acua.com/Community-Hub/Events-and-Classes/Earth-Day-Festival.aspx>.

Hoboken Earth Day Celebration & Music Festival
4/26/2026, 11:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
Hoboken, NJ - In-person

"Turn Up the Volume for the Planet! Get ready for the Earth Day Celebration & Music Festival at Hoboken's Monroe Center Plaza! This annual event presented by The Hoboken Business Alliance brings the best of green living and local talent for a day packed with sustainable shopping, high-

energy fitness, and incredible live tunes. From up-cycled crafts and live animal encounters to a curated marketplace of eco-friendly vendors, there's something for every Earth-lover. Grab a bite from our local food trucks, catch a fitness demo, and celebrate our planet with the best vibes in town. Let's go green together!" Additional information is available here:

<https://mainstreetpops.com/?event=earth-day-celebration-music-festival>.

Drive Electric Earth Month @ Wild Earth Fest in Mountainside
4/26/2026, 11:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
Mountainside, NJ - In-person

New Jersey Electric Vehicle Association (NJEVA) will be leading the EV show at the Wild Earth Fest at the Trailside Nature & Science Center in Mountainside, NJ. "Wild Earth Fest is Union County's annual Earth Day celebration aimed to educate and introduce the public to the wonders of the outdoors through local environmental groups, sustainable vendors, animal performances, and nature-based recreation." Additional information and the links to register to attend, exhibit your EV, or to volunteer are available here:

<https://driveelectricearthmonth.org/event?eventid=5182>.

Montclair Earth Day and EV Expo
4/26/2026, 12:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.
Montclair, NJ - In-person

"JOIN US for the third annual Earth Fest celebration made possible by Montclair Township's Department of Sustainability and the Montclair Center BID [Business Improvement District].... The goal of Earth Fest is to unite the Montclair community in upholding environmentally conscious practices while educating residents about the programs and initiatives we lead to build a more resilient community. Residents of all ages are able to participate in educational games, explore booths from local businesses and nonprofits championing sustainable practices, and discover eco-friendly alternatives they can demo such as electric vehicles, energy-efficient appliances, and more." In addition, "the Sierra Club Gateway Group will once again sponsor a Drive Electric Earth Month event at the EcoFest, along with displaying literature promoting Sierra Club programs and policies. **If you have an EV that you would like to show off and tell people**

about your EV experiences, send an email to Bill Beren at beren1@verizon.net." Additional information about the Sierra Club event is available here: <https://act.sierraclub.org/events/details?formcampaignid=701Po00001V3fUAIAZ&mapLinkHref=>. Additional information about the Earth Fest (including a video) is available here: <https://www.montclairnjusa.org/Government/Departments/Office-of-Sustainability/Earth-Fest-2026>.

**East Windsor, NJ: Public Hearing on QTS Data Center - Virtual Town Hall
4/27/2026, 5:00 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.**

From Food & Water Watch: "The East Windsor Planning Board is holding another public hearing on the plan for a 272,000 square foot data center proposed for Princeton-Hightstown Road. Data centers like this one emit noise and pollution while using up tremendous amounts of water and electricity. The proposed plan would also include a 27,000 square foot utility substation, which carries its own environmental risks. The Planning Board will open up the meeting to the public, and anyone who is concerned about the project will get to speak and ask questions." Additional information and the link to register are available here: <https://www.mobilize.us/fww/event/919292/>.

**2026 Hackensack River Nation Summit and Environmental Fair
4/28/2026, 8:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.
Teaneck, NJ - In-person**

"Join us for a day dedicated to the heart of our community and its natural environment. The Hackensack River Nation Summit, held by the Northern New Jersey Community Foundation, brings together leaders and local voices to protect our cherished ecosystems and promote community health. Engage with passionate individuals, learn from expert-led workshops, and collaborate on sustainable initiatives." This year's summit will feature "the ECOllab, an innovative networking initiative designed to foster environmental collaboration and partnership" (**register by 4/20/2026 to place a call for collaborators**); nationally and regionally recognized speakers and partners; and a **free Environmental Fair** that is open to the entire community. Additional details, including a link to the agenda and to register (**register by 4/15/2026 for the following early bird ticket rates: General Admission -**

\$80; Gov'ts & Large Nonprofits - \$60; Small Nonprofits - \$40; Student - \$20) are available here: <https://www.nnjcf.org/hrn/summit/>

**UUFANJ Friday "Action Hours" - Where You Can Get Involved
Fridays, 12:00 p.m. - 1:00 p.m.
- via Zoom**

UU FaithAction NJ (UUFANJ) hosts "Action Hours" every Friday, from 12:00 noon to 1:00 p.m. via Zoom. Participants take action on a specific issue impacting NJ and beyond. 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. A document with all of the information, and that includes all prior Action Hour actions and serves as a useful resource document for ways to take action on key NJ issues, is available here: https://docs.google.com/document/d/1C_x6nMp8O4LH4XBqfLV2SvOaHJqx9DmII8vR3Lg80d4/edit.

**NJ Tree Foundation Spring Tree Plantings
Various dates and locations - In-person**

"The NJ Tree Foundation [of which **EJTF member Peggy Middaugh is Board Secretary**] is a statewide nonprofit organization dedicated to planting trees in New Jersey's most urban neighborhoods, where the need is greatest. Through tree planting, volunteerism, and partnerships, [the NJ Tree Foundation] assist[s] numerous communities in improving their environment and quality of life." The spring plantings are beginning; April and May events are shown below and on [p. 15](#) (**All plantings are rain or shine, and begin at 9:00 a.m.**). Tools and gloves will be provided.

Volunteer numbers are capped for each event; check here - <https://njtrees.org/upcoming-events/> - to see if volunteers are still needed for the following events, (which were available as of 3/25/2026) and to register:

- 4/11 - Tree Planting on 18th Avenue, Irvington
- 4/11 - Tree Planting on N Constitution Rd, Camden
- 4/18 - Tree Planting on Chancellor Avenue, Irvington
- 4/22 - Tree Planting at Nat Turner Park, Newark

- 4/24 - Tree Planting at Paramus Borough Hall, Paramus
- 5/2 - Tree Planting on Wildwood Ave., Camden
- 5/12 - Tree Planting in Atlantic City
- 5/16 - Tree Planting at Arthur J Holland School, Trenton

Additional information is available here:
<https://tinyurl.com/m3zmc4xc>.

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 April 2026 sessions are listed below and in the [next column](#).

LWVNJ - "Holding Local Government Accountable: Observer Corps 101" 4/22/2026, 6:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m. - via Zoom

"The League of Women Voters has been an active champion of openness in government throughout its history. As our country faces threats to the fabric of our democracy, we prepare to fight back at the grassroots level. Join us to learn how to build an Observer Corps in your community. Through an Observer Corps program, participants will:

- Gain an understanding of New Jersey's Sunshine Laws
- Ensure their local government entities are following basic transparency and accountability procedures
- Observe and report on local government activity
- Build relationships with local government officials
- And more!" [Note: A League of Women Voters Observer Corps is a group of League volunteers who attend government meetings and report back on how the meetings were conducted and what was discussed.] Registration is available here: <https://tinyurl.com/38638s45>.

LWVNJ - "Preparing for the Census Training" - via Zoom 4/29/2026, 6:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.

"This training will focus on the road to the 2030 Census and provide updates on recent federal changes affecting census implementation, including key challenges and opportunities ahead. Participants will also gain an overview of the redistricting process, learn about ongoing reform efforts, and explore the work the League is helping to lead to advance a fair, transparent, and community-centered redistricting process. The session will include educational materials and concrete opportunities to get involved, ensuring participants understand how to plug in locally and statewide, and how to encourage local and state governments to fulfill their responsibilities for a fair and accurate census count." Registration is available here: <https://tinyurl.com/2zwxj3aw>.

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 April 2026 are listed below and on [p. 16](#). Links for additional information and to attend via Zoom are shown after each title.

- **"Climate Seminar: Emotions on Our Screens: Evaluating Emotions About Climate Change Online"** - 4/6/2026, 2:55 p.m. - 4:10 p.m.
<https://events.cornell.edu/event/climate-seminar-talbot-andrews>
- **Climate Seminar: Dr. Steven Mana'oakamai Johnson (Assistant Professor, Natural Resources and the Environment Section, Cornell University) topic TBA** - 4/13/2026, 2:55 p.m. - 4:20 p.m.
<https://events.cornell.edu/event/climate-seminar-steven-manaoakamai-johnson>

- **Climate Seminar: Dr. Sara Constantino** (Assistant Professor at the Stanford Doerr School of Sustainability in the Department of Environmental Social Sciences) topic TBA - 4/20/2026, 2:55 p.m. - 4:10 p.m.
<https://events.cornell.edu/event/climate-seminar-sara-constantino>

- **"Climate Seminar: Accelerating Climate Science With Machine Learning: Earth System Emulation"** - 4/27/2026, 2:55 p.m. - 4:10 p.m.
<https://events.cornell.edu/event/climate-seminar-duncan-watson-parris>

REPAIR CAFE

YOUR BROKEN ITEMS FIXED FOR FREE!

Repair Cafes Various Dates & 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 events taking place in April, with links for information, are shown below:

Roxbury Repair Cafe in Landing, NJ

4/18/2026, 11:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

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

Bloomfield, NJ Repair Cafe

4/19/2026, 2:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.

<https://calendar.google.com/calendar/u/0/event?eid=NG9sZzc3cWR1Z2oydTdiYTZzaWswa2FxcGggcmVwYWlyY2FmZWdhcmRlbnN0YXRlQGO>

Madison, NJ Repair Cafe

4/25/2026, 11:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

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



UU FaithAction NJ  **MAY 16**
ANNUAL MEETING 2026 10-11:30 AM | VIRTUAL ON ZOOM

The UU FaithAction NJ (UUFANJ) Annual Meeting will be a **Hybrid** event, to be held **in-person** at Central Unitarian Church in Westwood, NJ and **online via Zoom**. Additional information will be available here:

<https://www.uufaction.org/event/2026-annual-meeting/>.

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 National Urban and Community Forestry Ten Year Action Plan Update Input Form is available here: <https://tinyurl.com/2br34xwk>.

VIDEOS+ OF PAST EVENTS

"Global Warming Arrives 'Faster and Stronger' Than Expected"

- Recording of Brian Lehrer Show Segment

This 3/24/2026 "Science Tuesdays" segment of the Brian Lehrer show on WNYC radio is highly recommended by **EJTF member Peggy Middaugh** for its clarity of explanation about global warming. Brian Lehrer's guest was David Gelles, a reporter on The New York Times' climate team who leads the Times' Climate Forward newsletter. He described the findings of a recently-published study (available here: <https://agupubs.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1029/2025GL118804>) in which researchers for the first time have confirmed that global warming has accelerated in the last decade. The recording is available here (the Global Warming piece is the first segment): <https://www.wnyc.org/story/global-warnings-dire-signals-mail-voting-ibram-x-kendi-airport-advice-dhs-shutdown>.

Sierra Club NJ Monthly Building Electrification Webinar -

"Hydronic Heat Pumps: Data, Costs, and Lessons from Closter" and

"Past/Present/Future of NJ Distributed Energy Resources, Demand Response, and Virtual Power Plants (VPP)" - Video of Webinar & Slides

This session of the touted NJ Sierra Club's monthly Building Electrification webinars covered two topics:

1) **Hydronic Heat Pumps** - presented by Paul Yarin: "How will NJ homes with existing hydronic radiator systems achieve electrification? What should homeowners and clean energy advocates know about air-to-water heat pumps? Do they fulfill their promise to lower energy costs and carbon emissions? Paul recently installed the (first in NJ) Weil-McLain 'ECO Hybrid' hydronic heat pump and developed a monitoring solution based on the 'Home Assistant' platform. Paul share[d] data on system behavior, operating costs, and carbon savings -- and discuss[ed] the challenges that remain ahead for widespread adoption. Paul Yarin is a mechanical engineer, clean energy advocate, and Chair of the Closter, NJ Environmental Commission."

2) **Past/Present/Future of NJ Distributed Energy Resources, Demand Response, and Virtual Power Plants (VPP):** "Mike [Winka], retired Director of NJ Clean Energy Program, describe[d] the past/present/future of our NJ electrical grid. Direct control of a home building control system will evolve with MAJOR changes. Currently, NJ electric utilities centrally manage a relatively few large generating plants which serve millions of NJ residents. Within 2 years an additional million (potential) small VPP will be managed by an 'Aggregator' who pays all VPPs for their energy savings and their energy generation during times of peak grid load." **[Note the follow-up webinar on VPPs, listed on p. 8.]**

The video is available here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fbHW0XB3kEY> - the Hydronic Heat Pumps section is from minute 0:00 to 37:28; the Virtual Power Plants etc. section is from minute 37:29 to 53:25 followed by Q&A. **Hydronic Heat Pumps slides** are available here: <https://climate.smiller.org/50x30/building-electrification/2026/2026-3-19-Paul%20Yarin-water-heating/2026-3-19-Yarin-slides-mar20.pdf> and the link to download the **Virtual Power Plants etc. slides** is available here: <https://climate.smiller.org/50x30/building-electrification/2026/2026-3-19-Paul%20Yarin-water-heating/2026-3-19-winka-slides.pptx>.

Sierra Club "Data Centers Action Hour" - Video of Webinar

In this webinar, Sierra Club experts described the environmental and social impacts of data center growth and provided specific ways people can take action, including how to craft emails and letters to state utility commissions, including templates, and how to amplify this issue on social media, including materials and instructions. The video is available here:

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

"Innovation: Progress and a Path Forward for Wildfire Policy" - Video of Webinar

"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) [presented this] 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 highlight[ed] efforts to address this crisis, including wildfire preparedness, response, and recovery policies and innovations in the United States. Panelists [identified] 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." The video is available here:

<https://www.eesi.org/briefings/view/030326fire>.

NJ Green Amendment Press Conference **- Video of Press Conference**

"Organizations and leaders who are part of the New Jersey Green Amendment Coalition hosted 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 included: Senator Andrew Zwicker (District 16); Assemblyman Balvir Singh (District 7); Maya K. van Rossum, Founder, Green Amendments For The Generations; Stephen Elliott, Director of Watershed Programs, Pinelands Alliance; Shaelyn Parker, River Protection and Environmental Rights Advocacy Associate, Delaware Riverkeeper Network; Ellie Gruber, Member & Representative, League of Women Voters of New Jersey; SD Smith, Member, Ramapough Munsee Lenape Nation; Erica Beverett, Lead Organizer, Parents Engaging Parents New Jersey; Dr. Emile DeVito, Manager of Science & Stewardship, New Jersey Conservation Foundation; **Rev. Charles Loflin, Executive Director, UU Faith Action New Jersey**; Dave Pringle, Steering Committee, Empower New Jersey; Jennifer Coffey, Executive Director, Association of New Jersey Environmental Commissions (ANJEC); Sharonda Allen, Chapter Co-Chair, New Jersey Gateway Chapter of the Climate Reality Project; Kate Delaney, Senior Political Organizer, Food and Water Watch New Jersey; Elliott Ruga, Policy & Communications Director, New Jersey Highlands Coalition; and Blair Nelsen, Executive Director, Waterspirit. The video is available here:

<https://www.youtube.com/live/2UmQ3i5fwt0> - click on "more" under the video for a list of presenters with

clickable timestamps for the start of each presentation.

"Strategies to Lower Utility Bills Now for Households and Small Businesses" **- Video of Webinar**

This Environmental and Energy Study Institute (EESI) briefing "about readily-available solutions to help reduce energy costs for homes and small businesses.... convene[d] experts from around the country with on-the-ground experience in bolstering energy efficiency and delivering savings to consumers. These panelists explore[d] the benefits of energy-saving solutions available to households and small businesses. They also [identified] key federal programs that support these initiatives, such as the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program and the Weatherization Assistance Program." The video is available here:

<https://www.eesi.org/briefings/view/031226energy>.

Jersey Water Works Conference **- Slides from Sessions**

Jersey Water Works (JWW) presented its Eleventh Annual Jersey Water Works Conference, with the theme "Our Commitment to Future Generations." This event and included a keynote speaker, featured speakers, and twelve workshops. Breakout sessions included: "Lead Service Line Replacement"; "PFAS and Emerging Contaminants"; and "Green Stormwater Infrastructure (GSI)." Slides for many of the sessions are available here:

<https://www.jerseywaterworks.org/events/annual-conference/2025/event-materials/>.

"Food: The Ultimate Climate Change Messenger" **- Video of Webinar**

This webinar, part of the Cornell Atkinson Center for Sustainability "Perspectives on the Climate Change Challenge" Seminars, was presented by Dr. Michael Hoffmann, Professor Emeritus in the Department of Entomology of Cornell University. "Addressing the greatest challenge of our time - climate change - has been [Dr. Hoffman's] focus for many years.... Abstract: Food is essential for life, it is emotive, and it is imbedded in our cultures and family histories. However, climate change is changing everything on the menu giving

us unlimited stories to tell and make climate change relevant to everyone. We all eat! The common ground of food even crosses the political divide. Regardless of political affiliation most people are concerned about climate change impacts on their food, and they are interested in learning more - an audience awaits. Food is the ultimate climate change messenger. This is not another doom and gloom story but one focused on a solution. Everyone can tap the power of food to confront climate change and keep our favorites on the menu. And coincidentally, help keep the planet livable." The video is available here:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T_wO6aAcfrA.

"What (and Who) Counts? The Science, Law, and Policy of Greenhouse Gas Accounting" - Video of Webinar

This webinar, part of the Cornell Atkinson Center for Sustainability "Perspectives on the Climate Change Challenge" Seminars, was presented by Dr. Leehi Yona, the Gearnis & Russo Faculty Fellow of Environmental Law and Assistant Professor of Law at Cornell Law School, specializing in environmental and climate change law. Abstract: "Greenhouse gas (GHG) accounting forms the basis of many climate policies. Responsible actors such as governments and corporations rely on GHG accounting - the practice of quantifying and reporting GHG emissions - to produce the emissions inventories that both inform and substantiate their efforts to mitigate climate change.... And yet, our world is filled with 'unaccounted-for' GHGs: emissions that are both measurable and caused by human activity but that are excluded from these institutional inventories. These emissions omissions may have profound consequences for the success of climate mitigation, because progress toward emissions reduction pledges can only be ascertained against GHG inventory trends.... This lecture explore[d] how GHG emissions science does (or does not) get incorporated into law and policy - and how that may impact both people and climate progress." The video is available here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=68TZReiw1o0>.

"Climate Fiction and Climate Reality: Writing a Changing World" - Video of Webinar

This webinar, part of the Cornell Atkinson Center for Sustainability "Perspectives on the Climate Change Challenge" Seminars, was presented by Alexandra Kleeman, the author of the novel *Something New Under the Sun*, a New York Times Notable Book of 2021.... Her work deals in issues related to climate catastrophe, embodiment, and late-capitalist realism. Abstract: "The term 'cli-fi' - short for 'climate fiction,' and referring today to fiction that depicts a changed or changing climate - has been in use since at least 2008, but as the perception of climate change has shifted from being a problem of the future to one unfolding with immediacy and urgency in our own local contexts, the genre has shifted from a mode of science fiction to a more heterogeneous and unpredictable. Recent works of climate fiction are both closer in resemblance to the world of our everyday lives, and more varied in the way in which they depict the difficulties of adapting to environmental shifts. [She discussed] these trends in relation to [her] own climate novel, *Something New Under the Sun*, [thinking] through the stakes of writing fiction about climate change and the opportunities it may offer." The video is available here:

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

"Harness Transactions to Cultivate Transformations" - Video of Webinar

This webinar was sponsored by the American Forests' Tree Equity Coaching Network. In this webinar, a representative from "OUR Community Forestry [an Oregon nonprofit 'dedicated to fostering resilient, inclusive, and sustainable urban forests for underserved and climate-vulnerable communities across Oregon'].... discuss[ed] how trees are intersectional and how advancing our work and partnerships beyond simple transactions, with intention to transform our relationships and communities, can drive intersectional benefits." The Tree Equity Coaching Network "is a community of practice for urban foresters, community advocates, city leaders and allied professionals to connect, learn, inspire and cultivate city commitments to advance Tree Equity." The video is available here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9feYo5JSFnk>.

"Futureproof the Workforce" - Video of Webinar

This webinar was sponsored by the American Forests' Tree Equity Coaching Network. This webinar was presented by Brigitte Orrick from the Davey Tree Expert Company, who addressed "how our work advocating and working for tree equity aligns with our roles in workforce development. Both of these components are equally important and without future stewards our initiatives may be lost." The Tree Equity Coaching Network "is a community of practice for urban foresters, community advocates, city leaders and allied professionals to connect, learn, inspire and cultivate city commitments to advance Tree Equity." The video is available here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6I0RFyqkjgI>.

"Understanding Load Growth and Energy Affordability: Policy and Market Trends from the 2026 Sustainable Energy in America Factbook" - Video of Webinar

"The Environmental and Energy Study Institute (EESI) and the Business Council for Sustainable Energy (BCSE) held a briefing on commonsense technologies and solutions to keep energy costs low and meet rising demand. The rapid growth in energy demand from data centers has raised energy affordability conversations in households across the country. And on Capitol Hill, energy affordability might be the major theme of energy policy discussions. This panel covered a broad portfolio of commercially-available technologies and resources - from energy efficiency to renewable energy to natural gas - that are essential to understand in order to ensure that the U.S. energy system can continue to grow and promote domestic prosperity, encourage innovation, and provide opportunities for economic development....

The briefing shared new findings from the 2026 edition of the Sustainable Energy in America Factbook (a summary, and information to download the Factbook, are available here: <https://bcse.org/market-trends/>). The Factbook provides valuable year-over-year data and insights on the U.S. energy transformation. It examines trends in data centers and artificial intelligence along with the ways in which permitting and siting as well as federal appropriations impact the deployment of modern energy solutions. The

report also features an in-depth look at key topics including demand-side energy resources, renewable energy, natural gas, energy storage, and sustainable transportation." The video is available here:

<https://www.eesi.org/briefings/view/022626factbook>.

"Extreme Heat: Bridging Research and Application for Public Safety" - Video of Webinar

"This webinar showcase[d] research projects supported by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) that have used advanced modeling, monitoring, and analysis techniques to translate research on extreme heat into real-world applications and tools. The session explore[d]:

- the use of human heat stress metrics to characterize long-term trends, decadal-scale variability, and individual event features of heat waves,
- development of a percentile-based extreme humid heat monitor and its usefulness in preparing for extreme heat events, and
- how recent research on heat has informed efforts to communicate with the public before, during, and after heat events.

The video is available here:

<https://cpo.noaa.gov/extreme-heat-bridging-research-and-application-for-public-safety/>.

"Talking Energy Affordability - From Technical Facts to Kitchen Table Conversations" - Recap & Video of Webinar

"As policymakers and clean energy advocates work to protect their communities against skyrocketing energy costs, understanding how to communicate the counterintuitive link between additional grid investments and affordability is essential when bills are rising. [The ClimateXChange] convened a panel to discuss translating the complexities of the grid's impact on energy bills into accessible stories, from experts on clean energy, transmission, load growth, and consumer advocacy to demonstrate how different solutions can address affordability from multiple angles." A recap of the webinar and the video are available here:

<https://climate-xchange.org/2026/02/webinar-recap-talking-energy-affordability-from-technical-facts-to-kitchen-table-conversations/>.

"Revoking the Endangerment Finding - What Happens Next and How States Can Take Action" - Recap & Video of Webinar

"On February 12, EPA issued a final rule rescinding the 2009 Greenhouse Gas endangerment finding. This decision to revoke the basis for the majority of EPA's regulations on GHG emissions, including for industrial and power plants, as well as vehicles, will be fought in court. Significantly, how the agency argues that it is empowered to rescind the finding will have profound impacts for where this case resolves, and what the future of federal climate policy looks like. [The ClimateXChange] convened experts to explore how rescinding the endangerment finding affects federal climate law, what to expect during ongoing litigation against EPA, and how states can still achieve climate progress in the absence of federal regulation." A recap of the webinar and the video are available here:

<https://climate-xchange.org/2026/03/webinar-recap-revoking-the-endangerment-finding-what-happens-next-and-how-states-can-take-action/>.

"The Economic Impacts of Repealing the Endangerment Finding" - Video of Webinar

"The Environmental and Energy Study Institute (EESI) held a Rapid Readout about the consequences of the recent repeal of the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA's) 2009 Endangerment Finding for the economy, climate, and public health. The Endangerment Finding established that greenhouse gases are warming the planet and endangering public health and welfare. For 17 years, this determination has served as the basis for EPA regulations limiting industrial and vehicle emissions. Now, the repeal is expected to have wide-ranging impacts on energy markets and the U.S. economy more broadly. According to an EPA analysis, this repeal could cost Americans up to \$1.5 trillion, negating any potential savings from deregulation. This readout outlined projected ripple effects on the U.S. economy and identified possible paths forward." The video is available here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RDonBEHp5k8&t=1s>.

"Understanding NJPACT REAL: New Rules for Resilient Development and Flood Protection" - Video of Webinar

This webinar presented by the Association of NJ Environmental Commissions (ANJEC) is geared toward municipalities' understanding of the requirements of the recently-implemented NJ Protecting Against Climate Threats (NJPACT) Resilient Environments and Landscapes (REAL) rules. Vincent J. Mazzei, Jr., P.E., the NJ State Floodplain Administrator at the NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), gave a very detailed and illustrated explanation of the rules. The video is available here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kN5n1WCqjp0>.

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 March 2026 included a presentation by Anthony Milondo and Arya Singh, both of TRC Companies, Inc., titled "Energy Efficiency for Data Centers Overview." The video is available here: <https://tinyurl.com/366z7pxd>; the NJIT presentation begins at minute 00:32:40. Slides from the webinar are available here:

<https://tinyurl.com/48sk95d7>.

NEWS RELATED TO EJTF ISSUES [covering 2/26/2026 – 3/25/2026]

ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

NJ Invests \$5 Million to Reduce the Urban Heat Island (UHI) Effect in Overburdened Municipalities

From the press release: "The New Jersey Board of Public Utilities (NJBPU) today [3/18/2026] announced \$5 million in grants to fund more than two dozen projects that will expand cooling infrastructure, reduce energy demand, and improve public health while strengthening climate resilience in the state's most heat-vulnerable communities. The awards, issued through NJBPU's Urban Heat Island (UHI) Mitigation Program, span 10 municipalities statewide - with major investments concentrated in Newark, Camden, and Trenton, and additional projects in Paterson,

Atlantic City, Elizabeth, Roselle, Egg Harbor City, Lakewood Township, and Pennsauken Township. Projects include tree planting along major street corridors, conversion of public buildings into resilience hubs, shade structures, water features, community gardens, and pop-up cooling oases, all designed to lower surface temperatures and cooling costs on the hottest days of the year.

<https://www.nj.gov/bpu/newsroom/2026/approved/20260318.html>

EJ Rules Upheld, But Will They Stick?

This piece by the Sierra Club NJ describes how, in practice so far, the NJ Environmental Justice law adopted in 2020 has not performed as robustly as originally envisioned, and where its implementation of it needs strengthening.

<https://www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/blog/2026/03/ej-rules-upheld-will-they-stick>

ELECTRIC VEHICLES & VEHICLE EMISSION REDUCTION



Sherrill Shrinks Turnpike Bridge Project, a Score for Environmentalists

This article, with a 1-1/2-minute news video, describes Gov. Sherrill's ending the planned expanding of the Newark Bay Bridge and replacing it with two wider bridges. The expansion had been long opposed by environmental advocates for its potential impacts on climate, air pollution, traffic congestion and community health. The bridge now will be replaced by one bridge with the same width as the existing bridge.

<https://www.njspotlightnews.org/2026/03/sherrill-shrinks-turnpike-bridge-project-a-score-for-environmentalists/>

Opinion: Sherrill Has Clean Transportation Options Beyond Gateway

In this piece, Rebecca C. Lubot, Ph.D., M.Sc. and executive director of the New Jersey Sustainable Business Network, recommends that Gov. Sherrill "should take steps to innovate public transportation, future-proof New Jersey Transit, electrify New Jersey's transportation system, reimagine roadways, implement complete and green streets programs and reduce transportation pollution" and gives suggestions as to how the governor should proceed.

<https://www.njspotlightnews.org/2026/03/op-ed-sherrill-has-clean-transportation-options-beyond-gateway/>

FOSSIL FUEL INFRASTRUCTURE

Delaware Riverkeeper Network Files Motion for Summary Judgement in Opposition to the Gibbstown LNG Export Approval

From the press release: "The Delaware Riverkeeper Network (DRN) filed a Motion for Summary Judgement (available here: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1VWDzZ5I6vBR15ZNDwXK1pXQ76w_xwmFq/view) on Friday, March 6, 2026 in its continuing opposition to the decision by the Delaware River Basin Commission (DRBC) to extend its approval for the construction of the proposed Gibbstown Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) Export Terminal project on the Delaware River in Gloucester County, New Jersey. The case is being heard in the United States District Court for the District of New Jersey. The Motion lays out Delaware Riverkeeper Network's case based on the DRBC violating its own Rules of Practice and Procedure. Those rules only provide for a single extension of approval - this is the second extension. Additionally, an approval is conditional upon several factors which the project proponent Delaware River Partners (DRP) did not satisfy, including that DRP must have shown that the project or site has not materially changed, and that they have diligently pursued the project. Delaware Riverkeeper Network is seeking a ruling from the court that the DRBC should never have granted this second extension."

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1AYmfTtWgvCqxOWrEnV2kYgPICmDmaKTn/view>

RENEWABLE RESOURCES

NJBPU Takes Major Action to Advance Governor Sherrill's Goals for Affordable, Clean Energy

From the press release: "The New Jersey Board of Public Utilities (NJBPU) yesterday [3/4/3036] approved three major initiatives to expand in-state, clean energy generation, improve grid reliability, and help control electricity costs for New Jersey families and businesses. The Board awarded incentives to solar and battery storage projects, opened a second round of storage solicitations, advanced the Competitive Solar Incentive (CSI) Program, and approved the country's largest-ever expansion of a state-run Community Solar energy program."
<https://www.nj.gov/bpu/newsroom/2026/approved/20260305.html>

Smith, Burzichelli Bill Expanding Energy Storage Signed into Law

From the NJ Senate Democrats website: "Governor Mikie Sherrill signed into law legislation sponsored by Senators Bob Smith and John Burzichelli that would relax certain requirements for transmission-scale energy storage procurement to expand the number of projects that are eligible under the Garden State Energy Storage Program [GSESP] and, in turn, increase New Jersey's energy capacity and output. The electricity output from renewable resources like solar or wind energy is often unstable and depends on several factors, including the time of day, the season, and the weather.... In 2025, the Legislature codified the GSESP, an energy storage incentive program in the BPU.... The law, S-3819, aims to increase New Jersey's capacity for energy storage by relaxing the current maturity requirements so that more storage projects will be able to bid into the next stage."
<https://www.njsendems.org/m/newsflash/home/detail/1321>

LAND MANAGEMENT/ AGRICULTURE/FOOD

'Food Security Strategic Plan Implementation Toolkit' Issued

The NJ Office of the Food Security Advocate (OFSA) has released a companion "Implementation Toolkit" (available here: https://nj.gov/foodsecurity/documents/Strategic_Plan_Implementation_Toolkit_March_2026.pdf) to the recently-released NJ Food Security 3-year Strategic Plan (available here: https://nj.gov/foodsecurity/documents/strategic-plan/NJ_FoodSecurity_3Yr_StrategicPlan_010726_FINAL.pdf). "The Implementation Toolkit contains a step-by-step process and customizable templates to help communities move from the focus areas outlined in the Strategic Plan to specific, coordinated action plans. It is designed to help users think through a program from idea to implementation. OFSA designed and released the Toolkit to support a statewide, multi-sector movement from the shared vision in the Strategic Plan to collective action." Also see the webinar on the Toolkit described on [p. 8](#).
<https://nj.gov/foodsecurity/food-security/strategic-plan/>.

Black Run Headwaters: To Be Preserved for Future Generations

From the NJ Pinelands Alliance: "The Black Run Preserve is one of the most beloved natural areas in New Jersey and an important keystone of the Pinelands National Reserve. This 1,300-acre Black Run Preserve will soon include an additional 835-acres that has been the subject of decades-long advocacy. Following a successful campaign to down-zone the property and limit potential development, a binding sale of contract is now in effect to preserve the land outright." Additional information, including background, a timeline, and what you can do now, is available here: <https://pinelandsalliance.org/headwaters-of-the-black-run-preserve-threatened/>.

Environmental Group Sues Over Proposed 415-Unit Community In Southern Ocean County

Save Barnegat Bay has filed a lawsuit (available here: <https://savebarnegatbay.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/01/20251121-Filed-Complaint-in-Lieu-of-Prerogative-Writ.pdf>) challenging the Little Egg Harbor Township Planning Board's approval of a 415-unit age-restricted development. The lawsuit asks for a review of whether the Planning Board followed planning and environmental law when it approved the development, which would require clearing nearly 100 acres of one of the last tracts of remaining mature forest in Little Egg Harbor. Save Barnegat Bay notes that this is only one of a number of developments that planning boards in Ocean County are approving "in a vacuum."

<https://patch.com/new-jersey/barnegat-manahawkin/environmental-group-sues-over-proposed-415-unit-community-southern>

Hanover Environmental Commission Recognized as Part of Township's Primary Development Review

The recognition of the Hanover Environmental Commission as part of the Township's primary review process is an important development, because it will allow the Environmental Commission to evaluate environmental considerations alongside other municipal departments when projects are first examined. It will now receive development applications during the township's department-head review stage before they are forwarded to the Planning Board or Board of Adjustment, when it is more feasible to make suggestions for any changes.

<https://www.tapinto.net/towns/hanover-township/articles/hanover-environmental-commission-recognized-as-part-of-township-s-primary-development-review>

11.7% = Estimated Percentage of NJ Individuals Who Are 'Food Insecure' (2023)

This information from NJ Department of Health (DOH) State Health Assessment Data includes a map of Food Insecurity by County, along with other NJ food insecurity information.

<https://www-doh.nj.gov/doh-shad/indicator/summary/FoodInsecurity.html?>

Landmark New Jersey Law Tees Up Aggressive Food Waste Goals

This article describes the impacts of the law - available here:

https://pub.njleg.state.nj.us/Bills/2024/AL25/228_.PDF

- that was signed on the last day of 2025/2025 legislative session, which mandates that "No later than two years after the effective date of this section, each solid waste management district in the State shall develop and implement a strategy for reducing, by the year 2035, the amount of food waste generated annually in the district by at least 50 percent of the amount which was generated in the year 2022."

<https://www.waste360.com/food-waste/landmark-new-jersey-law-tees-up-aggressive-food-waste-goals>



'State of the Pinelands 2026' Report Issued

From the NJ Pinelands Alliance: "The Pinelands Alliance (the Alliance) released its 2026 State of the Pinelands Report. Amid the growing national uncertainty around environmental protections, Pinelands Alliance is urging Governor Mikie Sherrill to strengthen and expand the state's layered environmental safeguards to protect clean air, water, public lands, and climate resilience." The Alliance's annual State of the Pinelands Report details the actions of government agencies and elected officials with regard to Pinelands protection. The report is available here:

<https://pinelandsalliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/02/195687-5335-SOTP26-PRINT-for-Web.pdf>

CLIMATE CHANGE

Empower NJ: New Jersey Can Address Budget Deficit, Improve Affordability by Making Polluters Pay

From the press release: "As New Jersey lawmakers begin crafting next year's state budget, environmental advocates [**including UUFANJ**] in Empower NJ called on legislators to make the world's largest polluters pay for climate damages as a way to help close New Jersey's \$3 billion structural deficit and pay for infrastructure and other costs currently shouldered by taxpayers. The Polluters Pay for a More Affordable New Jersey Act (A3735/S2338) would require no more than 82 of the world's largest corporate polluters to pay \$2.5 billion annually over the next 20 years to fund critical infrastructure and climate resilience projects and programs across the state. This funding would surpass the \$2.1 billion for infrastructure currently included in Governor Mikie Sherrill's proposed budget."

<https://www.insidernj.com/press-release/empower-nj-new-jersey-can-address-budget-deficit-improve-affordability-by-making-polluters-pay-2/>

NJ Builders Association, NJBIA File Notice of Appeal to Stop Murphy Administration's Land Use Rules

Attorneys for the NJ Builders Association (NJBA) and the NJ Business & Industry Association (NJBIA) have filed a notice of appeal with the NJ Superior Court of "Adoption of the NJPACT [NJ Protecting Against Climate Threats] REAL [Resilient Environments and Landscapes] Rules by the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection." They have clarified that they are not challenging Gov. Sherrill's regulatory reform agenda and the prioritization of making housing more affordable, but only the REAL rule adopted on the last day of the Murphy administration, which they state "goes directly against both missions." See articles in the next column [here](#) and [here](#) for more information about opposition to the REAL rules.

<https://njba.org/realappeal/>

Ocean County Commissioners Unanimously Support New Jersey Senate President Nick Scutari's Push to Repeal the 'REAL' Rule

NJ Senate President Scutari has introduced a concurrent resolution (SCR106, link and status information available here: <https://www.njleg.state.nj.us/bill-search/2026/SCR106>) in the NJ legislature that "determines" that the NJPACT (NJ Protecting Against Climate Threats) REAL (Resilient Environments and Landscapes) Rules adopted on the last day of the Murphy administration "are inconsistent with legislative intent." The resolution would give the NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) "30 days following transmittal of this resolution to amend or withdraw the rules or the Legislature may, by passage of another concurrent resolution, exercise its authority under the Constitution to invalidate the regulations in whole or in part." In what has been termed a rare moment of bipartisan alignment between Republican-led Ocean County Board of Commissioners and the Democratic Senate President, the Board unanimously passed a resolution Supporting Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 106.

<https://tinyurl.com/5n6urmsw>

Coastal Flood Rules Defy Common Sense, Bipartisan Officials Say

This 8-1/2-minute news video interview with Manasquan Mayor Mike Mangan (a Democrat) and Assemblyman Paul Kanitra (R-Ocean) describes their opposition to the NJPACT (NJ Protecting Against Climate Threats) REAL (Resilient Environments and Landscapes) Rules adopted on the last day of the Murphy administration. They state that NJ is going above what is required by FEMA, and that FEMA will be revisiting its maps in a year or two and they feel NJ should wait for that. They also point out that public infrastructure is not addressed in the rules, and raising private dwellings if the roads in front of them flood won't solve the problem.

<https://www.njspotlightnews.org/2026/03/coastal-flood-nj-real-rules-defy-common-sense-bipartisan-officials-say/>

South Orange Environmental Leaders Highlight the Power of Local Climate Action

This article describes how much the South Orange Environmental Commission has accomplished on its "tiny budget."

<https://villagegreennj.com/environment/south-orange-environmental-leaders-highlight-the-power-of-local-climate-action/>

\$1.258 Million Grant Will Help Town Improve Flood Control Systems

From the press release: "The New Jersey Department of Community Affairs (DCA) today [1/15/2026] announced the Town of Guttenberg signed a grant agreement for \$1,258,445 in Resilient Communities Program funding to help improve flood control systems. The grant agreement signing marks the first Resilient Communities project to reach this stage of the program, which is aimed at supporting local governments in their efforts to strengthen community infrastructure to withstand future storms. The Resilient Communities Program is administered by DCA's Division of Disaster Recovery and Mitigation and supports projects that reduce risk, enhance preparedness, and promote long-term community resilience. Funding is made possible through federal Community Development Block Grant-Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) resources allocated to New Jersey by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for Hurricane Ida recovery efforts."

<https://www.nj.gov/dca/news/news/2026/approved/20260115.shtml>

FOREST HEALTH/ URBAN FORESTRY

Sherrill Administration Awards \$90,000 in Grants to Help Communities Reduce Risk in Advance of Wildfire Season

From the press release: "Ahead of the spring wildfire season, the Department of Environmental Protection's [DEP] Forest Fire Service today [3/5/2026] announced \$90,000 in grants to 22 communities statewide to support wildfire risk-reduction projects.... Communities receiving funds are located within New Jersey's high-risk wildland-urban interface... and have an approved Firewise Action Plan through the Forest Fire Service's

Firewise Communities program. Funded projects may include reducing wildfire risk through the maintenance of firebreaks to keep them clear of vegetation, along with strategic forest-thinning activities to reduce low and midstory trees and shrubs known as ladder fuels.... Other potential projects include community education and outreach, as well as home-hardening initiatives." The list of awardees is included in the press release, available here:

https://dep.nj.gov/newsrel/26_0009/.



Sherrill Administration Dedicates New Jersey's First New Fire Tower in 78 Years Amid Preparations for Spring Wildfire Season

From the press release: "Department of Environmental Protection [DEP] Acting Commissioner Ed Potosnak and DEP Forest Fire Service officials today dedicated the Veterans Fire Tower in Jackson Township to enhance wildfire protection in Monmouth and Ocean counties. The dedication of the tower, the first new such new structure in 78 years, comes as the state enters spring wildfire season.... New Jersey has some of the most volatile forest fuels in the nation, particularly in the southern part of the state where shrub and tree types can fuel large and rapidly spreading fires.... The Forest Fire Service has determined that human observers remain the most effective means of early detection and the deployment of appropriate resources in New Jersey due to its dense population and extensive development within places where homes and businesses are located along the edges of forested areas.... The Forest Fire Service's annual prescribed fire program is underway, aiming to

reduce wildland fire fuels. In addition to reducing wildfire hazards, prescribed fire improves habitat for plants and animals, reduces damaging insects and ticks, and recycles nutrients into the soil."

<https://dep.nj.gov/newsrel/26-0010/>

Creating More Equitable Urban Forests by Understanding and Responding to Historical Trauma

Although this article is five years old, it was just cited by the NJ Department of Environmental Protection's (DEP) Urban & Community Forestry Program, and describes the relationship of "unacknowledged and unresolved historical trauma" as a "key factor driving 'no-tree requests'" in urban historically marginalized neighborhoods, and the importance of addressing this issue.

<https://nysufc.org/creating-more-equitable-urban-forests-by-understanding-and-responding-to-historical-trauma/2021/01/06/>

DRINKING WATER (other than lead)

Sherrill Administration Highlights Success of Historic Program Helping Hundreds of Fire Departments Remove PFAS-Containing Firefighting Foams

From the press release: "The Department of Environmental Protection and Department of Community Affairs today [3/20/2026] highlighted the success of a major state-led effort to collect and safely destroy PFAS [i.e., "forever chemicals"] -containing firefighting foams from hundreds of fire departments across the state at no cost to them.... The initiative... is helping fire departments comply with state legislation banning the use and storage of these foams after Jan. 1, 2027. The effort is protecting communities and firefighters from the health and environmental threats these harmful chemicals pose."

https://dep.nj.gov/newsrel/26_00320/

ENERGY/ENERGY EFFICIENCY

NJ Senate Panel Backs Bill Forcing Data Centers to Use Own Clean Power

A bill (S680/A1170) that "Requires energy usage plan for proposed artificial intelligence data

centers and cryptocurrency mining facilities; requires all electricity for artificial intelligence data centers and cryptocurrency mining facilities to be derived from new clean energy sources" has been approved by the Senate Environment and Energy Committee. The bill states that all other states in the PJM Interconnection electric grid region will be monitored "to determine if any state laws, rules, regulations, or policies of those states require all electricity supplied to an AI data center or a cryptocurrency mining facility to be derived from energy sources, such that there is no net decrease in energy supplied to the transmission and distribution system.... Upon a finding by the board [that a majority of states in the PJM region have met the above requirement] and published in the New Jersey Register and on the board's internet website, all electricity supplied, as measured on an hourly basis, to an AI data center or a cryptocurrency mining facility within the State shall be derived from new verifiable Class I renewable energy, energy from newly constructed nuclear power plants, or a combination thereof, such that there is no net decrease of verifiable Class I renewable energy and energy from nuclear power plants supplied, as measured on an hourly basis, to the transmission and distribution system." Even if the bill passes and is approved, its implementation would require similar action by a majority of states in the PJM region.

<https://www.njspotlightnews.org/2026/03/nj-senate-panel-backs-bill-forcing-data-centers-to-use-own-clean-power/>

Pallone Urges FERC to Act as NJ Electricity Prices Surge, Warns Residents Face Another Spike

In a 3/16/2026 letter to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) (available here: <https://pallone.house.gov/sites/evo-subsites/pallone.house.gov/files/evo-media-document/pallone-letter-to-chairman-swett-pjm-price-cap-3.19.26.pdf>), U.S. Congressman and House Energy and Commerce Committee Ranking Member Frank Pallone, Jr. (NJ-06) pressed federal regulators to step in before ratepayers are hit with another increase. He asked FERC "to approve PJM Interconnection's proposal to extend its price cap for the upcoming capacity auctions and prevent New Jersey residents from absorbing yet another sharp increase in their electricity costs."

<https://pallone.house.gov/media/press-releases/pallone-urges-ferc-act-nj-electricity-prices-surge-warns-residents-face>

NJBPU Awards a New Round of Community Energy Plan Grants

From the press release: "The New Jersey Board of Public Utilities (NJBPU) today [3/20/2026] awarded grants to 19 municipalities as part of the Community Energy Plan Grant (CEPG) Program. Seventeen of the municipalities will receive the \$10,000 award and two municipalities will receive the enhanced award of \$25,000.... The CEPG program empowers local communities to create community energy plans that align with the State's Energy Master Plan, which is the roadmap to achieving the State's clean energy and emissions reductions goals. Municipalities may earn up to \$25,000 to create localized community energy plans to combat climate change, with a specific focus on equitable access, energy resilience, renewable energy, and energy efficiency." The list of communities that will be receiving awards is included in the press release, available here:

<https://www.nj.gov/bpu/newsroom/2026/approved/20260320.html>.

Commentary: NJ Energy Policy: It's All About the Subsidies

This piece from *The Jersey Vindicator*, by former NJ Sierra Club Director Jeff Tittel, describes the history of energy subsidies in NJ, how the Clean Energy Fund and now RGGI (Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative) funds are being diverted from their designated purposes to fund short-term energy price issues, and how structural changes are needed.

<https://jerseyvindicator.org/2026/03/07/nj-energy-policy-its-all-about-the-subsidies/>

OTHER

Bill Aims to Ban Private Development in Liberty State Park

A bill (S2924), the "Liberty State Park Protection Act," has been unanimously approved by the Senate Environment and Energy Committee. **EJTF provided a letter of support for the bill.** Here is language from the Act:

"Specifically, the bill would prohibit the DEP from considering any proposal to commercialize,

develop, or privatize Liberty State Park, except as provided in the bill. The bill would restrict the DEP from conveying, leasing, or otherwise transferring any property rights within the interior of Liberty State Park or at Caven Point Peninsula. Under the bill, the DEP may only approve an agreement for a concession, conveyance, lease, or other agreement with a private entity to provide small-scale commercial activities if the agreement enhances the experience of a visitor to Liberty State Park, except for agreements related to the continued operation of the marina and Liberty Science Center.

In addition, the bill directs the DEP to develop and implement a public participation process to allow public citizens and civic organizations to provide public input on any proposed changes in land use at Liberty State Park that are not envisioned in the Liberty State Park Master Plan, and to also, at least twice each year, hold a public forum and receive public comment concerning plans, improvements, preservation, conservation, and management of the park."

A *NJ Spotlight News* video interview (from minute 9:40 - 14:55 of the news broadcast) with state Senator Raj Mukherji (D-Hudson) is available here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4thvBhc64Yk>.



NJ Environmental Groups Sue State House Commission Over Approval of Liberty State Park Marina Lease

From the New Jersey Conservation Foundation press release: "Eight environmental groups across the state have jointly filed a lawsuit as co-appellants against the New Jersey State House Commission to appeal the Commission's approval of a 60-year lease for Liberty Landing Marina in Jersey City's Liberty State Park. The lease would allow for the development of an enormous boat

storage warehouse along the park's northern entrance.... The environmental groups that filed the lawsuit include the Friends of Liberty State Park, New Jersey Conservation Foundation, New Jersey League of Conservation Voters, NY/NJ Baykeeper, New Jersey Environmental Lobby, Pinelands Alliance, New Jersey Highlands Coalition, and Ramapough Culture and Land Foundation. New Jersey Appleseed Public Interest Law Center is representing the groups.

The groups deem the proposed lease to be a grave environmental and financial injustice to the people of New Jersey, and against the public's best interest. The proposed lease has sparked public outrage, with more than 1,000 people expressing their opposition through comments to NJDEP and the State House Commission. Fewer than 10 public comments were submitted to NJDEP and the Commission in support of the lease.....

The warehouse was never mentioned during the public engagement efforts for NJDEP's Liberty State Park revitalization plans that guided the new official master plan for the park.... The State House Commission has neither memorialized its approval of the lease in writing nor stated its reasons for approving the lease, which violates the public process the state itself created for this kind of agreement." Gov. Sherrill could direct the NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) not to sign the lease, which would be needed before it would take effect.

https://www.njconservation.org/press_release/nj-environmental-groups-sue-state-over-approval-of-liberty-state-park-marina-lease/

Report Issued: Gov. Sherrill's 'Making Energy More Affordable and Reliable' Transition Team

The final report of Gov. Sherrill's "Making Energy More Affordable and Reliable" transition team outlines key recommendations to bring more cheap, clean energy generation online to provide relief to New Jersey families bearing the cost burden of increased energy demand. The report is available here:

https://www.nj.gov/governor/library/docs/Energy_Affordability_and_Reliability_Action_Team_011426.pdf.

Bill to Protect Public Utility Customers from Increased Energy Costs Clears Assembly

From the NJ Assembly Democrats website: A bill (A796) "designed to ensure that public utility customers are not burdened with subsidizing the energy costs of large load data centers passed the New Jersey General Assembly.... [The bill] would require electric utilities to develop and apply special rules for large load data centers to protect non-large load data center customers from increased transmission and distribution costs. The bill would further authorize the New Jersey Board of Public Utilities (NJBPU) to require financial guarantees to ensure that large-load data center customers pay for at least 85 percent of the service they request for a minimum of 10 years. It would also incentivize data centers to develop and utilize methods to increase energy efficiency. The legislation would apply to data centers with a peak electricity demand of 100 megawatts (MW) or more." Identical legislation (S731) has been approved by the Senate Economic Growth Committee with amendments.

<https://www.assemblydems.com/m/newsflash/home/detail/13013>

Commentary: The AI Data Center Boom Is the Next Environmental Crisis and It's Already Starting

This piece from *The Jersey Vindicator*, by former NJ Sierra Club Director Jeff Tittel, describes the growth of data centers in the Tri-state area, their multiple impacts, and what is needed to "stop the data center free-for-all before it's too late."

<https://jerseyvindicator.org/2026/03/15/the-ai-data-center-boom-is-the-next-environmental-crisis-and-its-already-starting/>

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) now is meeting on the second Tuesday of each month at 7:00 p.m.

Contact environment@uufaithaction.org for more information

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

NJ Grassroots Organizing Conference

4/11/2026, 10:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

New Brunswick, NJ - **In-person**

This just in! NJPIRG (NJ Public Interest Research Group) Students at Rutgers New Brunswick and several of **EJTF's partner** organizations are sponsoring the annual Grassroots Organizing Conference at the Rutgers Labor Education Center. **EJTF Chair Mike Skelly** attended last year, and highly recommends it. He notes that "attendees are a solid mix of students, community groups, and many of our partners.... The day is packed with dynamic speakers, useful breakout sessions, and a lunch for conversations.... It is an uplifting opportunity to see firsthand how large and dynamic the grassroots advocacy community is in New Jersey and to make contacts and plans for our work together." Additional information, including the link to register (required) is available here: <https://www.njgoc2026.org>.