



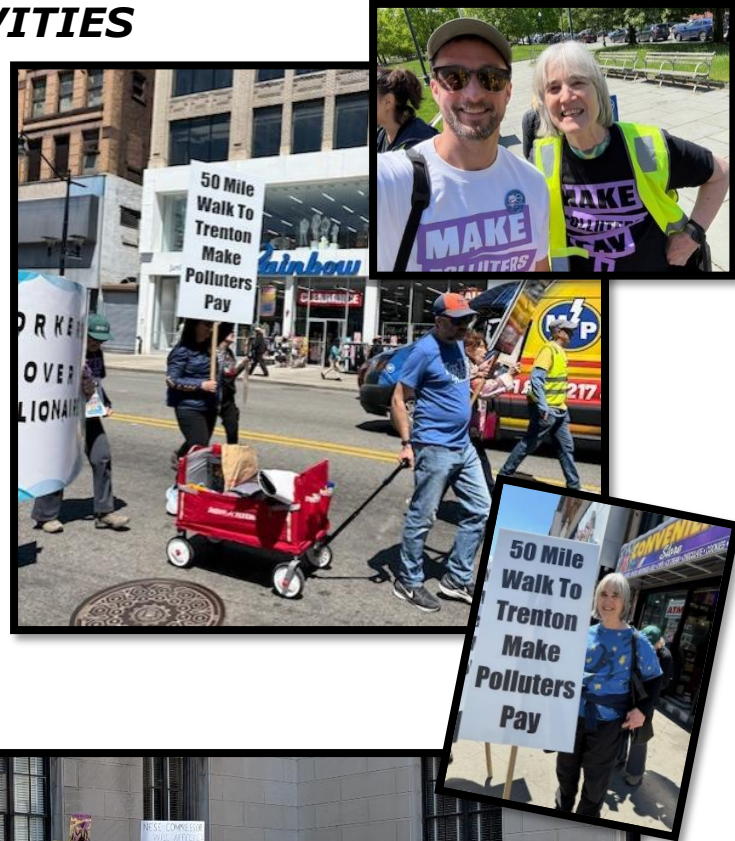
A newsletter focused on environmental justice-related events and actions specifically affecting New Jersey.

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

## EJTF ACTIVITIES

### • "Make Polluters Pay Act" Week of Action

EJTF members participated in a Week of Action in support of the "Make Polluters Pay Act," including portions of the 50-mile March from Newark to Trenton, and Rallies along the way. Photos clockwise from right: the start of the march in Newark; Food & Water Watch state director Matt Smith with EJTF member Nancy Griffeth; Nancy Griffeth at the start of the march from Newark to Elizabeth; and the culmination of the week - a rally in Trenton, with UUFANJ Executive Director Rev. Charles Loflin and EJTF Chair Mike Skelly holding the UUFANJ banner, next to Nancy Griffeth, with fellow Unitarian Universalist and NJ State Director of Clean Water Action Amy Goldsmith at top, far left of photo, and EJTF member Peggy Middaugh (not pictured). See the article on [p. 15](#).



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## **CONGREGATIONAL ACTIVITIES**

- **Central Unitarian Church (CUC)**



As they have done before, the Central Unitarian Church (CUC) participated in the Hike for Hope fundraiser. On behalf of CUC's long-time partner Family Promise of Bergen County, they raised funds that support Family Promise's life-changing programs for working families with children, that are facing homelessness in the community.

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- **Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Somerset Hills (UUCSH)**

### **Green-er End-of-Life Option**

The Green Team at the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Somerset Hills (UUCSH) in Somerville had an information session about soil transformation, also known as human composting, on May 3. This end-of-life option is now legal in New Jersey as of 2025. The process uses much less energy than traditional burial or cremation. The process takes 30-45 days and yields soil that can be used by loved ones and/or used for conservation efforts. Earth Funeral is a company that provides this service, and has a facility that recently opened in Maryland. If you or your congregation would like to learn more about this environmentally friendlier process, you can reach out to Brenton Shelkey at [brenton.shelkey@earthfuneral.com](mailto:brenton.shelkey@earthfuneral.com). A representative from the company could do a presentation for your congregation.



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

**EJTF members - also watch for email announcements of events with short lead times!**  
**Others - send an email to [uufactionejtf@gmail.com](mailto:uufactionejtf@gmail.com) requesting to receive information about environmental issues and upcoming events.**

<b>JUNE 2026</b> (with <a href="#">hyperlinks</a> 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>
	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b> <a href="#">NJBPU Comprehensive Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy Resource Analysis, etc. for FY26 Clean Energy Program Public Hearing</a> - 10:00 a.m.  <a href="#">"Extreme Heat and Protecting New Jersey's Unhoused"</a> - 11:00 a.m.	<b>4</b> <a href="#">1st Annual Community Science Symposium</a> - 9:00 a.m.  <a href="#">Data Center Deep Dives: "Navigating Water, Air, and Other Environmental Considerations"</a> - 1:00 p.m.	<b>5</b> <a href="#">UUFANJ Friday "Action Hour"</a> - 12:00 p.m.	<b>6</b>
<b>7</b> <a href="#">East Brunswick, NJ Repair Cafe</a> - 1:00 p.m.	<b>8</b> <b>Comments Due:</b> <a href="#">NJBPU Comprehensive Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy Resource Analysis, etc. for FY26 Clean Energy Program</a>	<b>9</b> <a href="#">NJDEP's Sustainability Speakers Series (S3): "Electric Vehicles"</a> - 10:00 a.m.  <a href="#">"NJ Infrastructure Underwater: Metuchen's Flood Risk"</a> - 1:00 p.m.  <a href="#">UUFANJ EJTF Monthly Meeting</a> - 7:00 p.m.	<b>10</b> <a href="#">2026 New Jersey Climate Change Research Symposium</a> - 8:30 a.m.  <a href="#">New Jersey Planning and Redevelopment Conference</a> - 9:00 a.m.	<b>11</b> <a href="#">New Jersey Planning and Redevelopment Conference</a> - 9:00 a.m.  <a href="#">DRBC 2Q Business Meeting</a> - 10:00 a.m.  <a href="#">"Building Community Capacity for Flood Resilience - Integration Strategies"</a> 10:30 a.m.  <a href="#">"Data Centers Are Not Inevitable: National Coalition Launch"</a> - 7:00 p.m.	<b>12</b> <a href="#">New Jersey Planning and Redevelopment Conference</a> - 9:00 a.m.  <a href="#">UUFANJ Friday "Action Hour"</a> - 12:00 p.m.	<b>13</b>
<b>14</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b> <a href="#">"Generations United in Action: A Month of Hope Health and Community"</a> - 7:00 p.m.	<b>17</b> <a href="#">Clean Air Council Meeting</a> - 9:30 a.m.  <a href="#">"Nuclear Power: Why It's Still a Bad Idea"</a> - 7:00 p.m.	<b>18</b> <a href="#">"Decarbonize Your Lifestyle - Home &amp; Transportation"</a> - 7:00 p.m.	<b>19</b> <a href="#">UUFANJ Friday "Action Hour"</a> - 12:00 p.m.	<b>20</b> <a href="#">Spring Car Trek: From Field to Flour, NJ Grain Heritage Tour</a> - 10:00 a.m.
<b>21</b>	<b>22</b> <a href="#">Garden Talk: Urban Garden Tour</a> - 5:30 p.m.	<b>23</b> <a href="#">"Generations United in Action: A Month of Hope Health and Community"</a> - 7:00 p.m.	<b>24</b> <a href="#">2026 Congressional Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency EXPO and Policy Forum</a> - 10:00 a.m.	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b> <a href="#">UUFANJ Friday "Action Hour"</a> - 12:00 p.m.	<b>27</b>

## **FUTURE EVENTS**

### **NJBPU Comprehensive Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy Resource Analysis, etc. for FY27 Clean Energy Program Public Hearing 6/3/2026, 10:00 a.m. - Virtual Comments Due 6/8/2026**

The NJ Board of Public Utilities (BPU) has released the NJ Fiscal Year 2027 (FY27) Clean Energy Program ("NJCEP") Comprehensive Resource Analysis ("CRA") and the proposed FY27 program budgets and compliance filings. "Through the CRA process, the NJCEP funding levels for energy efficiency and Class I renewable energy programs are established. The proposed funding level will fund the core NJCEP programs and provide opportunities for new and enhanced programs that help residents, businesses, and State and local governments reduce energy usage, save money, and improve the environment." A link to the documents, as well as a link to register for the public hearing and to provide written comments, are available here:

<https://nj.gov/bpu/pdf/publicnotice/FY27%20Public%20Hearing%20Notice%205.14.pdf>. **Written comments are due by 5:00 p.m. 6/8/2026.**

### **"Extreme Heat and Protecting New Jersey's Unhoused" - Webinar 6/3/2026, 11:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.**

"Join us on June 3rd, 2026, at 11 a.m. as NJ Interagency Council on Climate Resilience (IAC) and the Housing and Community Development Network of New Jersey (HCDNNJ) hosts an extreme heat webinar, Extreme Heat and Protecting New Jersey's Unhoused, featuring a panel of community experts discussing the impacts that extreme heat has on the unhoused. At this webinar, you'll learn:

- Impacts of Extreme Heat on our Unhoused Populations
- Community responses to Extreme Heat
- Resources for the Unhoused
- How to stay informed

Additional information and the link to register are available here:

<https://events.gcc.teams.microsoft.com/event/2a692574-4e41-4d5e-91ed-2f5c247cdf23@5076c3d1-3802-4b9f-b36a-e0a41bd642a7>.

### **1st Annual Community Science Symposium 6/4/2026, 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. Newark, NJ - In-person**

"Newark Water Coalition [NWC] is hosting its first annual community science symposium. Our organization works hard to continuously liberate knowledge and to make data transparent. Come listen to community members doing scientific research and data collection, local community leaders on how to build coalitions, and students who are doing community-based work and how it changed their research. NWC also hopes to highlight some local environmental justice short films that are telling our story and our work. Come join us for some networking and connection June 4th at NJIT. This symposium is sponsored by the CRISP grant. Register today!" Additional information, including the agenda and links to register (required), is available here: <https://secure.givelively.org/event/newark-water-coalition-a-nj-nonprofit-corporation/1st-annual-community-science-symposium>.

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### **Data Center Deep Dives: "Navigating Water, Air, and Other Environmental Considerations" - Webinar 6/4/2026, 1:00 p.m. - 2:00 p.m.**

The multinational corporation law firm of K&L Gates is presenting a series of "Data Center Deep Dives" webinars "designed for developers, investors, and energy stakeholders" to provide information they can use to move these projects forward. It is a chance to find out the strategies of the development side. "Environmental considerations, including water use and air emissions, play a central role in modern hyperscale data center development. These environmental factors influence site selection, permitting strategies, commercial contracts, project financing, and long term operations. They also shape community engagement and public response to data center proposals.... This program will focus on how stakeholders can proactively identify and manage key environmental considerations, such as water supply, air permitting, stormwater runoff, and property contamination, during data center development." Additional information and the link to register are available here:

<https://www.klgates.com/Data-Center-Deep-Dives-Navigating-Water-Air-and-Other-Environmental-Considerations-6-4-2026>.

Also see links to the previous webinars on [p. 18](#).

## REPAIR CAFE

YOUR BROKEN ITEMS FIXED FOR FREE!

### Repair Cafe 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; check for updates.** The event currently listed as taking place in June, with a link for information, is shown below:

**East Brunswick, NJ Repair Cafe**  
**6/7/2026, 1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.**  
<https://www.repaircafegs.org/our-locations/east-brunswick> **with a video about a previous Repair Cafe**

### "NJ Infrastructure Underwater: Metuchen's Flood Risk" - Webinar 6/9/2026, 1:00 p.m. - 2:00 p.m.

This webinar is presented by Rebuild by Design. "Join us for a conversation with Jonathan Busch, Mayor of Metuchen, to discuss the challenges municipalities face and strategies to advance resilience for a more safe and affordable New Jersey." Registration is available here: <https://tinyurl.com/49tybx2r>.

### 2026 New Jersey Climate Change Research Symposium 6/10/2026, 8:30 a.m. - 3:45 p.m. (Plus Poster Session, 3:45 p.m. - 4:45 p.m. and Off-site Networking Happy Hour, 5:00 p.m. - 6:30 p.m.) Piscataway, NJ - In-person

"The NJ Climate Change Resource Center is hosting the 2026 NJ Climate Change Research Symposium at Rutgers University in Piscataway, NJ on June 10, 2026. This day-long event will highlight the latest natural and social science, economics, engineering, and policy research furthering climate change understanding, evaluation, and response in New Jersey while fostering a community of climate

change scholarship." Additional information, including links to the agenda and to register, (**\$100**) is available here: <https://njccrc.rutgers.edu>.

### New Jersey Planning and Redevelopment Conference - Hybrid 6/10/2026, 9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. - Virtual 6/11/2026, 9:00 a.m. - 2:15 p.m. - Virtual 6/12/2026, 9:00 a.m. - 3:45 p.m. - In-person - New Brunswick, NJ -

New Jersey Future and the New Jersey Chapter of the American Planning Association are presenting the annual New Jersey Planning and Redevelopment Conference (NJPRC26) virtually on June 10–11 and in person at the Hyatt Regency New Brunswick on June 12. "At a time of rapid change - with shifting federal policies impacting infrastructure, housing, energy, and climate investment, and a new administration taking shape in Trenton - NJPRC26 will help you navigate emerging trends, understand evolving policy landscapes, and explore innovative solutions being implemented across New Jersey's communities. This year's conference features 37 timely and thought-provoking sessions that will spark new ideas and strategies around land use, sustainable growth, transportation, public health, climate change, and much more. Whether you're advancing local initiatives or shaping statewide policy, you'll gain practical tools and real-world insights you can put into action immediately." Additional information, including links to the schedule, speakers and to register, (**\$400 for non-members**) is available here: <https://site.phedloop.com/event/njprc26/home>.

### NJDEP's Sustainability Speakers Series (S3): "Electric Vehicles" - Webinar 6/9/2025, 10:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.

"The next installment of the NJDEP's Sustainability Speakers Series (S3) will be taking place virtually on June 9<sup>th</sup>, 2026, from 10am - 11:30am. Attendees of this S3 event will learn about electric vehicle fleets, funding opportunities for electric vehicles, and legislation on the management of electric vehicle batteries; from various professionals in the field of sustainability." Additional information and the link to register are available here:

<https://events.gcc.teams.microsoft.com/event/3b249c76-947e-45d8-ab3e-6b133b35e9c1@5076c3d1-3802-4b9f-b36a-e0a41bd642a7>.

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**Delaware River Basin Commission (DRBC)  
Second Quarter 2026 Business Meeting  
6/11/2026, 10:00 a.m. - Virtual**

The Delaware River Basin Commission (DRBC) will hold its second-quarter business meeting on Thursday, 6/11/2026. The business meeting is open to the public and will be held virtually via Zoom Webinar. A livestream via the DRBC's YouTube channel will also be offered. After all scheduled business has been completed and as time allows, the Business Meeting may be followed by up to one hour of Open Public Comment. Those interested in giving public comment should register by 5 p.m., 6/10/2026 and note that you wish to provide open public comment (you cannot provide comment if watching on YouTube). Additional information, including a link to the agenda when available, a link to register for the Zoom webinar and to register to provide public comment, and a link to the YouTube livestream, is available here: <https://tinyurl.com/2vpu3kxt>.

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**"Building Community Capacity for Flood Resilience - Integration Strategies"  
6/11/2026, 10:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.  
- Webinar**

The NJ Department of Environmental Protection's (NJDEP) Watershed and Land Management, Division of Resilience Engineering & Construction is hosting a webinar "to help communities learn more about flood resilience strategies and notable projects that are currently in progress across the state including Rebuild by Design's work on the Hudson River and in the Meadowlands, East Riser Ditch and Riverfront Park. The webinar will provide an overview of the importance of community flood protection, structural and non-structural strategies, and include a Q&A with the NJDEP project team." Additional information and the link to register are available here:

<https://events.gcc.teams.microsoft.com/event/9fbd535d-52f5-431d-be4a-327dfd2b86b4@5076c3d1-3802-4b9f-b36a-e0a41bd642a7>.

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**"Data Centers Are Not Inevitable: National Coalition Launch" - Virtual  
6/11/2026, 7:00 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.**

This event is organized and sponsored by Citizens Action Coalition, Food & Water Watch, GreenLatinos, Our Revolution, North Carolina

Environmental Justice Network, Pennsylvania Physicians for Social Responsibility, and Third Act. "Join the call to launch our national coalition fighting for a data center moratorium! You'll hear from coalition partners and organizers across the country. We'll share successful stories of resistance against data centers, as well as what critical campaigns are underway at local, state, and federal levels. We'll also spend time making calls to Pennsylvania residents, letting them know about the data center moratorium bill in their state legislature and inviting them to take action." Additional information, including registration, is available here:

<https://www.mobilize.us/fww/event/952496/>.

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**"Generations United in Action: A Month of Hope Health and Community"  
6/16/2026 & 6/23/2026, 7:00 p.m. -  
8:30 p.m. - Webinars**

These webinars are sponsored by Elders Climate Action. 6/16/2026 - "Interested in the connection between health, hope and community? Looking for solutions to problems related to climate change and environmental injustice? Join us to learn from and share with committed advocates as they lead a series of conversations that explore ways to build community, promote health and cultivate hope. In this interactive session, you will have the opportunity to discuss challenges and share solutions across generational and geographic differences." 6/23/2026 - "After learning from our partners about the powerful connections between health and climate, it's time to take what we have learned and mobilize! In this session, we'll focus on what it looks like to advocate for healthier communities in a changing climate. You'll gain practical tools, real-world strategies, and the confidence to take action locally, hearing from those who are already making major impacts." Registration for the 6/16/2023 webinar is available here:

<https://secure.everyaction.com/Q1zL5Kj5kUe4PRoIQyh4LA2> and registration for the 6/23/2026 webinar is available here:

<https://secure.everyaction.com/hWPTci-dkyG5hsmvJOD5w2>.

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**NJ Clean Air Council Meeting - Virtual  
6/17/2026, 9:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.**

The NJ Clean Air Council (CAC) provides advice to the NJ Department of Environmental Protection

(DEP) on air quality matters. For questions about the June meeting, please reach out to George Berdomas, 609-940-5654 ([George.Berdomas@dep.nj.gov](mailto: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-20260617/>.

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**"Nuclear Power: Why It's Still a Bad Idea"  
6/17/2026, 7:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.  
- Virtual**

This event is sponsored by Food & Water Watch. "As the climate crisis grows more urgent and calls for energy expansion increase, the Trump administration is going all-in on nuclear power, and Big Tech is investing heavily. But nuclear power is still a bad idea. Fatal meltdowns aside, nuclear power is generally dangerous, dirty, and expensive. From the uranium mine to the toxic waste pit, nuclear power puts our health, environment, and climate at risk at every point in its lifecycle. Nuclear plants require large quantities of water, construction is slow and expensive, and radioactive waste poses a giant threat because there are no good disposal options. These are not the markers of a renewable energy source. Join us for this virtual event to discuss the history and current research on nuclear power, what the current state of play is in the national political context, our strategy to fight back, and what you can do to join us in the fight." Additional information, including registration, is available here: <https://www.mobilize.us/fww/event/958500/>.

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**"Decarbonize Your Lifestyle - Home & Transportation" - Sierra Club Webinar  
6/18/2026, 7:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.**

Matt Kavanagh, founder, Green Insight LLC, will provide details on decarbonizing your home and the transportation you use. Additional information and the link to register are available here: <https://act.sierraclub.org/events/details?formcampaignid=701Po00001nAqGqIAK&mapLinkHref=>.

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**Spring Car Trek: From Field to Flour, NJ  
Grain Heritage Tour  
6/20/2026, 10:00 a.m.  
Blairstown, NJ - In-person**

This is a NJ Highlands Coalition event. "Experience a scenic 66-mile self-guided driving tour through

the picturesque towns of Blairstown, Chester, Long Valley, Oldwick, and Asbury, showcasing the rich agricultural heritage and revitalized grain movement of the New Jersey Highlands, with Wakefern Food Corp serving as our Presenting Harvest Sponsor. The day begins with a tour briefing and optional guided visit at Marksboro Mills, followed by a curated route featuring historic gristmills, farms, and beautiful countryside views, with opportunities to stop, explore, and connect with local producers along the way. **Cost is \$55 per vehicle. Guests may join us on event day or choose 'rain check' tickets to purchase a tour packet to drive the route another day for \$45 per vehicle.** Additional information and the link to purchase tickets are available here: [https://njhighlandscoalition.org/upcoming\\_events/field-to-flour/](https://njhighlandscoalition.org/upcoming_events/field-to-flour/).

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**Garden Talk: Urban Garden Tour  
6/22/2026, 5:30 p.m.  
Atlantic City, NJ - In-person**

"ACUA [Atlantic County Utilities Authority] and the Rutgers Cooperative Extension of Atlantic County partner to offer free gardening programming to the community." For the June program, "We'll meet in Atlantic City to tour community gardens across the city and speak with the gardeners behind them. Transportation is provided." For questions, please email: [ar@acua.com](mailto:ar@acua.com) or call (609) 272-6950. The link to register is available here: <https://www.acua.com/Community-Hub/Gardening-Lectures.aspx>.

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**2026 Congressional Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency EXPO and Policy Forum  
6/24/2026, 10:00 a.m. - 7:00 p.m.  
- Livestream**

"The Environmental and Energy Study Institute (EESI) and the House and Senate Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency (REEE) Caucuses invite you to join us for the 29th Annual Congressional Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency EXPO and Policy Forum (EXPO 2026). Top-level speakers will showcase technologies and solutions that save households money, improve the economy, build resilience, protect our security interests, and reduce carbon emissions.... The Policy Forum panels will be streamed live." Additional information, including the links to RSVP and for the Livestream is available here: <https://www.eesi.org/briefings/view/expo2026>

**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. UUFANJ supporters and friends gather to take action and experience the joy and power of community while taking on a specific issue impacting NJ and beyond. If you can't join on a Friday at noon, the following document has all the information you need to take action on your

own: [https://docs.google.com/document/d/1C\\_x6nMp8O4LH4XBqfLV2SvOaHJqx9DmII8vR3Lg80d4/edit](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1C_x6nMp8O4LH4XBqfLV2SvOaHJqx9DmII8vR3Lg80d4/edit)

**"Native Plants Necessary to a Healthy Habitat"** - "Native plants are important, even necessary, to every ecosystem, from swamps, to meadows, to forests, to your yards. The benefits of biodiversity – clean air and water, soil stabilization – are shared by all... We discuss[ed] what makes native plants special, important, and necessary.... We [gave] examples of places in the listening area where you can get native plants and how to make at least part of your lawn into a native garden - thus requiring less mowing. To quote the Native Plant Society of New Jersey, 'The point is not that one place produces 'good' plants and another produces 'bad' plants. The point is that plants belong to ecological relationships.'" The recording is available here:

<https://wbai.org/archive/program/episode/?id=65524>.

**- "Greenwashing - How to Spot & Stop It"** - Greenwashing is an attempt by an entity with bad environmental practices - usually a corporation or politician - to fool people that they are environmentally friendly. The term was coined in 1986 when Jay Westerveld realized that hotels asking guests not to change towels to save water was an attempt to distract from bigger environmental issues. Greenwashing can be done in many ways.... On this episode, we expose[d] some of those practices and help you to identify greenwashing. This [was] an episode about corporate irresponsibility and corporate masquerades. We talk[ed] about how they hide pollution - and how to avoid being deceived." The recording is available here:

<https://wbai.org/archive/program/episode/?id=64570>.

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

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## **VIDEOS+ OF PAST EVENTS**

### **Eco-Logic Radio Shows:**

#### **"Green Amendments: Progress and Obstacles," Native Plants Necessary to a Healthy Habitat," and "Greenwashing - How to Spot & Stop It" - Recordings of Radio Shows**

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

**- "Green Amendments: Progress and Obstacles"** - "Green amendments secure a constitutional right to pure water, clean air, a stable climate, & healthy environments for all people, including future generations, regardless of race, ethnicity, or socioeconomics. It seems that such an amendment would not be needed because those rights would be automatic. However, we live in a society that values profit over environmental health. There is a movement to pass Green Amendments in every state. So far, three states have one (Pennsylvania, Montana, and New York) and 27 states have active campaigns.... Our guests this week [were] Maya van Rossum, the Delaware Riverkeeper and founder of the Green Amendments For The Generations Movement and Joel Kupferman from the National Lawyers Guild Environmental Justice Committee." The recording is available here:

<https://www.wbai.org/archive/program/episode/?id=64572>.

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### **"8 Billion Angels - Video of Film**

"Global warming, food and water shortages, catastrophic storms, extinction of species, plant and animal habitat loss.... The list of environmental, social and economic catastrophes affecting our planet with greater frequency and severity goes on and on. If there was a simple root cause and a fundamental solution, wouldn't you want to know? Earth Overshoot Executive Director Terry Spahr and his 8 Billion Angels crew do what most of the world has yet to do in this compelling new documentary: connect the dots among all of the 'downstream' symptoms of our global environmental crises with their fundamental upstream cause - our unsustainable global

population.... and provide real solutions while there's still a chance to save our planet and our species by quickly and dramatically altering our population and consumption trajectories." [As a counterpoint to the film's focus on the importance of industrial agriculture, EJTF member Sally Gellert recommends this article:

[https://organicconsumers.org/article\\_18988/](https://organicconsumers.org/article_18988/), which states, "When the measure is lifecycle carbon assessment that includes the embedded fossil-fuel energy in fertilizer and pesticide manufacture, along with carbon sequestered in regenerative organic systems at higher levels than is possible with chemical no-till, organic systems can produce more food value per acre through intensive multi-cropping not possible when pesticides are used."]

The video of the film is available here:

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N\\_XZtF-I7vo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N_XZtF-I7vo).

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### **"Flood Risk in New Jersey: Why Investing in Infrastructure Is an Environmental Justice Issue" - Video of Webinar**

This webinar, sponsored by Rebuild by Design, included "A conversation with Melissa Miles, Executive Director of New Jersey Environmental Justice Alliance [EJTF partner NJEJA], on why investing in New Jersey's infrastructure is essential to building safer, healthier, and more just communities, and... how NJEJA is advancing this work across the state." The video is available here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eoR8RRU3ZqU>.

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### **NJ WasteWise Business Network Meeting - Meeting Presentation Materials**

"The New Jersey WasteWise Business Network is a free educational program designed to help businesses and other organizations learn how waste reduction, recycling, and recycled product procurement not only help the environment, but also their bottom line." Some of the topics presented at this webinar/meeting were "New Jersey Food Donation Guidelines," "Residential Composting," "Batteries, Bulbs, Cell Phones, Televisions and More E-Waste...How Do These Items Get Recycled?," "Recycling Attitudes and Practices: A Behavioral Science Perspective," and "Recycling, Waste Reduction and Sustainability at Hikma Pharmaceuticals." Links to download the agenda, a description of the presentations ("minutes") and to the presentations are available here, under "Waste Wise May 5 2026": <https://anjr.site-ym.com/page/wastewise>.

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### **"Policies and Financing Solutions to Modernize U.S. Water Infrastructure" - Video of Webinar**

This webinar, presented by The Environmental and Energy Study Institute (EESI) and American Rivers, covered "America's most pressing water infrastructure challenges, and solutions to close the gap between investment needs and reliable water services. Today, U.S. waterways - and our drinking water - are vulnerable to aging infrastructure, stormwater and sewage overflows, and extreme weather.... This briefing convene[d] practitioners and policy experts to present innovative policy and financing solutions - from smart monitoring systems to credit trading - to improve water infrastructure across the country. Panelists also highlight[ed] key existing programs, like the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's [EPA] Clean Water State Revolving Fund, which help states catalyze water innovation and address water affordability." The video is available here: <https://www.eesi.org/briefings/view/050726water>.

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### **"The Heat Beneath Our Feet: The Potential and Challenges for Thermal Energy Networks in New Jersey" - Video of Webinar**

The Rutgers NJ Climate Change Resource Center presented this webinar on the feasibility of thermal energy networks in NJ. "Thermal energy networks (TENS) are large-scale geothermal systems in which multiple buildings are connected for heating and cooling purposes.... this webinar present[ed] the results of [a] Rutgers-led study on the feasibility of these TENS systems in New Jersey." The Rutgers University Center for Urban Policy Research (CUPR) undertook a study of "Large-Scale Thermal Energy Network Systems in New Jersey: Feasibility, Marketability, Benefits, and Costs" (available here: <https://rutgers.app.box.com/s/9lt82zhzhmkxtotbt6sn5tkiv5uj3zo0>) on behalf of the New Jersey Board of Public Utilities (BPU) in accordance with legislation directing the BPU to conduct a study on the feasibility, marketability, benefits, and costs of implementing large-scale geothermal heat pump systems in the state. The video is available here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8856bYcSMnA>.

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## **"Extreme Heat and Interconnected Hazards: New Research on Compounding and Cascading Impacts" - Video of Webinar**

This webinar was part of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Climate Program Office (CPO) Heat Research Webinar Series, which showcases heat research projects funded and supported by teams across CPO.

"Extreme heat rarely occurs in isolation. It often interacts with other hazards - such as drought, air pollution, and wildfires - resulting in greater risks to human health, infrastructure, and the economy. This webinar highlight[ed] NOAA-supported research that has advanced our understanding of these compounding and cascading impacts of extreme heat. Speakers share[d] new insights on:

- how drought conditions intensify heat waves and increase exposure to extreme temperatures
- how heat and humidity influence air quality
- how communities are strengthening household-level health protections during overlapping heat and wildfire smoke events.

The video is available here:

<https://cpo.noaa.gov/extreme-heat-and-interconnected-hazards-new-research-on-compounding-and-cascading-impacts/>.

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## **NJBPU Public Meeting on "Modernization of the Traditional Electric Distribution Utility Business Model Study" - Video of Meeting**

A public stakeholder meeting was held by the NJ Board of Public Utilities (BPU) "to address matters pertaining to Governor Mikie Sherrill's Executive Order 1 directive that 'the New Jersey Board of Public Utilities shall complete and issue a study regarding modernization of the traditional electric distribution utility business model.' The stakeholder meeting cover[ed] the topics below:

- the relationship between the traditional business model and recent trends affecting electricity affordability;
- potential policy pathways and opportunities for achieving long-term reductions to, and stabilization of, electric bills; and
- opportunities including, but not limited to, making utility revenue models less dependent on capital spending on infrastructure; expansion of performance based ratemaking, whereby performance would include, among other things, the rate at which utilities approve the interconnection of new electricity generating

facilities to the grid; multi-year rate plans; reductions in utilities' return on equity; state review of supplemental transmission projects; least cost resource testing requirements; greater use of asset securitization; and amendments to the regulations governing infrastructure investment programs." Also see the article on [p. 17](#). The video is available here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q-WIZxuXIM0&t=563s>.

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## **Option Green - "Breathe Better: Taking Action on Air Quality in Our Community" - Video of Webinar**

This webinar on air quality and the actions we can take together as a community to improve our environmental health was part of the East Brunswick Public Library's Option Green Series, in partnership with the Friends of the East Brunswick Environmental Commission and special partner Keep Middlesex Moving. The webinar was presented by Christopher Gonda, Program Manager of Operations at Keep Middlesex Moving. "Chris aims to tailor programming and solutions that promote opportunities for alternative and active transportation for schools, municipalities, community-focused organizations and businesses." The video is available here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XqzbzpimINjA&t=2s>.

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## **"A Closer Look at Geothermal Energy" - Video of Interview**

"Geothermal energy produces enough heat to meet global electricity demand more than 100 times over - so why aren't we using more of it? In this interview.... C2ES [Center for Climate and Energy Solutions] Carbon Management Senior Fellow Emily Pope discuss[ed] her new report, "Drilling Down: What it Will Take to Harness the Potential of Next-Generation Geothermal" [a link to the report is available here:

<https://www.c2es.org/document/drilling-down/>]. Emily explain[ed] how next-generation geothermal technology could unlock clean, firm energy anywhere on Earth - not just near volcanoes or hot springs - and what policies Congress can enact right now to make it happen. The video is available here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W8MN-JzKxD0>.

## **"Emotions on Our Screens: Evaluating Emotions About Climate Change Online" - Video of Webinar**

This webinar, part of the Cornell Atkinson Center for Sustainability "Perspectives on the Climate Change Challenge" Seminars, was presented by Dr. Talbot Andrews, an Assistant Professor in the Cornell University Department of Government. She studies how policy design and the changing environment interact with individuals' attitudes to shape their behavior related to environmental policy. "Abstract: People feel increasingly emotional about climate change: As of 2023, 66% of Americans are at least 'somewhat' worried about climate change, and 55% believe they've already experienced some of the negative effects of climate change. But emotions aren't only felt, they are expressed. Changes in the media environment have given people unprecedented access to the expressed emotions of others. Through both contemporary news stories and social media, people now learn how others – often strangers – feel about climate change. Do people believe in the sincerity of these expressed emotions? The answer depends on the context." The video is available here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U0o1bkIf18o>.

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## **"Implications of the U.S. Forest Service Reorganization" - Video of Webinar**

"The Environmental and Energy Study Institute (EESI) held a Rapid Readout about the recently announced reorganization and restructuring of the U.S. Forest Service. Housed within the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the Forest Service manages nearly 200 million acres of federal land, mostly in western states. Because the service's focus is primarily on the West, the Administration is proposing to move the agency's headquarters from Washington, D.C., to Salt Lake City, Utah. It also intends to reorganize staff into state hubs and eliminate 57 research labs. The Rapid Readout explored how these changes could impact decades of science, including key climate-related forest research. The session also covered the implications of the reorganization on both wildfire preparedness and response and annual budget and appropriation conversations." The video is available here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kfOpN1O9mPc>.

## **"Teach the Hope: Environmental Education Inspiring Action" - Video of Webinar**

This webinar, part of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Science Seminar series, was presented by author and environmentalist Patricia Newman. "Abstract: Let's face it, today's environmental headlines are depressing.... award-winning children's book author and environmentalist Patricia Newman [presented] a new philosophy in environmental education: HOPE. Together with Claire Fackler, National Education Liaison for the NOAA Office of National Marine Sanctuaries, [they] emphasize[d] gratitude for and connections to the natural world, including the ocean, and identif[ied] effective role models to emulate and actions that can be taken. Then [they] put your new-found knowledge to work with several activities that Patricia demonstrate[d]. Participants [left] with ready-to-use resources."

The video is available here:

<https://sanctuaries.noaa.gov/education/teachers/webinars/2026/teach-the-hope-environmental-education-inspiring-action.html>.

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## **"Food Donations and New Guidelines" - Video of Webinar**

This webinar was part of the Rutgers Environmental Stewards "Earth Day Every Day" webinar series. This webinar covered "how nonprofit organizations and grocery retailers follow food safety guidelines to make sure that food donated to worthy causes is stored and handled properly.... and the State of New Jersey's recently updated guidelines for donated food safety.... and how you can prevent food waste and ensure food security for our neighbors." The video is available here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1wwoSCIHppc>.

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## **"Sustainable Seafood, Explained: What the Science Says About How to Eat Earth Friendly" - Video of Webinar**

This webinar was part of the Rutgers Environmental Stewards "Earth Day Every Day" webinar series. "Abstract: Food choices have real environmental impacts, but those impacts are rarely as simple as we're told. What are the tradeoffs between different foods, and where does

seafood fit in? This talk translate[d] the science of sustainable seafood into plain English.... [and included] how to make choices that are genuinely better for the ocean and the planet as a whole." The video is available here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iogJ78i4PAA>.

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### "Our Calling to Become Good Ancestors" - Video of Webinar

This webinar was presented by Elders Climate Action and included "A lively discussion with Montana rancher, businessman, and freedom-focused conservationist, Steve Held. Steve is the father of Rikki - lead plaintiff in the groundbreaking HELD v. Montana youth climate case. From the Big Sky Country of Montana to the global stage, Steve has dedicated his life to securing freedom, food, fiber, and fuel while ensuring shelter, health, and dignity for all. Traveling over a thousand miles a week, Steve connects with people from Venezuela to Cuba to rural America, listening, learning, and challenging policymakers to think bigger about abundance and equality. In this conversation, he share[d] his personal journey, lessons from the land, and his vision of becoming good ancestors who leave behind a world where both communities and ecosystems thrive." The video is available here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l1uCt9GerH0&t=1s>.

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### "Breaking Down DRBC's Framework for Resilience" - Video of Webinar

At its 2024 second quarter business meeting, the Delaware River Basin Commission (DRBC) unanimously approved a resolution directing staff to develop a resilience plan for water resources (available here: [https://www.nj.gov/drbc/library/documents/Res2024-04\\_ClimateResiliencePlan.pdf](https://www.nj.gov/drbc/library/documents/Res2024-04_ClimateResiliencePlan.pdf)). The DRBC held a public webinar about the Water Resources Resilience Plan's (WRRP) progress and next steps. The WRRP "will connect multiple water resource impacts under one umbrella. DRBC's activities will focus on matters within the authority and jurisdiction of the Commission and will complement the efforts being made by Commission members." Additional information about the WRRP is available here: <https://www.nj.gov/drbc/programs/flow/water-resources-resilience-plan.html>. The video of the webinar is available here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=16ZaHrScYxY>.

## **NEWS RELATED TO EJTF ISSUES** **[covering 4/26/2026 – 5/25/2026]**

An additional source of NJ environmental articles and stories is **South Jersey Climate News**, a student-driven news site with Rowan University undergraduates as staff writers (available here: (<https://sjclimate.news>)). Some recent articles of interest are:

- "UPDATED: New Jersey Data Center Map"
- "Is nuclear power the future of "clean" energy in New Jersey?"
- "Sea level rise and sunny-day flooding can't stop a building boom on the Jersey Shore"
- "NJ Big Data conference explores potential and pitfalls of AI"
- "EPA funding cuts threaten Superfund site cleanups in New Jersey"
- "'Zombie pipeline' lands final OK, sparking alarm among environmentalists"
- "Dry conditions raise serious concerns for summer wildfires"

"Should horseshoe crabs be protected under the Endangered Species Act?"

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## **ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE**

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### **NJDEP Issues Four Environmental Justice Decisions**

From the NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) Office of Environmental Justice (OEJ) news release: "On May 7th, NJDEP issued four Decisions under NJ's Environmental Justice Regulations, which detail conditions for permit approvals regarding the renewals and proposed expansion of facilities in Ewing, Kearny, Rahway, and Hackensack.

- 1) **Mercer Group International of New Jersey in Ewing** is a solid waste transfer station and materials recovery facility. They submitted two permit applications to install and operate a new shredder, and to install new oil-burning heaters. The Department is requiring the applicant to locate the new shredder inside an enclosed building and implement emissions controls. The applicant must also limit the operation of the oil burners and monitor their use, limit idling for diesel vehicles, and perform an analysis on alternatives to burning waste oil. [Read the full EJ Decision Document.](#)

- 2) **Merck Sharp & Dohme LLC in Rahway** is a biopharmaceutical company. They submitted an air permit modification and a renewal application. The applicant is seeking to add 11 pieces of equipment including tanks containing waste solvent, decontamination system tanks, and add tanks to the Raritan Valley Sewerage Authority System pretreatment system. The Department decision includes requiring the applicant to implement control measures to reduce Volatile Organic Compound emissions and locate tanks inside to insulate them from temperature fluctuations. They also will be required to install pressure and vacuum release valves on all new tanks. [Read the full EJ Decision Document.](#)

- 3) **Kuehne Chemical Company in Kearny** manufactures hydrochloric acid, bleach, caustic soda and repackages liquid chlorine primarily for use in water and wastewater treatment operations. The facility submitted a permit renewal and modification application to install a second electrolyzer, add two sodium hydroxide tanks and nine sodium hydroxide storage tanks, and remove two sodium hydroxide storage tanks. The conditions include requiring the facility to lower emissions of several air contaminants and hazardous air pollutants, conduct control measures to ensure negligible risk from hazardous air pollutants by reducing flowrates, temperatures, and operating hours of boilers and generators, and conduct a feasibility analysis for transitioning vehicles and equipment to hybrid or electric models. [Read the full EJ Decision Document.](#)

- 4) **Hackensack University Medical Center in Hackensack** submitted a renewal with no requested changes and the Department has not imposed conditions. [Read the full EJ Decision Document.](#)"

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## Singleton Bill Establishing Office of Clean Energy Equity Legislation Advances

From the NJ Senate Democrats website: "In an effort to reduce the negative environmental impacts on historically overburdened communities and to lower energy costs for low-income households, the Senate Environment and Energy Committee advanced legislation sponsored by Senators Troy Singleton and John McKeon.... The bill, S-1757, would establish the Office of Clean Energy Equity within the Board of Public Utilities (BPU), tasked with promoting and overseeing an equitable transition to clean energy. The Office would seek to ensure that clean energy programs

and their benefits are targeted toward the communities most impacted by the placement of polluting facilities and thus forced to contend with the negative health impacts.... The legislation would also set specific goals and requirements to direct clean energy investments to low-income households and overburdened communities.... [and] is aimed at reducing low-income households' average energy costs to below six percent of household income." Note: the Clean Energy Equity Act was originally introduced in 2020. <https://www.njsendems.org/m/newsflash/Home/Detail/1352>

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## Jersey City Residents Push Back on Third West Side Waste Facility

From *NJ Urban News*: "With a third waste facility proposed for a neighborhood already hosting two, community groups such as Sustainable Jersey City (SJC), as well as city council members and residents, have formed a coalition to voice their concerns" at a public hearing that took place 4/28/2026. [Additional information about the proposed transfer station is available here: <https://nowastetransferstation.com> and here: <https://njeja.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/04/Van-Keuren-Quick-Guide.pdf>, and a link is available here <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cm1ULDZHtv8> to the public hearing that took place 4/28/2026.] <https://njurbannews.com/2026/04/27/jersey-city-residents-push-back-on-third-west-side-waste-facility/>

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## ELECTRIC VEHICLES & VEHICLE EMISSION REDUCTION

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### Report: New Jersey Making Progress on Spending Federal EV Charging Dollars, but Still Has a Long Way to Go

From the Sierra Club NJ press release: "New Jersey made meaningful progress on rolling out federal EV charging dollars in 2025, but the vast majority of funding remains unspent, according to a new Sierra Club report... [available here: <https://www.sierraclub.org/sites/default/files/2026-04/faster-but-not-fast-enough-evaluating-states-progress-on-implementing-federal-ev-charging-programs.pdf>].... In February 2025, the Trump administration illegally froze the National Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (NEVI) program. Sierra Club, New Jersey, and other states and nonprofit partners challenged that action in federal court and

successfully lifted the freeze. NEVI funds were unavailable to New Jersey for nearly five months in 2025 and only fully secured after a final court order in January 2026. Despite these months-long obstructions, 2025 was still the most productive year in the program's four-year history. States have to jump through a lot of hoops to implement and spend federal funds for EV charging - including developing statewide plans for NEVI, selecting projects, 'obligating' funding (which legally binds the federal government to reimburse their spending), and moving ahead with permitting, design, and construction. By the end of 2025, New Jersey had:

- Opened 0 NEVI charging stations to the public.
- Obligated 9% (\$9M) and spent 0.62% (\$0.65M) out of its \$104M of available federal dollars for EV charging stations along highways
- Obligated 1% (\$0.12M) and spent 0% (\$0M) out of its \$10M of available federal dollars for EV charging stations in communities
- Obligated 100% (\$226M) and spent 0% (\$0M) out of its \$226M of available federal dollars for EV charging infrastructure at ports."

<https://www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/blog/2026/04/report-new-jersey-making-progress-spending-federal-ev-charging-dollars>

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## FOSSIL FUEL INFRASTRUCTURE

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Image by Icewall42 from Pixabay

### Tidelands Council OKs Utility License for NESE Pipeline, Despite Public Outcry

In what was the last step required before final approval of the controversial Williams Northeast Supply Enhancement Pipeline (NESE), the NJ Tidelands Resource Council (NJTRC) approved the utility license for the pipeline. The pipeline was first

proposed nearly a decade ago, and was repeatedly denied permits by the NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) until a revised application was approved in 11/2025. Challenges have been filed in both federal and state courts in NY and NJ.

<https://tworivertimes.com/tidelands-council-oks-utility-license-for-nese-pipeline-despite-public-outcry/>

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## LAND MANAGEMENT / AGRICULTURE / FOOD

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### NJ Bill Promoting Community-Supported Agriculture Advances

A bill (A3108) promoting Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) programs has been passed by the NJ Assembly. The bill "would require the Department of Agriculture (DOA) to take certain actions to publicize and promote community supported agriculture in the State. 'Community supported agriculture' is a method of on-the-farm direct sales and marketing in which the retail sale, to a consumer, of a share of the agricultural output of a commercial farm is effectuated through a paid subscription service.... The bill would also require the DOA to establish and annually observe a week of promotional events to be known as 'Community Supported Agriculture Week.'... The bill would further require the DOA, through the State's existing 'Farm to School Program,' to encourage schools in the State to obtain fresh, locally grown or produced agricultural products for school meals..."

<https://enviropolitics.com/nj-bill-promoting-community-supported-agriculture-advances/>

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### NJ County-level Food Security Data Chartbooks Now Available

The NJ Office of the Food Security Advocate (OFSA) had issued a data chartbook (available here: <https://tinyurl.com/4twbsfub>) that provides a guided summary of select few food security metrics, including determinants, measures, and impacts, to provide an ... overview of the state of food security in New Jersey. "Leveraging data within this statewide chartbook, OFSA has developed dynamic county chartbook profiles for each of New Jersey's 21 counties." The county profiles may be accessed here: [https://www.nj.gov/foodsecurity/food-security/resource-library/approved/state-of-food-security-in-nj\\_data-chart-book.shtml](https://www.nj.gov/foodsecurity/food-security/resource-library/approved/state-of-food-security-in-nj_data-chart-book.shtml).

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## **An NFL Owner Wants to Build 500 Units in a Pristine N.J. Forest. The Town Just Said No.**

A Watchung Mountains ridge site that environmental advocates have called "the last of its kind" because it remains mostly untouched, has been threatened with development once again. Under the auspices of NJ's affordable housing requirements, West Orange officials had previously entered into a court-approved settlement with the developers that allowed the proposed plan to move forward if affordable housing units were included. However, the West Orange Planning Board just denied the proposal, after substantial region-wide opposition, voiced at more than a dozen hearings over close to two years. West Orange residents had filed a lawsuit to stop the project, arguing that the area is already prone to flooding, is environmentally sensitive, and is unsuitable for high-density housing. If the developer appeals the decision in court, local organizers plan to continue fighting to protect the site.

<https://www.nj.com/news/2026/05/an-nfl-owner-wants-to-build-500-units-in-a-pristine-nj-forest-the-town-just-said-no.html>

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## **CLIMATE CHANGE**

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### **Newark Rally Launches 50-Mile March to Trenton Backing 'Polluters Pay' Act**

During the first week of May, EmpowerNJ (a coalition of which **UUFANJ is a member**) and allies launched a week of actions including a March and Rallies in support of the "Make Polluters Pay Act, to call on the NJ Legislature and Gov. Sherrill to pass this legislation before they finalize the state budget. The march covered 50 miles from Newark to Trenton, with rallies along the way, and people joined for some or all of it. The week of actions culminated with a rally at the State House in Trenton, where there were speeches by three of the primary sponsors of the Make polluters Pay bill: Alixon Collazos-Gill, Verlina Reynolds-Jackson, and Raj Mukherji; as well as X Braithwaite, the Environmental Justice Organizer for Clean Water Action in NJ, and Ben Dziobek of Climate Revolution Action Network. There was a benediction and speech by Rev. Rupert Hall from

Turning Point United Methodist Church of Trenton, who told the group that "Organized people can overcome organized money." News articles about the march and rallies are available here:

- <https://www.tapinto.net/towns/newark/sections/green/articles/newark-rally-launches-50-mile-march-to-trenton-backing-polluters-pay-act>
- <https://www.towntopics.com/2026/05/13/students-activists-officials-say-make-polluters-pay/>
- <https://www.insidernj.com/press-release/rutgers-students-climate-marchers-rally-in-new-brunswick-in-support-of-polluters-pay-act/>.

The Act (S2338/A3735) is under consideration in the legislature. See [p. 1](#) for photos.

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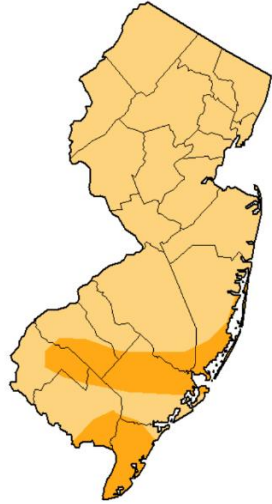
### **Climate & Health: Feeling Climate Anxiety? You're Not Alone. And There's a Map for That!**

From the Elders Climate Action newsletter: "As the impacts of climate change accelerate, many of us carry a weight that's hard to name: worry, grief, helplessness, or a restless urgency to do something. A peer-reviewed study puts a framework around that experience. Researchers Anne van Valkengoed and Linda Steg introduce the Climate Anxiety Compass, a theory-informed tool that organizes the many ways people cope with climate anxiety into two broad pathways: problem-focused coping - taking action on the causes and consequences of climate change and emotion-focused coping - managing the stress and difficult feelings it stirs up. The field lacked a coherent map of these strategies, making it harder for individuals, educators, and advocates to know where to turn. The Climate Anxiety Compass changes that - and affirms that climate engagement itself can be part of the cure." The article with the Climate Anxiety Compass "maps" is available here:

<https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/29768659241293226>.

**U.S. Drought Monitor  
New Jersey**

**May 5, 2026**  
(Released Thursday, May. 7, 2026)  
Valid 8 a.m. EDT



	Drought Conditions (Percent Area)					
	None	D0-D4	D1-D4	D2-D4	D3-D4	D4
Current	0.00	100.00	100.00	15.85	0.00	0.00
Last Week 04-28-2026	0.00	100.00	100.00	15.89	0.00	0.00
3 Months Ago 02-03-2026	2.40	97.60	77.62	1.89	0.00	0.00
Start of Calendar Year 01-01-2026	0.00	100.00	77.72	15.89	0.00	0.00
Start of Water Year 09-30-2025	49.66	50.34	14.90	0.00	0.00	0.00
One Year Ago 05-06-2025	20.61	79.39	37.21	4.50	0.00	0.00

**Intensity**  
 None (White)      D2 Severe Drought (Orange)  
 D0 Abnormally Dry (Yellow)      D3 Extreme Drought (Red)  
 D1 Moderate Drought (Light Orange)      D4 Exceptional Drought (Dark Red)

The Drought Monitor focuses on broad-scale conditions. Local conditions may vary. For more information on the Drought Monitor, go to <https://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/About.aspx>

**Author**  
Adam Allgood  
NOAA/NWS/NCEP/CPC



## The Role of Urban Tree Canopies in Environmental Justice and Conserving Biodiversity

This chapter from the book "Urban Biodiversity and Equity: Justice-Centered Conservation in Cities" has been cited by the NJ Department of Environmental Protection's (DEP) Urban & Community Forestry Program. The study has four goals: "(1) introduce and describe urban forestry, (2) explain why other disciplines might be interested in urban forestry, (3) illustrate how wildlife biologists can use urban forestry in their studies, and (4) encourage conservationists to think mechanistically about how urban vegetation, environmental justice, and urban wildlife may interact. Here we... differentiate among different parts of an urban forest: street trees, forested patches, and public vs private ownership. This differentiation is important because these different components of the urban forest are managed by different individuals and organizations, with diverse and sometimes competing interests and authorities.... [and] we illustrate how history matters and how urban forests and environmental justice might look in the future."

[https://www.fs.usda.gov/nrs/pubs/jrnl/2023/nrs\\_2023\\_1ocke\\_005.pdf](https://www.fs.usda.gov/nrs/pubs/jrnl/2023/nrs_2023_1ocke_005.pdf)

## 'All Types of Problems' Ahead if NJ Rainfall Scarce, Climatologist Says

In the last two years, NJ received below-average precipitation in all but three months, with South Jersey seeing fewer days with precipitation. According to the NJ State Climatologist, the amount of rain that falls in a day is less important than the frequency of days with precipitation. A normal rainfall pattern is needed in order to stave off wildfires.

<https://www.njspotlightnews.org/2026/05/all-types-of-problems-ahead-if-nj-rainfall-scarce-climatologist-says/>

## LEAD REDUCTION IN HOUSEHOLDS

### Knocking on Doors: How One Student Discovered Trenton, New Jersey's Deep Issue With Lead

This article describes how a graduate student collecting data for a doctoral dissertation helped some residents to fill gaps in existing lead testing programs, which operate in an uncoordinated manner. He tested homes for lead paint, dust, lead in water, and lead in soil outdoors. Such comprehensive testing would normally require different tests from different agencies, each with its own requirements, cost, and timeframe. The East Trenton Collaborative program of Isles, Inc., previously performed combined lead, water, and soil testing for more than 1,800 homes in Trenton through funding from Princeton University, and currently provides testing for lead in paint as well as resident education and lead-based paint remediation for Trenton residents.

<https://www.njspotlightnews.org/2026/04/polluted-nj-neighborhood-has-one-lead-tester-and-hes-leaving-in-may/>

## FOREST HEALTH/ URBAN FORESTRY

### Hamilton Township Plans "250 Trees for 250 Years" Initiative for America's 250th Anniversary

"The Hamilton Township Shade Tree Commission is spearheading a special '250 Trees for 250 Years' initiative. Throughout the year, the Commission will work with its Planning Division to oversee the planting of 250 new trees across the community. This green initiative serves as a living tribute to our nation's milestone, ensuring that the spirit of growth and renewal continues to flourish in Hamilton."

<https://www.hamiltonnj.com/m/NewsFlash/Home/Detail/325>

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## ENERGY/ENERGY EFFICIENCY

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### NJBPU Launches Electric Utility Reform Study With Stakeholder Session

The NJ Board of Public Utilities (BPU) held a public stakeholder meeting with policymakers, national utility regulators, consumer advocates and industry representatives "to address matters pertaining to Governor Mikie Sherrill's Executive Order 1 directive that 'the New Jersey Board of Public Utilities shall complete and issue a study regarding modernization of the traditional electric distribution utility business model.'" The meeting opened the BPU's Utility Business Model (UBM) Reform Study, which will examine whether the existing electric utility business model, which rewards utilities for capital investment, should be replaced with a model tied to performance, cost stability and measurable outcomes for ratepayers. Additional stakeholder meetings will be held by the BPU as the study advances, along with opportunities for public input throughout the process. Also see the video of the meeting, linked on [p. 10](#).

<https://enviropolitics.com/as-electricity-demand-soars-nj-explores-new-utility-profit-models/>

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### Electricity Grid Manager PJM Says Developers Are Proposing 800+ New Power Projects

After a four-year hiatus, PJM Interconnection LLC (PJM), the regional grid operator that serves 13 states including NJ, began reviewing applications for building and connecting new power sources to the grid. As of 4/28/2026, they had received 811 application submissions, in the following fuel/technology types: Natural Gas = 157, Storage = 349, Nuclear = 27, Solar = 142, Solar/Storage = 45, Wind = 65, Hydro = 11, and Other = 15. PJM has reformed its application review process from the previous first-come, first-served method to a first-ready, first-served approach, which prioritizes projects that are closer to actually starting construction. Among other requirements, projects are required to show proof of meaningful financial commitments and control of the proposed site.

<https://www.newsfromthestates.com/article/electricity-grid-manager-pjm-says-developers-are-proposing-800-new-power-projects>

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## DATA CENTERS

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### NJEJA Releases 'Clean Air, Not AI' Community Toolkit & Draft Municipal Resolutions

"To help residents, advocates, and policy makers alike, NJEJA [**EJTF partner** NJ Environmental Justice Alliance] developed a 'Clean Air, Not AI' Community Toolkit and educational series to provide valuable resources, tools, and strategy ideas." A link to the Community Toolkit, draft municipal resolutions for an "Indefinite Zero-Hyperscale Data Center Moratorium" and a "Warehouse-to-Data-Center Conversion Moratorium," as well as to the webinar on "Data Center Development: Understanding The Risks of AI in New Jersey," are available here: <https://njeja.org/clean-air-not-ai/community-toolkit-resource-library/>.

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### New Jersey Environmental Groups Push for Statewide Moratorium on Data Centers

From *The Jersey Vindicator*: Led by the NJ Pinelands Alliance, "More than 60 environmental, labor, community, and grassroots organizations [**including UUFANJ**] are calling on Gov. Mikie Sherrill to impose a moratorium on new data centers in New Jersey, warning that the rapidly growing industry threatens the state's electric grid, water supply, environment, and local communities.... [The letter sent to Gov. Sherrill is available here - see its Addendum for a comprehensive description of concerns: <https://www.foodandwaterwatch.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/05/Gov.-Sherrill-Data-Center-Moratorium-Final-Letter-051326.pdf>] Communities across the state are increasingly opposing proposed projects, particularly in the Pinelands region, where several municipalities have already moved to block data centers through local ordinances." <https://jerseyvindicator.org/2026/05/14/new-jersey-environmental-groups-push-for-statewide-moratorium-on-data-centers/>

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Photo by Geoffrey Moffett on Unsplash

## Are the Pinelands Safe from Data Centers?

This post by Dr. Heidi Yeh, Policy Director of the Pinelands Alliance, describes in detail how the Pinelands Comprehensive Management Plan (CMP) protects the ecosystem from water use and land use intensity concerns - but that there are some weak spots that should be addressed.

<https://pinelandsalliance.org/policy-notes-april-2026/>

## Stockton Poll: Most N.J. Voters Would Support Local Data Center Bans

From the Stockton University website: "A majority of New Jersey voters are concerned about the growth of artificial intelligence data centers and 56% would support banning them in their own communities, according to a Stockton poll [available here: <https://stockton.edu/hughes-center/polling/ai-and-data-centers.html>]..... Nearly 3 in 4 voters (74%) think AI will eliminate more jobs than it will create, while just 7% believe it will create more jobs than it eliminates, and 13% think it will have little to no impact either way. A plurality of 41% of voters believe society's increased use of AI will make their lives worse. That rate was 36% in a 2024 Stockton poll of New Jersey residents. More than one-fourth (27%) think the increased use of AI will make their lives better, while 18% think it will have little to no impact."

<https://commencement.stockton.edu/news/2026/poll-voters-support-local-data-center-bans.html>

## Bayonne Council Hears More Outcry Against Data Centers as It Turns Out City Zoned for 3

This article describes the complicated process related to resolutions, ordinances, redevelopment

plans, zoning, and the City of Bayonne's Master Plan. After a rally against a possible data center, which would be allowed under a redevelopment plan amendment passed in 12/2025, the City Council revealed that two other previous redevelopment plan amendments would also permit AI data centers as an existing use. The Council is in the process of attempting to address this, as City residents are opposed to these uses.

<https://hudsoncountyview.com/bayonne-council-hears-more-outcry-against-data-centers-as-it-turns-out-city-zoned-for-3/>

## Opinion: NJ's Urgent Need to Regulate Power-Sucking Data Centers

In this piece, Anjuli Ramos-Busot, the director of the New Jersey chapter of the Sierra Club, describes the lack of laws and regulations related to data centers in NJ, and touts a number of bills currently under consideration in the legislature to address various facets of the problem..

<https://www.njspotlightnews.org/2026/04/op-ed-njs-urgent-need-to-regulate-power-sucking-data-centers/>

### Data Center Issues from the Developer's Viewpoint

The multinational corporation law firm of K&L Gates has been presenting a series of "Data Center Deep Dives" webinars "designed for developers, investors, and energy stakeholders" to provide information they can use to move these projects forward. It is a chance to find out the strategies of the development side.

#### Data Center Deep Dives Webinar 1: "Navigating Power, Land, and Policy" -

Additional information and a link to the video are available here: <https://www.klgates.com/Data-Center-Deep-Dives-Navigating-Power-Land-and-Policy-4-7-2026-1>.

#### Data Center Deep Dives Webinar 2: "Permitting, Land Use, and Community Engagement" -

Additional information and a link to the video are available here: <https://www.klgates.com/Data-Center-Deep-Dives-Permitting-Land-Use-and-Community-Engagement-5-7-2026-1>.

See "Future Activities" on [p. 4](#) for information and registration link for **Data Center Deep Dives Webinar 3: "Navigating Water, Air, and Other Environmental Considerations"** to be held 6/4/2026.

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## **PJM Gets Emergency Approval to Curtail Data Centers, Large Loads During Hot Weather**

From *Utility Dive*, "Under the Department of Energy order, the PJM Interconnection can curtail power to data centers with backup generation as a last resort before instituting rolling blackouts." From the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) Order (available here:

<https://www.energy.gov/documents/doe-emergency-order-no-202-26-23pdf>): "Weather conditions pose significant risks to electric reliability in the Reliability Coordinator's footprint.... this order seeks to unlock and deploy backup generation resources (whether auxiliary, standby, directly-connected, battery storage or other, and whether synchronized or not to the bulk power system) at data centers (including, but not limited to, hyperscaler facilities), and at other large load industrial and commercial customer sites... to mitigate any undue risk to the bulk power system.... during PJM's hot weather conditions." <https://www.utilitydive.com/news/pjm-doe-emergency-order-curtail-data-centers/820571/>

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### **OTHER**

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## **Roxbury Ice Detention Center on Hold for Environmental Review**

From *NJ Spotlight News*: "The plan to turn a Roxbury warehouse into an immigrant detention facility is on hold after federal, state and township officials agreed to require an environmental review." Until the environmental review requirements have been met, site work will be limited to security and property maintenance, and must avoid the conservation easement (without state permission) and involve no ground disturbance (details are available here:

<https://www.tapinto.net/towns/roxbury/sections/law-and-justice/articles/feds-agree-to-environmental-impact-review-of-proposed-ice-facility-in-roxbury-warehouse>). The site is located in the Highlands region, which is subject to tougher protection rules than other areas. Officials have noted that the site is unsuitable because of environmental concerns and lacks sufficient water or sewer capacity. The No ICE in North Jersey Alliance (Project NINJA) views this outcome as a delaying action, and will closely scrutinize the environmental review. <https://www.njspotlightnews.org/2026/05/roxbury-ice-detention-center-on-hold-for-environmental-review/>

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## **Hoboken Selected for National Sustainability Program**

The City of Hoboken has been selected as one of 17 municipalities nationwide to participate in the 2026 LEED for Cities Certification Cohort, a program led by the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC) to help local governments advance sustainability and resilience efforts. Hoboken is the only municipality in New Jersey chosen for the 2026 cohort. The LEED for Cities program provides a framework for municipalities to measure and improve performance across environmental, economic, and social indicators.

<https://www.tapinto.net/towns/hoboken/articles/hoboken-selected-for-national-sustainability-program>

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## **DEP Launches Operation FAST to Support Governor Sherrill's Mission to Deliver More Efficient Government**

From the press release: In support of Gov. Sherrill's Executive Orders No. 2 and No. 5, "the Department of Environmental Protection [DEP] ... launched Operation FAST [Facilitated Approvals for Sustainable Transformation].... The initiative will implement permitting reforms across the agency, including faster, more efficient reviews of clean energy projects that will help build energy infrastructure and deliver ratepayer relief....

Through Operation FAST, the DEP is committed to:

- Reorganizing key permitting programs by focusing on cross-program collaborations
- Recruiting and training new staff across permitting programs to advance efficiency
- Supercharging the Office of Permitting & Project - Navigation to ensure early coordinated consultations on priority projects speed up review times
- Supplementing technical staff capacity to accomplish targeted reviews to reduce backlogs
- Streamlining review procedures to support faster decisions
- Modernizing technology for automated submissions and upgrading dashboard systems for online e-Permitting
- Implementing robust and expedited coordination for energy projects to help meet electricity generation shortfalls.
- Increased Staff and IT Infrastructure."

[See the Commentary on Operation FAST by Jeff Tittel on [p.20](#), in which he states: "It is not about protecting the public. It is about saying yes faster

to developers, utilities, and politically connected interests while the people of New Jersey and our environment are left standing outside the door."]  
[https://dep.nj.gov/newsrel/26\\_0019/](https://dep.nj.gov/newsrel/26_0019/)

## **NJDEP's Responses to NJ Office of Legal Services Questions on FY2026-2027 Budget**

As part of the FY226-2027 budget process, the NJ Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) provided written responses to questions from the NJ Office of Legal Services (OLS) in sixteen areas. One answer of interest in area #10 (on p. 27) is as follows: "Question: Is the State on track to meet the emissions reduction goal by 2050 and the renewable standard for clean energy by 2035? Response: New Jersey is not on track to meet its 2050 emissions reduction goal of 24.1 million

metric tons (MMT) of carbon dioxide equivalent (CO2e). In 2022, New Jersey's emissions totaled 97.6 MMT CO2e, with the largest contributors from the transportation, residential and commercial buildings, and electric generation sectors. When accounting for existing policies, statewide emissions are expected to reduce to 56.8 MMT CO2e in 2050, leaving a deficit of 32.7 MMT CO2e of reductions needed via other state action and policy. Meeting the RPS is the obligation of New Jersey's Load Serving Entities (Generators and 3rd Party Suppliers). The Renewal Portfolio Standard (RPS) is achieved via Renewable Energy Credit purchases and/or Alternative Compliance Payments. BPU will determine compliance with the RPS at the end of each energy year spanning June 1 to May 31." The response document is available here:  
[https://pub.njleg.state.nj.us/publications/budget/governors-budget/2027/dep\\_response\\_2027.pdf](https://pub.njleg.state.nj.us/publications/budget/governors-budget/2027/dep_response_2027.pdf).

### **Commentary in the *NJ Vindicator* by Sierra Club NJ Former Director Jeff Tittel**

Former Sierra Club NJ director Jeff Tittel provides Commentary pieces in the "What's Left" section of the *NJ Vindicator*. Below are links to several pieces relevant to EJTF's goals:

#### **'A Betrayal of the Highlands': Council Approves Massive Warehouse Project on Protected Farmland**

<https://jerseyvindicator.org/2026/05/23/a-betrayal-of-the-highlands-council-approves-massive-warehouse-project-on-protected-farmland/>

#### **New Jersey's Water Crisis: A Deficit of Planning and a Drought of Action**

<https://jerseyvindicator.org/2026/05/17/new-jerseys-water-crisis-a-deficit-of-planning-and-a-drought-of-action/>

#### **Governor Sherrill's Environmental Report Card: Moving FAST for Polluters**

<https://jerseyvindicator.org/2026/04/30/governor-sherrills-environmental-report-card-moving-fast-for-polluters/>

#### **The Days After Earth Day: We Need a New Activism in the Fight for the Environment in New Jersey**

<https://jerseyvindicator.org/2026/04/26/the-days-after-earth-day-we-need-a-new-activism-in-the-fight-for-the-environment-in-new-jersey/>

## **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.**

## **DATE/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](mailto:environment@uufaithaction.org) for more information**

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

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