



# ANJEC REPORT

Local Environment Matters

WINTER 2020

A vibrant red cardinal is perched on a snow-covered branch. The bird is facing right, with its distinctive crest raised. The background is a soft-focus winter scene with snow and evergreen branches.

## Inside:

- [ANJEC Congress highlights](#)
- [The changing face of recycling](#)
- [Building sustainable, affordable housing](#)



# Director's Report

## Year in review... What's next?

This past year has brought a bounty of success for New Jersey's environment and there is so much more to do! Please join me in reviewing milestones from 2019 and sharing your local success stories on our Facebook page and tagging us on Twitter @ANJECTweets

### Ending plastic pollution

**SUCCESS** – Environmental Commissions (ECs) across the Garden State flexed their leadership by supporting the adoption of more than 100 municipal ordinances to ban single-use plastic bags, polystyrene (Styrofoam) use for food, intentional outdoor balloon releases and plastic straws! ECs are hosting T-shirt to totes workshops, partnering with local businesses to swap plastic for more sustainable choices, securing grants to buy and distribute reusable bags, and more!

**WHAT'S NEXT?** – As we go to press, the New Jersey Legislature has yet to adopt a comprehensive statewide bill to reduce plastic pollution. ANJEC will continue to advocate for a statewide bill and will continue to support dozens more municipalities who are ready to adopt plastic pollution ordinances. We will also provide technical support for the municipalities whose ordinances went into effect on January 1, 2020.

### Flood reduction

**SUCCESS** – In March, Governor Murphy signed the *Flood Reduction Act*. This new law allows municipalities to adopt stormwater utilities to reduce localized flooding and improve water quality. ANJEC is a proud founding member of the Flood Defense Coalition that advocated for this law giving municipalities more ability to make good

decisions for the environment and their communities.

**WHAT'S NEXT?** – Through our work with the Flood Defense Coalition, ANJEC is drafting a model ordinance for municipalities to use when considering the adoption of a storm-water utility. We are also providing support to the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) in the development of their guidance document for municipalities to assess if a utility is right for them and how to implement one, should they choose to do so.

### Open space preservation

**SUCCESS** – In November, the NJDEP announced that 1,400 hundred acres in Cumberland County known as Holly Farm are being preserved by the State. Holly Farm is owned by Atlantic City Electric (ACE) and was nearly developed a number of times. It connects two preserved wildlife areas totaling approximately 5,500 acres and is the most densely populated threatened and endangered species habitat in New Jersey. Many environmental groups have worked for more than 20 years to preserve this land. ANJEC was one of the groups engaged in a lawsuit over it for nearly a decade, and has provided support to Millville, Cumberland County and ACE encouraging the preservation.

**MORE SUCCESS** – Governor Murphy signed legislation over the summer allocating the 2014 voter-approved, constitutionally dedicated funding for open space, farmland, and historic preservation in perpetuity. Now, preservation can continue just as New Jersey voters intended.

**WHAT'S NEXT?** – ANJEC will continue to offer our municipal open space grants to environmental commissions seeking to clean up trails, remove invasive species, create

pollinator and community gardens and more. Look for the grant announcement on page 24.

## Climate change and renewable energy

**SUCCESS** – Last summer, New Jersey awarded its first offshore wind project to Orstead, which will power approximately a half million Garden State homes with 1,100 megawatts of clean energy. This will be the largest offshore wind project in the United States. In November, Governor Murphy also announced a new goal to increase the State’s wind energy to 7,500 megawatts by 2035.

In 2019, New Jersey also formally rejoined The Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative and enacted the updated *Global Warming Response Act*.

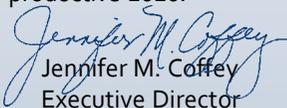
**WHAT’S NEXT?** – ANJEC will be offering education programs for ECs in the New Year to discuss the details of wind energy. We will continue to work with coastal advocates to ensure that offshore wind energy projects are properly located to avoid impacts to marine conservation zones, wildlife migration routes, fisheries and shellfish beds.

## Honors and nominations

ANJEC was also very pleased to celebrate our 50th anniversary in 2019 and receive the Governor’s Environmental Excellence Award for Healthy and Sustainable Communities. Two ANJEC people were honored with nominations to important State posts. Wynnies-Fred Victor Hinds, Community Outreach and Engagement Manager, was nominated to the Highlands Council, and I was nominated to the Pinelands Commission. Senate confirmation was still pending as we went to press.

## As we begin a new year

I am so grateful for the energetic, creative and dedicated work being done by the thousands of environmental commission members in our State and I wish us all a healthy and productive 2020.

  
Jennifer M. Coffey  
Executive Director

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On the cover: *Male cardinal*

# Number one NJDEP challenge – Climate change

By **Randi K. Rothmeil**, Ph.D., ANJEC South Jersey Project Director

“**A**NJEC has long served as the eyes and ears of the statewide environmental movement, providing the DEP with valuable advice and guidance,” stated New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) Commissioner Catherine McCabe in her opening remarks at ANJEC’s 46th Annual Environmental Congress. For 50 years, “ANJEC and the NJDEP have worked hard... to protect the environment.”

The number one environmental challenge is climate change, she said, citing five core

principles that guide policy decisions on this and other DEP challenges:

- following the law;
- using the best available science;
- listening to all sides;
- finding the best balance; and
- being transparent and honest.

On climate change, McCabe exclaimed, “It’s here and New Jersey is ground zero.” Sea level is rising faster here than in other parts of the country because of its long coastline, combined with the fact that NJ is geologically sinking naturally. To face this challenge, the State needs to reduce Green House Gas (GHG) emissions, adapt and become more resilient.

## Reducing GHG emissions

The State has made significant headway in the power sector towards reducing GHG emissions. McCabe highlighted achievements under the Murphy administration, including rejoining the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI) and continuing the nuclear power subsidy. While controversial, the subsidy “...is a big deal,” stated McCabe, “because the nuclear industry represents the State’s largest sector of carbon-free energy” at 38 percent.

Another achievement was to increase the renewable energy portfolio standards, such as requiring 50 percent of New Jersey’s power to come from renewable sources by 2030, with a goal of 3,500 megawatts from offshore wind. The State’s first 1,100-megawatt wind project is expected to be operational by 2024.

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Vol. 40 / No. 1	WINTER 2020
<b>565 MUNICIPALITIES ..... ONE ENVIRONMENT</b>	
Executive Director .....	Jennifer M. Coffey
Editor .....	Julie Lange Groth
The Association of New Jersey Environmental Commissions is a private, non-profit educational organization serving environmental commission and open space committee members, concerned individuals, non-profits, and local officials. ANJEC’s programs aim to promote the public interest in natural resource preservation, sustainable development and reclamation and support environmental commissions and open space committees working with citizens and other non-profit organizations.	
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Moving away from coal and oil to natural gas in the power sector allowed NJ to meet its 2020 emission goals due to the upsurge of fracking and increased gas supply, remarked McCabe, and even though "...we do not love where we are now, we are in a better place." Reaching future goals will require moving toward renewable power and addressing the transportation sector, now the largest contributor of GHG emissions (over 40 percent).

On the transportation front, she noted that NJ's goal is to get 330,000 electric vehicles (EVs) on the road by 2025 and build the supporting charging infrastructure. Currently, the State has over 300 vehicle charging stations and the NJDEP will be launching a location-finder app soon.

Money from the Volkswagen settlement continues to fund grants to build EV stations and replace buses and diesel trucks with EVs, especially in poorer communities disproportionately affected by air pollution.

Though the Partnership to Plug In, New Jersey's Board of Public Utilities, the Economic Development Authority and the DEP are tasked with building the necessary infrastructure to support EV ownership. DEP will also partner with the NJ Coalition of Automotive Retailers, ChargeEV and Plug-In America to launch PlugStar, an EV certification program for automotive dealers.

## Building resiliency

McCabe warned, "No matter what we do, it (climate change) is coming anyway; it is already here." So in addition to reducing our GHG emissions, we "...have to adapt, we have to become more resilient." US Army Corp of Engineer's flood control and

coastal restoration projects utilizing Superstorm Sandy funds are mostly complete, with several resiliency projects funded by HUD's Rebuild by Design initiative yet to be built.

The new DEP Office of Climate and Flood Resilience (utilizing coastal engineers and land-use planners) will provide planning and technical support to New Jersey's communities in making decisions about climate resiliency along the coastline and in tidal and inland areas prone to repeated flooding. The group is also tasked with integrating climate policies into other DEP programs and activities.

DEP continues working on its *Coastal Resiliency Plan* and a draft sea level rise report will soon be available for public comment. "At a minimum, we should all be informed about the real facts about sea level

rise and what to expect (using the best science) so we can plan accordingly," the Commissioner concluded, adding that a lot of work is still needed, such as determining where modifications are needed in our land-use rules and regulations to become more adaptable and resilient. She added that the DEP is looking forward to working with ANJEC in this process. 🌊



*NJDEP Commissioner  
Catherine McCabe*

Photo by Gary Szelc

### More information:

- NJDEP and Climate Change initiatives [www.nj.gov/dep/climatechange/](http://www.nj.gov/dep/climatechange/)
- Commissioner Catherine McCabe's full address can be viewed at [www.facebook.com/ANJECpage/videos/385226889046091/](https://www.facebook.com/ANJECpage/videos/385226889046091/) starting at 30.3 minutes

# Dr. Anthony Broccoli on climate change in New Jersey

By **Alex Ambrose**, ANJEC Policy Associate

*"Climate change is real, it's happening now, and it's affecting New Jersey." It was clear right away Dr. Broccoli wasn't there to equivocate.*



On October 4, attendees at ANJEC's 46th Annual Environmental Congress heard about the state of our changing climate and rising seas from an expert, a Professor of Atmospheric Science and Chair of the Department of Environmental Sciences at Rutgers University and Co-Director of the Rutgers Climate Institute. And what a perfect time to hear about "Climate Change in New Jersey," when just two days before, the temperature was 95 degrees in New Brunswick – in October! While that warm Wednesday may be hard to recall during these cold winter months, it held the highest temperature ever recorded in any October in the State. Dr. Broccoli's presentation focused on three main aspects of New Jersey's climate trends: temperature, precipitation and sea level.

## Higher average temperatures

The rate of temperature rise has been increasing rapidly – the nine warmest summers on record have occurred since 1999, and the four warmest winters have occurred since 1998. But that still doesn't tell the whole story. Winters have a faster rate of warming than summers do, and there is a higher rate of variability year-to-year, which makes it harder to perceive long term trends, he explained.

Changes in average temperature also inevitably lead to changes in extremes. There will no doubt be less cold weather and a much higher incidence of hot and record-hot weather. Perhaps the most startling statistic he cited was this: by 2100, most of New Jersey could have between 10 and 25 days above 100 degrees Fahrenheit every year. That's certainly something to sweat about.

## Precipitation extremes

Everyone in New Jersey has a flood story. I personally remember the water being so deep in my backyard during Hurricane Irene in 2011, I was watching ducks swim and dive for fish!

While precipitation is trending upward, and there is great variability each decade, one chart stood out in Dr. Broccoli's presentation. It all comes down to greater extremes in precipitation. That includes both non-precipitation days (leading to droughts and water shortages) and extremely high precipitation events. Heavy rain events will become heavier, and there will be more of them.

## Rising seas

The effects of sea level rise are most felt during a storm surge, although the residents of the Jersey Shore surely know that

already. Sea levels have been rising globally for a century, but in New Jersey the water is coming up twice as fast. And adding to the impact of a rising sea, our land is sinking due to extraction of groundwater from aquifers and the compaction of loose sediments.

If all goes well and we are able to lower global emissions, the central estimate for how high the water will rise is around 2.3 feet. However, if we continue business as usual, or even increase our emissions, the central estimate is even higher – around 3.4 feet. Does this mean hurricanes and nor'easters will become more intense or more frequent? According to Dr. Broccoli, it's hard to say. However, with an increased baseline for coastal flooding, New Jerseyans will have an increased risk of floods comparable to those caused by Super-storm Sandy.

## So what now?

The problem certainly feels insurmountable. With creeping trend lines and bigger spikes, it's hard to imagine what one person can do to make a difference. But

that is not what Dr. Broccoli wants you to take away.

Trying to make the problem less serious is a good goal, he said. If the doctor tells you to lose twenty pounds, she won't complain if you only lose ten. Anything and everything we are able to do to help reduce the impacts of climate change can help. The sooner the better, and every little bit counts.

"The best thing to do if you find yourself in a hole is to stop digging," said Broccoli. And thanks to his research, New Jersey residents – and especially the attendees of our Environmental Congress – are now better equipped to fight that fight.

View a video of Dr. Broccoli's presentation at [www.facebook.com/ANJECpage/publishing\\_tools/?section=VIDEOS&sort\[o\]=created\\_time\\_descending](https://www.facebook.com/ANJECpage/publishing_tools/?section=VIDEOS&sort[o]=created_time_descending) starting 22 minutes in. 

### *Dr. Anthony Broccoli speaking at the ANJEC Environmental Congress* Photo by Gary Szalc



# ANJEC Environmental Achievement Awards

**A**t ANJEC's Environmental Congress, on October 4th, we acknowledged and celebrated those who have made significant environmental achievements in the past year. Congratulations to the winners and thank you to all who work tirelessly to protect the environment at the local level.

## Environmental commission category

### Berkeley Heights

#### Environmental Commission:

#### *Berkeley Heights Vegan Fest 2018*

The Berkeley Heights Environmental Commission (EC) sponsored a three-day Vegan Fest that was free and open to the public. Through attendee education and participation, the event aimed to provide residents with tools to incorporate healthy living into their daily routines. The EC used Vegan Fest as a vehicle to increase people's awareness and mindfulness about their daily choices, particularly their food selection and exercise regimen. A variety of events took place over a three-day period,

from yoga and tai chi to expert panels on health and sustainability to a vegan cooking contest. By enabling the public to hear and interact with experts with backgrounds in medicine, exercise, wellness and law, the EC educated people about the health and environmental impacts of their diet. Hundreds of people, babies through seniors, attended the series of events.

#### Cherry Hill Environmental Board:

#### *Conservation Community Service Project*

The Cherry Hill Environmental Board took an innovative approach to coordinating volunteer opportunities for community groups and individuals to help improve public lands. They established a recruitment and volunteer coordinator position to break down their volunteer projects into organizational, national, and individual intensive categories and tailored projects to meet the needs of the volunteers so that they could have team building opportunities. By establishing a recruitment and volunteer coordinator, the Board's conservation projects worked on:

- Connecting people with nature;
- Erosion prevention and control;
- Litter and debris mitigation;
- Invasive species removal; and
- Sustainable trail use of open space lands.

Over 400 hours of community service were logged to improve trails, reduce erosion, increase accessibility, open blocked trails, remove invasive species and rescue a pollinator garden.



*Vegan Fest - 2018*

*Hackensack  
Community  
Garden*



**Closter Environmental  
Commission:**

***Closter McBain Farm***

The Closter Environmental Commission started a farm project that began when a land exchange, initiated by the Borough, preserved five and a half acres of farmland that has been tilled since the early eighteenth century. The original and ongoing mission of MacBain Farm is to introduce Closter families to fresh produce – how it is planted, grown and harvested without pesticides. Closter residents are permitted to pick one bucket full of veggies each day the farm is open (presently three days a week) at no cost. Residents are encouraged to volunteer at the farm to help with weeding, welcoming visitors and learning and teaching about what happens at the farm. There is a section of the park that has been made handicapped accessible and the farm welcomes guests from Spectrum for Living in Closter (serving people with developmental disabilities). Over 60 volunteers serve as greeters, guides, weeders, tillers, hoers and tomato stakers. And at their annual pumpkin festival, they even work as film directors, publicists, musicians and storytellers!

**Delaware Township  
Environmental Commission:  
*Meadow Trail***

Delaware Township had a subdivision that resulted in the donation of open space acreage, located between homes on one side of the subdivision and the Delaware Township School on the other. The donation included the stipulation that a trail be constructed between the subdivi-

sion and the school property so that children could use it to walk to school. The Environmental Commission took advantage of this opportunity to restore the wetlands and the surrounding area back to its native habitat for use as a community resource, transforming it into an outdoor STEM classroom for the 400 to 500 students at the school. It is an open space stewardship education site for the greater community as well, providing an ongoing field study site on wildlife habitats and wetland ecosystems.

**Hackensack Environmental Commission:  
*Hackensack Community Garden***

The Hackensack Environmental Commission was re-formed in 2018 and one of their duties is to research the use and possible use of the open land areas of the city. The EC located an area of land that was being underutilized and had become a storage place for Department of Public Works equipment. With a recommendation from the EC, the City Council passed a resolution designating that area of land along with a greenhouse to be designated as green space. The garden has been expanded and embellished and has become a community hub, which provides educational opportunities for residents. Planting the community garden in a former equipment storage area has refocused attention on this unused resource.

## **Hopewell Township (Mercer)**

### **Environmental Commission:**

#### ***Out of the Ashes and the American Chestnut***

The Hopewell Township Environmental Commission conducted an inventory of ash trees when the loss of tree cover due to the Emerald Ash Borer became apparent.

Recognizing the tremendous impact that this loss would have on carbon sequestration, stormwater runoff and bird and small animal habitat, the EC proposed a two-pronged approach to deal with the situation. The Hopewell Valley Arts Council worked with The Howell Living History Museum and arranged for a sawyer to mill the wood of felled ashes. The Arts Council then utilized some of the wood by “upcycling” it for the construction of educational art installations in the Township.

The EC also has committed to reforestation throughout the Township with an innovative partnership with the American Chestnut Foundation and several area environmental groups. They identified sites for chestnut planting throughout the Township. Orchards of chestnut trees have been planted, highlighting the efforts to restore this iconic and economically important American native tree, which is in danger of extinction due to the chestnut blight in the first half of the 20th century.

### **Madison Environmental Commission:**

#### ***Plastic-Free Week***

To help create momentum for a single-use plastic bag ordinance, the Madison Environmental Commission launched a Plastic-Free Week and urged residents to take seven voluntary actions. The campaign included a presentation to the Borough Council on the hazards of plastic pollution. The EC held events for people throughout the town, from students to seniors, from businesses to town employees. They conducted reusable bag giveaways, events where people took the pledge and received a free, native pollinator plant or a free reusable bag. They did a great deal of

education and outreach groundwork culminating in the introduction and passage of a single-use plastic bag ordinance.

## **Waterford Twp.**

### **Environmental Commission:**

#### ***Recycling Sticker Project***

Waterford Township Environmental Commission members attended recycling workshops in neighboring towns to gather ideas for how to increase local participation. They created flyers and social media posts and collaborated with neighboring Berlin Township to create special recycling stickers for all of their residents. EC members and township employees then canvassed their town to place recycling stickers on all recycling bins. They also distributed stickers and explanatory information during National Night Out and via a tax bill insert.

## **Nonprofit Category**

### **Rutgers Center for Environmental Exposures and Disease:**

#### ***Countdown to Cleaner Air: Street Scientists and the Fight for First Street***

Local community members, in partnership with community-based organizations, churches, Rutgers University and elected officials took action in Elizabeth, NJ, that led to cleaner air by banning container trucks in their neighborhood. Deacon Walter Leak of the Mt. Calvary United Church on First Street in Elizabeth makes his living driving tractor trailer trucks and led the fight for cleaner air in the First Street neighborhood. Residents conducted a truck count that revealed more than 50 trucks drove through the area each hour during a typical weekday morning. Air monitoring results showed spikes in black carbon with each passing truck, an indicator of diesel exhaust pollution.

The City of Elizabeth Council then unanimously passed an ordinance to restrict traffic on First Street to vehicles under four tons, essentially banning tractor trailers. A follow-up study found that there

was an 86 percent reduction in truck traffic and an 80 percent reduction in black carbon and ultrafine particle counts after the ordinance was enacted and enforced.

**Rowan GeoLab, The Nature Conservancy & NJ Conservation Foundation:**  
*The New Jersey Conservation Blueprint Phase II – Protecting New Jersey’s Land and Legacy*

The New Jersey Conversation Blueprint is a data-driven, interactive mapping tool made possible through a partnership of the Nature Conservancy, Rowan University, and the New Jersey Conservation Foundation. It is also a collaborative, living vision of 21 conservation-focused groups, both governmental and nonprofits.

The Conservation Blueprint Phase II represents a major overhaul and rebranding of the web site completed in June 2019. The web mapping interface was completely redesigned to be more intuitive, efficient and elegant. Multiple technical enhancements improved functionality and search

capabilities. The initiative also included a rebranding of the landing page, including new icons and logos for the various themes.

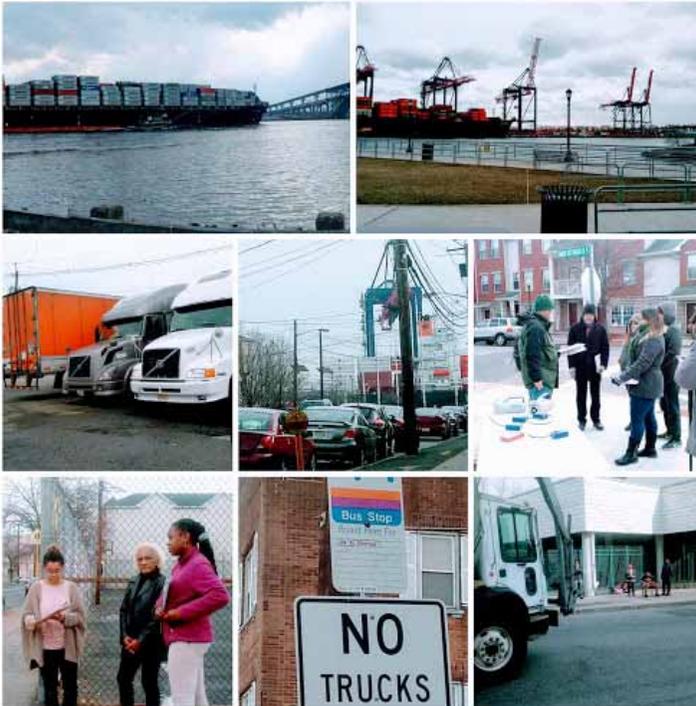
Conservation Blueprint Phase II has received feedback from many constituents and users who have indicated that they regularly use the Blueprint and that it has proven valuable for conservation and environmental activities.

**Sustainable Essex Alliance Energy Procurement Cooperative:**  
*Community Choice Energy Aggregation for Five Essex County Towns*

The municipalities of Maplewood, South Orange, Montclair, Verona and Glen Ridge contracted for a third-party electricity supplier, which resulted in favorable bids for their residents. Each of the towns held town hall meetings after the contract was awarded to inform residents about the program and their right to opt out if they chose. About 85 percent of the eligible residents remained in the program, which will run through

December 2020.

The winning bid and the resulting contract is expected to save residents about 10 percent of the supply price, averaging about \$150 per residence. The provisions require that the supply include 20 percent more Renewable Energy Certificates than required by New Jersey law and marks the communities’ commitment to encourage a rapid transition to renewable electricity supply. 



*Fighting diesel pollution in Elizabeth*



*Tom Johnson, NJ Spotlight,  
with ANJEC Executive Director  
Jennifer Coffey* Photo by Gary Szelc

# ANJEC Environmental Journalism Award 2019

*For the first time, ANJEC focused on the journalists who are doing a great job reporting on environmental issues. This year's winner was Tom Johnson, from NJ Spotlight.*

Tom Johnson has 30 years experience with various news reporting organizations, including the *Newark Star-Ledger*, *Ridgewood Newspapers*, and the *Herald News*. He has covered energy, environmental, and telecommunications issues for many years and has won State and national awards for his reporting, including an award from the US Environmental Protection Agency.

After leaving the *Ledger* in early 2009, Johnson served as Chris Daggett's press secretary for his gubernatorial run. In 2010, he founded *NJ Spotlight* and is their energy and environment writer. *NJ Spotlight* is an award-winning online news outlet which has partnered with NJTV News to form a New Jersey focused multimedia news reporting organization.

Thanks to Tom Johnson and to all of the journalists out there who are focusing on environmental reporting and keeping us informed. 



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# The changing face of recycling

*At the ANJEC Environmental Congress in October, a recycling workshop offered tips and ideas for local recycling programs as well as an overview of the industry. Gary Sondermeyer of Bayshore Recycling reported on the status of recycling and offered goals for improvement, with a focus on the current collapse of international markets for commodities. Amy Cook-Menzel of Atlantic County Utilities Authority shared ideas on educating and engaging the community in municipal recycling efforts. Suggestions from both presenters provided ideas for statewide initiatives as well as local and regional programs to keep NJ at the forefront of the movement*

## Recycling in NJ – The history and current status

By **Gary Sondermeyer**, Vice President of Operations,  
Bayshore Recycling

Some 32 years ago, New Jersey embarked on a sweeping experiment as the first state to make recycling mandatory. Today the recycling industry employs 27,000 people, adding \$6 billion annually to our State economy. Most recent statistics from the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) show the State achieved a 61 percent recycling rate for the total waste stream – among the highest recovery rates for any state in the US.

Getting recycling started and to its current level of success took a massive effort. We now stand at a crossroads as international markets have all but collapsed, based most notably on public



policy decisions and regulatory restrictions imposed by China, characterized as the Green Fence and Green Sword initiatives. The impact on the economics of recycling has been painful. While historically orders of magnitude cheaper than disposal, the current cost of recycling has risen alarmingly.

Before the Green Sword was imposed by China, towns were regularly “paid” for their material by recyclers. However, the recent market crisis has resulted in tipping fees for single stream recycling in the range of \$65

to \$75 per ton and higher, making them equivalent to and, in some cases, higher than the cost of disposal. New Jersey towns have been forced to scramble under severe budget constraints to cover unanticipated costs to maintain recycling services to residents.

## What now?

The Association of New Jersey Recyclers has devised a 14-point plan to address the crisis:

1. Reconvene the statutory Advisory Council on Solid Waste Management, which has been inactive for over five years, to provide the Governor and DEP Commissioner with expert advice on solid waste and recycling matters.
2. Create a State Markets Development Council of experts in commodities exchange to evaluate options to stimulate development of new domestic markets for recycled materials.
3. Keep the annual Recycling Fund whole. Annually over \$20 million is generated by a tax on disposal, but funds are regularly diverted to other uses through the budget process.
4. Towns should revert to dual stream recycling where paper and cardboard is kept separate from beverage containers at the curb. Single stream recycling has resulted in significant levels of contamination.
5. To reduce contamination, a public education campaign is needed to address "wishful recycling."
6. Launch a statewide recycling education campaign to remind residents that recycling is mandatory in the residential, commercial, institutional and industrial sectors – no one is exempt!
7. The State should establish a standard list of what is required for recycling. Currently each county has its own list which leads to tremendous confusion among residents.

8. URGENT! Impose a Statewide ban on single-use plastic. Legislation ( S2776/A4330) is working its way through the legislature now.

9. Restore historic incentives to the private sector in the form of business recycling loans. In the past, 35 percent of the State Recycling Fund was dedicated to loans to help finance new recycling mills.

10. Restore historic Executive Orders such as EO #91, signed by Governor Jim Florio in 1993 calling for procurement of products made from post-consumer material to help stimulate markets.

11. Increase the amount of post-consumer material, such as glass and rubber used in design mix for road construction, to stimulate additional markets.

12. Aggressively develop food waste reduction plans to help feed hungry people and also enact legislation, currently pending as S1206, to foster organic material composting.

13. Place renewed focus on recycling research and development through New Jersey's outstanding college and university system.

14. Enforce municipal ordinances to remind residents that recycling is mandatory in New Jersey despite rising costs due to deflated international markets.

In 1987 we drove our then fledgling mandatory programs from infancy to maturity as a thriving industry through multifaceted approaches like those highlighted above. We most certainly can do this again. We simply need leadership to bring the right people and expertise together to identify logical approaches to drive market development as we did in the past.

Gary Sondermeyer can be reached at [GSondermeyer@bayshorerecycling.com](mailto:GSondermeyer@bayshorerecycling.com). 

# Good tools for new rules – communicating about recycling

By **Amy Cook-Menzel**, Communications Manager,  
Atlantic County Utilities Authority

You may have noticed changes in your local recycling program. Many communities have modified their rules due to global challenges facing the recycling industry, such as China’s refusal to accept certain types of waste for recycling.

Last December, we at the Atlantic County Utilities Authority (ACUA) made changes to our recycling guidelines to reduce contamination and improve the quality of the materials collected for processing. Certain types of plastics (#3 through #7) were even moved to the “do not recycle” list.

Through this process, we learned a few methods that may help others who are also looking to share recycling information with their communities. Here are some ways you can help spread the word to benefit your local recycling program.

## Understand the message

To get a handle on your local program, contact your county or municipal recycling coordinator. Make sure everyone assisting with your outreach efforts is on the same page. Everyone involved should understand what is being communicated and why.

## Make materials eye-catching and easy to understand

At ACUA, we started by updating our printed materials and website with attractive, easy to understand images and clear descriptions. The recycling leader in your city or county may already have materials you can share, or you can create your own with easy-to-modify templates from the Recycling Partnership. The NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) also has great recycling resources.

You can also share photos of items that are commonly recycled incorrectly, such as plastic bags, and point to the right information. Your smartphone camera and a little creativity can get you rolling.

## Implement a diverse outreach plan

Information comes through so many sources, and everyone has their preferred way of getting it. This means you’ll need a diverse communication effort. While this may sound daunting (or expensive!), there are many low-cost or no-cost options. In addition to the more traditional modes of communication, social media platforms offer an excellent way to reach and engage people. Posting to your own personal page or your town’s page is a “free” way to spread information. Buying ads on Social media is also a low-cost option that can bring great results.

In addition to social media platforms, don’t overlook the power of email to reach out. Constant Contact and MailChimp are just two of many free or low-cost services that can be used to create professional looking e-newsletters.



*ACUA tagged recycling bins with either an "Oops!" or a "Great Job!" sticker.*

To save postage on expensive mailings, you can also team up with your municipality to share information in a tax or sewer bill or make use of the cable access station or community newsletter.

## Partner up

Reach out to other local environmental groups: your municipal environmental commission, local watershed association, environmental clubs, Sustainable Jersey and others to amplify your efforts.

## Presentations and events

At ACUA, we leveraged our connection with the public, using tours and tabling at community events, and making presentations to local civic groups to share new recycling information. Schools, senior centers and community groups are often looking for a speaker! Your presentation doesn't need to be high tech, but your message should be clear. Bring examples for "show and tell" and provide printed materials people can take home.

## Educational tagging project

Another initiative ACUA adopted is targeting certain neighborhoods for recycling inspections. Trained volunteers accompanied by staff have canvassed neighborhoods over the course of four consecutive recycling collection days, armed with clipboards and "oops" and "great job" tags (modified from the Recycling Partnership's free templates). Peering into recycling containers, errors are noted, and tags are left on containers to provide direct feedback on recycling.

As we wrap up inspections in our fourth community, we have seen significant improvement in every town, which proves most people really do want to do the right thing, but often lack the information they need.

## Get creative

Look for opportunities to raise awareness. ACUA hosts an annual Recycled Art Contest, partnering with our county library

system and the local mall, which donates space to exhibit artwork.

How about challenging local students with a poster or video contest or celebrating America Recycles Day on November 15? ACUA uses this "holiday" to invite guests to an Open House at its Recycling Center, complete with "Touch a Truck" opportunities, recycling center tours, games, recycled crafts and activities. Earth Day is another natural opportunity to bring attention to recycling.

With a little creativity, you can remind people how simple actions like recycling properly can positively impact the environment! Whatever tools you choose, providing consistent, easy to understand information about recycling rules is an essential part of your local program's success. 🌊

## More information

Amy Cook-Menzel can be reached at [amenzel@acua.com](mailto:amenzel@acua.com)

Association of NJ Recyclers: <https://anjr.com/>  
County recycling contact list: [www.nj.gov/dep/dshw/recycling/county\\_recycling\\_coordlst.pdf](http://www.nj.gov/dep/dshw/recycling/county_recycling_coordlst.pdf)

Municipal recycling coordinators: [www.nj.gov/dep/dshw/recycling/recycling\\_coordinators.pdf](http://www.nj.gov/dep/dshw/recycling/recycling_coordinators.pdf)

Educational tool kit: <https://recyclingpartnership.org/social-media-kit/>

NJDEP recycling resources: [www.nj.gov/dep/dshw/recycling/](http://www.nj.gov/dep/dshw/recycling/)

Atlantic County Utilities Authority: [www.acua.com/](http://www.acua.com/)  
Bayshore Family of Companies:

[www.bayshorerecycling.com/](http://www.bayshorerecycling.com/)

## Thanks to ANJEC member communities

We are grateful to the thousands of volunteers serving as local officials in more than 260 municipalities and counties that are members of ANJEC. These dedicated people – from municipal and regional environmental commissions and green teams to open space committees, planning boards, governing bodies, shade tree commissions and zoning boards – dedicate their time and efforts to assure a clean environment and high quality of life in their communities throughout our State. Thank you! 🌊

# ANJEC receives Governor's Award

By Julie Lange Groth, ANJEC Report Editor

**C**ulminating 50 years of protecting New Jersey's natural resources, ANJEC was honored to receive New Jersey's premier environmental award, the Governor's Environmental Excellence Award, on Dec. 9. Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) Commissioner Catherine R. McCabe presented ANJEC's award in the Healthy & Sustainable Communities category during a ceremony at the New Jersey State Museum.

The recognition program is celebrating its 20th anniversary and the DEP received more than 50 applications for the awards this year. A panel of judges reviewed and scored the nominations on criteria including: documented environmental benefit, contributions to meeting the State's environment needs, replicability by others, leadership and innovation, and education and outreach undertaken as part of the effort.

"It is truly an honor to recognize these environmental leaders who are shining examples for all of us to follow," Commissioner McCabe said. "Their commitment and dedication provide proof that the spirit of environmentalism remains strong in New Jersey. We congratulate them on their outstanding achievements and thank them for helping to improve the health of our environment – and our quality of life."



"Receiving this award is an incredible honor for ANJEC, especially this year when we're celebrating our 50th anniversary," said ANJEC Executive Director Jennifer Coffey. "Our staff and trustees have worked incredibly hard to defend our State's precious natural resources. And we all stand on the shoulders of amazing environmental warriors who have served before us, who had the vision and courage to establish a framework for protecting the environment in our State, enacting laws and creating a legacy for us to follow. And we're especially grateful for the thousands of local environmental commission members throughout New Jersey who inspire us every day with their passion and dedication."

Commissioner McCabe also announced that former Governors Thomas H. Kean and James J. Florio, noted for their leadership of the State during pivotal periods in environmental protection, were honored with Richard J. Sullivan awards. The award, named for the first DEP Commissioner, will be formally presented to Kean and Florio in April, as part of DEP's 50th birthday celebration and the 50th anniversary of America's first Earth Day. 



*From left, DEP Commissioner, Catherine McCabe; ANJEC Trustee, Barbara Vadnais; Sheila Baker Gujral, ANJEC Resource Center; ANJEC Development Director Lyle Landon; ANJEC Executive Director, Jennifer Coffey; ANJEC Deputy Director Elizabeth Ritter; and David Zimmer, Executive Director, NJ Infrastructure Bank*



# Sustainable housing for all:

## *Build it like the future depends on it*

By **N. Dini Checko**, ANJEC Resource Center



Climate change is our biggest threat and it encompasses every aspect of our lives, from how we build our homes to our mental health and wellbeing. By committing to sustainable housing policies and initiatives, New Jersey municipalities can help mitigate the effects of climate change.

Imagine you are making \$10 per hour at your job in Princeton. Sure, you would love to live close to work, but a one bedroom rental in town would mean that you'd need to make \$45 per hour. So, you decide to take a less expensive apartment further away, which means you need a car to get to work. That contributes to making the transportation sector the largest emitter of greenhouse gas emissions (GHG). A whopping 42 percent of the NJ's net GHG emissions come from transportation.

Given the cost of gas, tolls, insurance and car maintenance, that \$10 per hour is still stretched very tight, with little room to cover essentials such as housing, food, medicines, etc. During a recent *NJ Spotlight* Roundtable discussion on affordable housing, it was reported that, sadly, 40 percent of New Jerseyans cannot afford their basic needs and almost half of residents are spending more than 30 percent of their income on rent. Given the high cost of living in NJ, it's imperative that every municipality provides affordable and sustainable housing.

At ANJEC's 46th Environmental Congress, three fantastic speakers offered insights and solutions. First, Heidi Fichtenbaum, Princeton Environmental Commission Vice Chair, made the case for

Net-Zero housing. In July 2019, Princeton unveiled an in-depth *Climate Action Plan* to help the community reduce greenhouse gas emissions and become more climate-resilient. It establishes an ambitious goal of reducing 80 percent of GHGs by 2050 (based on 2010 emissions).

Princeton's GHG analysis shows nearly 65 percent of local emissions come from electricity and fossil fuels used in homes and commercial buildings. And over 32 percent of emissions are a result of transporting people and goods.

### Passive and affordable housing

A critical opportunity to significantly reduce GHG emissions and improve quality of life locally is passive home construction, especially for affordable housing, but it's also appropriate for market rate housing and commercial construction. There are many benefits, including energy use reduction of 70 to 95 percent, lower total net monthly cost of living, and increased personal comfort because passive homes are built better and require less maintenance.

Who qualifies for affordable housing? Earnings must be below specified levels or income standards set by the federal government and based on median family income. In New Jersey, income standards vary by county and household size. There are three primary affordable housing categories:

- families who meet income requirements,
- age restricted (generally 62 years or older), and
- special housing, such as supervised apartments, halfway houses, and group

homes for people with developmental disabilities, the mentally ill, or other special needs.

Sometimes an unfortunate stigma is attached to affordable housing and its occupants when, in fact, they are often hardworking people who are greatly needed in the community, such as home health aides. They just can't make ends meet on low-wage jobs

Amazingly, when Net-Zero low income homes are built and financed correctly, they are not more expensive than non-passive house construction. (A Net-Zero home produces at least as much energy as it consumes.)

## Making affordable homes sustainable

Our second speaker, Pam DeLosSantos, Assistant Director for NJ Housing and Mortgage Finance, shared information about the Low Income Housing Tax Credit program. Under this federal tax credit program, every state develops a Qualified Allocation Plan (QAP) to allocate eligible credits. So far in NJ, approximately 500 projects and 50,000 units have been created using this financing model. Tax credit properties must restrict rents and the income eligibility of residents.

The QAP has multiple criteria, including energy efficiency. DeLosSantos stressed the importance of working with an Energy Star consultant and using the NJ Office of Clean Energy's benchmarking program to maximize energy efficiency. This evolving program will add criteria such as community solar and health and social equity in the coming year. Knowledgeable and committed developers are key to successful implementation.

Our third speaker, Lauren Zullo, Director of Environmental Impact at the Jonathan Rose Company, is responsible for leading environmentally sound and healthy building initiatives. This national, award-winning developer works closely with communities to build beautiful, green affordable and mixed income housing that enhances people's lives. Zullo provided numerous

examples, including the East Harlem Center for Living and Learning. This mixed-use building provides 89 units of affordable housing, school and nonprofit office space. The environment is a key element to all their designs.

Too often, unfortunately, environmental considerations take a back seat to cost savings, especially for affordable housing development. What if all requests for proposals (RFPs) required Net-Zero building and other environmental criteria? All the speakers highlighted numerous successful projects across the country with the common theme of strong private and public partnerships.

## What environmental commissions can do

ECs can advocate for sustainable, affordable housing design during preliminary site plan reviews and for incorporating this goal into the Master Plan. Fichtenbaum outlined key steps municipalities can take to integrate sustainable housing for all:

- Include Net-Zero and sustainability goals in all public projects through the RFP process.
- Build relationships with design teams and developers committed to sustainability goals.
- Research and apply for available funding sources to address climate change.
- Share learning statewide and advocate for State policy that incentivizes Net-Zero building, including passive houses and renewables
- Resolve legal issues where NJ's Uniform Construction Code standards conflict with local aspirations for Net-Zero building. 🌊

### More info:

- *Sustainable Princeton Climate Action Plan* – [www.sustainableprinceton.org/climate-action-plan](http://www.sustainableprinceton.org/climate-action-plan)
- NJ Housing and Mortgage Finance Agency – [www.njhousing.gov](http://www.njhousing.gov)
- Affordable Housing in New Jersey: What's Next?, NJ Spotlight – [www.njspotlight.com/2019/06/19-06-04-affordable-housing-in-new-jersey-whats-next](http://www.njspotlight.com/2019/06/19-06-04-affordable-housing-in-new-jersey-whats-next)

# New Highlands Council members await confirmation

By **Julia Somers**, Executive Director,  
New Jersey Highlands Coalition

The New Jersey Highlands Council was established by the Legislature as mandated by the 2004 *Highlands Water Protection and Act*. The Council was charged with drafting a *Regional Master Plan* and promoting municipal and county conformance to the *Plan's* capacity-based planning provisions. The *Act* also charged the Council with performing a resource assessment of the region and determining the amount of human development that could occur without adversely impacting water quality. The New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) is required to consult with the Council on all land use permit decisions within the Highlands region.

The Council has 15 members, all serving five year terms, with 13 of them nominated by the Governor. Eight of the Governor's nominees must be elected officials – three from county government and five municipally elected. No more than four can be of the same political party.

The Governor also nominates seven “public members,” one of whom is recommended by the Senate President and one by the Assembly Speaker. These nominees should have expertise in water quality protection, natural resource management, agriculture, forestry, land use or economic development. At least four of the public members must be property owners, business owners or farmers in the Highlands, or residents or nonresidents of the Highlands who benefit from Highlands water. If satisfying this Rubik's cube isn't challenging enough, any NJ Senator whose

district includes a town in a nominee's county may deny that nominee's appointment.

While the rules of the game may seem somewhat Byzantine, the role of the Council is important. According to the US Geological Survey, 332 New Jersey towns receive some or all of their water from the Highlands, meaning 6.2 million people, or 70 percent of State residents, depend on Highlands water, making the role of the Highlands Council an environmental priority.

Today, three seats on the Council are vacant, leaving only 12 voting members. To authorize any Council action, eight positive votes are necessary, which means reaching a consensus is important to moving new initiatives forward.

## Meet the nominees!

Governor Murphy has recently nominated three excellent members to the Council! After a 30-year career, **Dr. Daniel van Abs** is the State's foremost expert in water resource management. Dan began his career at DEP, then moved on to the New Jersey Water Supply Authority. He subsequently served as Director of Policy & Science at the Highlands Council, and today, as a professor at Rutgers University, he lectures on water infrastructure, environmental policy and regional environmental management. You can hear him give an inspiring keynote speech at the March 2019 Northwest New Jersey Rivers conference at [www.facebook.com/NJHighlandsCoalition/videos/263706941238407/](https://www.facebook.com/NJHighlandsCoalition/videos/263706941238407/).



*Wynnie-Fred Victor Hinds, ANJEC Community Outreach – Engagement Manager*

**Wynnie-Fred Victor Hinds** is a resident of Newark, which was not previously represented on the Council, despite being the largest single landowner in the Highlands, with extensive forests buffering its five reservoirs. Newark's interest in protecting Highlands' water quality is huge. Wynnie also co-chairs Newark's Environmental Commission. With her extensive background in community engagement and environmental justice, she currently works as Community Outreach Manager at ANJEC.

**Bill Kibler** is a West Point graduate, having majored in environmental science. After law school at Syracuse University, Bill practiced environmental law before joining the staff of the South Branch Watershed Association. Bill is currently Policy Director at the Raritan Headwaters Association. He has an extensive record of volunteer service with organizations such as the Raritan Basin Watershed Alliance, the NJ Council of Watershed Associations, NJ Keep It Green, the American Water Resources Association and the Wetlands Forum. The New Jersey Highlands Coalition proudly counts him as a former trustee, where he chaired our Policy Committee.

After approval by their Senators, each nominee must then be approved by the Senate Judiciary Committee, and finally, by the full Senate. An arduous process, but when they're finally seated, New Jersey will greatly benefit by the presence of these stellar individuals on the Highlands Council. 

## Lechner Scholarship for a student in the environmental field

ANJEC will award a \$1200 scholarship to a New Jersey college student entering his/her junior or senior year. The scholarship is granted to encourage qualified students to pursue a career in a field related to environmental protection. The Lechner Scholarship Fund is a living memorial to Hermia Lechner in recognition of her many years of dedicated service and contributions to the preservation of open space and natural resources in New Jersey.

An eligible student must:

- be a New Jersey resident;
- attend an accredited New Jersey four-year college or university;
- be entering his/her junior or senior year in the fall of 2020;
- be majoring in natural resources, parks and recreation, environmental law, environmental sciences, or a related field;
- have a cumulative grade point average of 3.0 or better;
- have demonstrated an activist role in the preservation of open space, wildlife, or water resources in NJ; and
- submit a completed Lechner Scholarship Application to ANJEC by Friday, May 1, 2020. (application and information at [www.anjec.org](http://www.anjec.org))

The Lechner Scholarship will be awarded by June 1, 2020. The winner will be recognized at ANJEC's annual Environmental Congress in October. 

# Acting Locally

By **Michele Gaynor**, ANJEC Resource Center;  
**Lyle Landon**, ANJEC Development Director; and  
**Anthony Greco**, Cresskill Environmental Commission

## Maplewood resolves to share the plastic burden

With a wave of towns and cities across the nation deciding to combat the overwhelming plastic pollution problem, some towns are now turning their attention to the manufacturers of plastics. Consumers should always do their best to recycle, but it's also time for those that create the plastic to take responsibility for its environmental and human harm.

Maplewood, having already passed an ordinance banning single-use plastic bags, went a step further to recognize that the manufacturers of disposable plastic items also need to step up to the plate.

Maplewood's resolution urges federal and State legislators to enact policies that require manufacturers who use plastic to make consumer goods bear a substantial part of the burden. The resolution states that recycling plastic is no longer providing municipal revenue but is now, instead, costing taxpayers. Fees should be added to products packaged in plastics in order to fund recycling operations at local and state levels.

Plastic manufacturers fully comprehend the damage their products inflict on people, animals and the environment, but most choose not to take responsibility. So far, California is the only state creating legislation that forces plastics manufacturers to phase in the use of 100 percent recycled plastics in their products.

As the burden of recycling and proper disposal of plastics falls to local municipalities, it's well past time to push for change and deal with the production and con-

sumption of this environmental hazard.

Maplewood's resolution can be found at [www.twp.maplewood.nj.us/sites/maplewood\\_nj/files/uploads/resolution\\_101-19.pdf](http://www.twp.maplewood.nj.us/sites/maplewood_nj/files/uploads/resolution_101-19.pdf)

– Michele Gaynor

## High Bridge and trees – Environmental warrior partners

Noting that many of the banks along the South branch of the Raritan River were in need of re-forestation, the High Bridge Environmental Commission (EC) recently took on the project. Along with local volunteers, Chair Jeanie Baker said, "We



*High Bridge EC planted and staked 128 native trees.*

planted and staked 128 native trees. The trees were in plastic tubes in order to prevent damage from wildlife." Over time these trees and shrubs will become stream-side buffers that will stabilize banks, filter out pollutants and provide extra storage for flood waters. Project funding came from a Roots to Rivers grant from the Nature Conservancy and from Sustainable Jersey.

This was not the first tree project for the High Bridge EC. In 2011 their efforts earned them the status of Tree City, one of only four in New Jersey at the time. In 2013 their work enabled High Bridge Commons and Union Forge Park to become certified as a Wildlife Habitat Community.

Nature sometimes needs our helping hands, and environmental commissions, green teams, land use boards and shade tree commission members can protect or restore trees so that they can grow into mature environmental warriors.

While it is easy to understand that fledgling trees and shrubs need protection, we should not lose track of the many mighty environmental benefits mature trees provide. Most notably, trees help all living creature by absorbing carbon dioxide and potentially harmful gasses, such as sulfur dioxide and carbon monoxide from the air, and by releasing oxygen. One large tree can provide a day's supply of oxygen for four people! When news headlines say "We need to plant a billion trees to combat climate change," that statement makes a lot more sense given the environmental math.



*Cresskill students created award-winning posters and essays.*

Other benefits from trees include: cooling the land and water, along with the humans and animals who live there; decreasing noise pollution and wind erosion; providing wildlife habitat; supplying food, shelter and recreation; improving air and water quality as well as quality of life; and enhancing property values.

Let's warrior on together! – Lyle Landon

## Cresskill students celebrate the environment

Award-winning posters and essays from local students in grades 3 to 8 were celebrated at an awards ceremony for the the Cresskill Environmental Commission's 12th annual Poster/Essay Contest . The ceremony was held at the Cresskill Senior Activity Center in June.

Each year, the Commission selects an environmental theme for the contest, and teachers from the town's schools ask their students to interpret the theme in the form of a poster (grades 3-5) or essay (grades 6-8). This year's theme was "Why Trees Are Important to Me." Winning students received a proclamation signed by Cresskill Mayor Ben Romeo as well as an Amazon gift card.

The winning posters and essays were displayed at the Cresskill Public Library.

– Anthony Greco

## South Plainfield's students encourage sustainability

The South Plainfield Green Team, a subcommittee of the Environmental Commission, partnered with local students to produce a video with the goal of encouraging residents to volunteer and become more engaged. The Green Team works hard in the community to promote sustainability. It was important for them to let residents know what the Green Team does and how people can get involved and help with their efforts.

With a grant from the PSE&G Foundation, the Green Team worked with a consultant to make a video, design a website and create a social media campaign. Students in grades 5

and 6 were invited to enter an essay contest on why it is important to protect their local environment, while students in grades 7 through 12 could submit a three-minute video on how South Plainfield could become a more sustainable community. The essay and video winners each received gift certificates and appeared on camera to share their ideas and stories.

The project culminated in a video in which the children spoke about why it's important for residents to pitch in and help the town be more sustainable and resilient. It was a way to let the community know

*The South Plainfield Green Team produced a video promoting community engagement.*



what the Green Team has accomplished and how it's helping to preserve and protect South Plainfield's environment. Students, principal, teachers, the environmental club and the Green Team all worked together on this project and the video was unveiled at a screening held at the town library.

Watch the video here [www.youtube.com/watch?v=vj5P1Rjbi18](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vj5P1Rjbi18) – Michele Gaynor

#### Funding announcement

## ANJEC 2020 Open Space Grant Program

ANJEC is pleased to announce the continuation of the ANJEC Open Space Stewardship Grants, funded in part by the Sandy Batty Grant Fund.  
*2020 marks the seventh year of this grant program.*

One-year grants of up to \$1500 will be available to environmental commissions in New Jersey whose applications are selected in 2020.

Application materials are now available on the ANJEC website at [www.anjec.org](http://www.anjec.org).

**Grant applications are due on Friday, April 3, 2020, at 4:30 PM.**

**Successful applicants will be notified by May 15, 2020.**

ANJEC expects to award approximately 15 grants in 2020.

Suitable projects include, but are not limited to:

- pollinator gardens
- trail building, signage, maintenance
- printed or online guides, maps, inventories of open space, trails
- open space or trails assessments, plans, maps
- multi-town plans to link open space or trails
- conservation easement inventories, monitoring, outreach, education
- management of invasive species
- habitat enhancement on open lands
- restoration or maintenance of riparian areas within preserved public open space
- educational stormwater management projects on preserved public open space.

No cash match is required. 💧

Save the dates

# Fundamentals for Effective Environmental Commissions

Saturday, March 7, 14 and 28

9:00 AM to 1:30 PM

Join ANJEC staff and other experts for a full morning of training. Learn how to be an effective member of a municipal environmental commission.

Our 2020 program will include separate breakout sessions for experienced and new environmental commissioners, plus hands-on training and networking opportunities.



## The agenda includes:

- Responsibilities and powers of an environmental commission
- Site plan review
- Creating/updating an ERI
- The municipal master plan and the environmental commission's role in the process
- Reviewing and updating municipal environmental ordinances
- NJ Highlands actions and resources for environmental commissions

## Registration Details:

If your municipal commission/committee is an ANJEC member, there is no charge to attend. Non-member participation fee: \$45

More registration information is coming soon. Watch your email or contact us at [info@anjec.org](mailto:info@anjec.org) or 973-539-7547. 

## Student fundraiser benefits ANJEC

ANJEC was honored and grateful to receive the proceeds of a fundraiser mounted by a team of students in the International Baccalaureate Career-Related Program at Mendham High School. As part of the program's Philanthropy Project, the five-person team, who called themselves the "Planet People," chose ANJEC as the beneficiary of the \$340 they raised by holding a bake sale. The team members included: Erin Duffy, Kate Duffy, Peter Bohlen, Sydney Riley and Ethan Ryan.



The Philanthropy Project is designed to introduce students to the possibilities for service and help them identify their philanthropic interests. 

2019

## At the State House

ANJEC and several other environmental nonprofits were out in force on December 16, appealing to NJ legislators in Trenton to pass bills to prevent plastic pollution, secure funding to protect the Delaware watershed, build more electric vehicle charging infrastructure and more.



From left: NJ Senator Bob Smith, NJ Assemblywoman Nancy J. Pinkin, NJ Senator Linda R. Greenstein, NJ League of Conservation Voters Executive Director Ed Potosnak, ANJEC Executive Director Jennifer Coffey, NJ Highlands Coalition Executive Director Julia Somers, and ChargEVC CEO Pamela Frank.



From left: Tony Landa, Paramus EC; Kelly Knutson, State Policy Manager, Coalition of Delaware River Watershed, NJ Audubon; Carol Peterson, Oakland EC; Sheila Baker Gujral, ANJEC Resource Center; and Vinish Gujral, ANJEC volunteer.

# Congress memories

Photos by Renee Resky and Gary Szelc





# ANJEC people 2020

Local Environment Matters

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Jillian Madsen, Media Volunteer  
Steve Carroll, Resource Center Volunteer  
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- Endangered Species Surveys
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We'd love to highlight your town's successes on our Facebook page, so please "like" us at [www.facebook.com/ANJECpage](http://www.facebook.com/ANJECpage) and then post your commission or green team events, activities and accomplishments. On Twitter, please follow @ANJECtweets and you'll find ANJEC on Instagram too!






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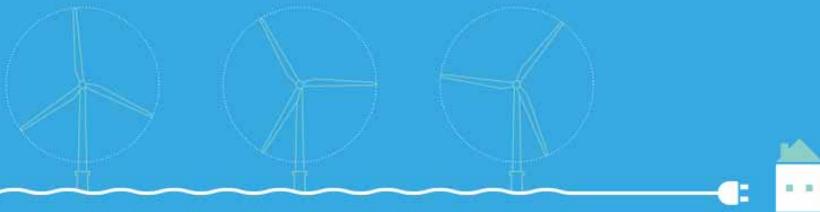
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