



# ANJEC REPORT

Local Environment Matters

SPRING 2019



1969 - 2019



## Inside:

- ANJEC Open Space Stewardship Grants available
- Greening your event
- Get involved in community science



## Director's Report

# Neither rain, nor sleet, nor snow will increase our taxes....

*New Jersey has just adopted strategic, proven actions that will reduce local flooding and improve water quality.*

More than 1,600 communities in 40 states across the United States have implemented stormwater utilities to reduce the flooding and dirty water impacts caused by poorly managed stormwater runoff. Development built in the Garden State after 2004, when New Jersey adopted stormwater rules, have had fairly protective regulations intended to defend against worsening floods. However, as one of the 13 original colonies, with more than 350 years of development, we still need to address the flooding impacts of today created by decisions of the past. Stormwater utilities will allow us to do just that.

The Stormwater Utilities Authorization bill, passed by the New Jersey Legislature with bipartisan support and signed into law by Governor Murphy on March 18, offers greater control to local government officials to solve the flooding problems that plague their communities. The bill allows local governments to conduct an inventory and impact assessment of impervious cover – surfaces that cannot absorb rain and snow melt, resulting in runoff. If the assessments show that impervious cover is indeed the cause of local flooding and polluted water, local officials and their communities can now decide whether to adopt a stormwater utility. If they choose to do so, they would assess a fee on some or all impervious cover within their jurisdiction. The fee is then dedicated toward constructing stormwater management facilities with an emphasis on green infrastructure.

Green infrastructure, of course, has many co-benefits, such as helping stormwater infiltrate the ground, filtering pollutants in

runoff, and providing food and habitat to pollinators. It also can create wonderful green, outdoor spaces for communities to enjoy.

### It's not a tax!

Some people and organizations, primarily those who own or manage much of the State's impervious cover, are trying to suggest that the new *Stormwater Utilities Authorization* is a tax. That characterization is, quite simply, wrong. The law contains absolutely no taxes or fees, not on local jurisdictions and not across the State. What it actually does is authorize local elected officials to take action to reduce flooding if their communities suffer from those impacts.

Stormwater utilities will particularly help New Jersey municipalities with large commercial and industrial complexes, stadiums, and parking lots that predate stormwater management regulations. Towns with combined sewer overflows (CSOs) are suffering from raw untreated sewage in their local waterways, adding to the community's overburden of environmental pollution. The Stormwater Utilities Authorization, also known as the *Flood Defense Act*, gives community leaders a viable, proven option to address flooding impacts and water pollution. And it is completely voluntary.

### Stormwater rule changes

On February 1, the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) closed the public comment period on revisions to the State stormwater regulations. The changes include progressive requirements to use green infrastructure to manage stormwater from new developments



# ANJEC 2019 Open Space Grant Program

By **Elizabeth Ritter**, ANJEC Deputy Director

**F**or the sixth consecutive year, ANJEC is pleased to announce the continuation of the ANJEC Open Space Stewardship Grants, funded in part by the Sandy Batty Grant Fund.

One-year grants of up to \$1500 will be available to environmental commissions in New Jersey whose applications are accepted in 2019. Application materials are now available on the ANJEC website. ANJEC expects to award approximately 15 grants in 2019.

Completed grant applications are due no later than Monday, April 15, at 4:30pm. Successful applicants will be notified by May 10, 2019.

Suitable projects include, but are not limited to:

- pollinator gardens;
- trail building, signage, maintenance;
- printed or online guides, maps or inventories of open space or trails;
- open space or trail assessments, plans, maps;
- multi-town plans to link open space or trails;
- conservation easement inventory, monitoring, outreach and education;
- rain gardens/native plant gardens;
- 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.

The 2019 program objectives and application requirements are the same as for the 2018 grants. No cash match is required.

To read the 2019 guidelines and view examples of projects funded in previous grant rounds, visit ANJEC's grant page at [www.anjec.org/EnvCommissionGrantPrograms.htm](http://www.anjec.org/EnvCommissionGrantPrograms.htm). 



*Mount Holly's 2017 grant project included beautifying a neglected lot and creating pollinator habitat*

# Making Leonia Styrofoam-free

By N. Dini Checko, ANJEC Resource Center

**W**hat does it take to start and spread a movement? Inspiration, action and community. In the small Bergen County Borough of Leonia, a grassroots group of community activists are working towards progress and inclusivity in their town and beyond. Christie Evens, Leonia Action Alliance (LAA) member, was inspired to tackle climate change by eliminating single-use plastics. Since plastic is made primarily from fossil fuels, it contributes to climate change and pollutes at every stage – from materials extraction to product production to waste disposal.

Evens targeted one specific type of single-use plastic, disposable food service containers made of polystyrene foam, commonly known as Styrofoam. The International Agency for Research on Cancer has declared that styrene, a chemical found in Styrofoam, is a known neurotoxin and suspected carcinogen. Evens deduced that “eliminating Styrofoam is something we can do locally, especially

since it’s not a necessity, and this can scale up to help reduce climate change and improve lives.”

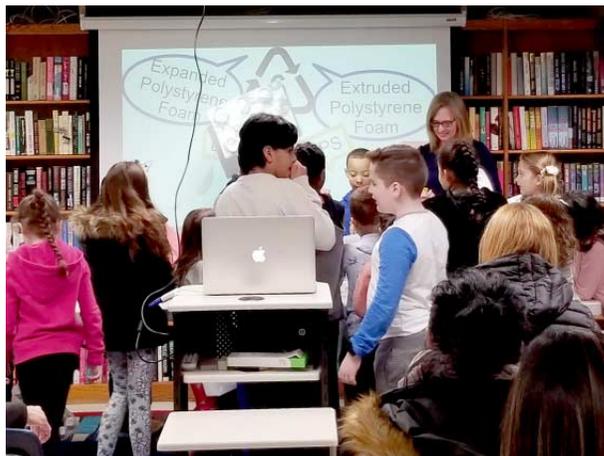
Over the past 18 months, Evens, LAA and the Leonia Environmental Commission (LEC) implemented an in-depth strategy aimed at education and passing an ordinance that banned polystyrene disposable food containers while promoting the recycling of clean, white expandable polystyrene. This strategy was broken down into five key elements: research, education, awareness, reduction and elimination. There are a lot of moving parts to this campaign and this article highlights just a few.

Starting in the summer of 2017, LAA and local Girl Scouts began a Styrofoam awareness/collection program for Leonia residents and businesses. Before the Girl Scouts began canvassing businesses for support, they gained a better understanding of the problem by participating in an interactive, hands-on presentation on the “Science of Styrofoam” that taught chemical composition, material biodegradability and ecology.

Leonia has a diverse population, so the Girl Scouts distributed informational fliers to local businesses in multiple languages (English, Spanish, Korean and Chinese).

*Local Scouts played a key role in Leonia's Styrofoam drive* Photo by Jessie Glass





*Leonia Sciece of Styrofoam classroom presentation*

By last fall, all schools in Leonia were Styrofoam-free. The school superintendent and Board of Education worked with the school food vendor to successfully switch to compostable lunch trays. A key element was Leonia's commitment to join Sustainable Jersey for Schools, which provided the funding for new trays.

The various community partners pressed forward by making public presentations in local schools, the public library and to the Rotary Club. Qualified and respected speakers added to the credibility of the message. For example, Dr. Jimmy Meltzer, a Leonia resident, father and attending physician in the Division of Pediatric Emergency Medicine at the Department of Pediatrics of the Albert Einstein College of Medicine, spoke at the Rotary of the Palisades about the hazards of Styrofoam, especially for growing children.

The Girl Scouts gave out environmental award certificates and window sticker medallions to stores that promised not to use or sell Styrofoam. Recipients included Leonia Borough offices, schools, organizations, churches, and the local synagogue. The coalition shared announcements of the Styrofoam-Free awards and other information about the campaign with local newspapers and social media.

The next step was passing an ordinance banning Styrofoam in the town. Thanks to all the footwork done by LAA, LEC and

Girls Scouts within the community, the Council was open to considering an ordinance. Councilman Bill Ziegler, also the LEC liaison, championed the ordinance and last December the Leonia Borough Council unanimously passed a ban on foam disposable food service ware.

Leonia inspired other Bergen County towns to tackle the Styrofoam problem. Last October, Sustainable Jersey awarded the Bergen County Hub a \$6,177 grant to promote the recycling of EPS Styrofoam packaging, and encourage the reduction

and elimination of XPS Styrofoam food service-ware.

The Hub's plans include six Styrofoam drives for the twelve member towns over the next couple of years. For this program to be successful, they need access to recycling bins, an EPS densifier, trucks and drivers. The leaders have applied for additional grants through the Bergen County Utility Authority and have confirmed Suez as a corporate sponsor.

Not content to rest on their laurels, a core group of environmental commission and green team members are engaging with the Bergen County Freeholders to push for a countywide Styrofoam ban, and individual towns are using Leonia's strategy and methods to pass their own ordinances.

The comprehensive State bill (S2776/A4330) that would ban single-use plastic carryout bags, straws, and polystyrene foam food service products statewide is still awaiting committee hearings in the Senate and Assembly. However, as we have seen with Leonia and the Bergen County Styrofoam-Free Hub, perseverance is key to success. Contact your legislators and let them know why this important and to take action immediately. 💧

### **For more information**

Leonia Action Alliance –

<http://leoniaactionalliance.org>

How to urge the State Legislature to pass the Plastic Pollution bill – <http://bit.ly/pvanjec>

# Acting Locally



By **Michele Gaynor**, ANJEC Resource Center;  
**S.T. Carroll**, ANJEC volunteer

## Refuse the plastic when ordering takeout

The takeout dilemma: How does one avoid the unnecessary plastic packaging that most takeout food comes in? If you have tried asking the restaurant to use your own reusable containers, your request most likely was met with silence. Occasionally you will find some restaurants that do offer to package in compostable paper containers instead of the usual plastic. But unfortunately that is not the norm.

The Maplewood, Millburn and South Orange Green Teams, in an attempt to reduce the use of Styrofoam and plastic containers, participated in a project called Greener To-Go. With support from a Sustainable Jersey grant, residents were invited to order plastic-free takeout from several participating restaurants during one week in January. Takeout orders were packed in US-made, 100 percent recycled paper containers that were also totally chlorine-free and recyclable if cleaned of food. The green teams supplied each participating restaurant with 600 reusable bags and 600 each of three different size recyclable containers.

The green teams that organized Greener To-Go are encouraging people to take the short survey at [www.greenertogo.org](http://www.greenertogo.org) in order to gather more public opinion to encourage restaurants to move in the direction of using non-plastic packaging. Of the 100 people who responded to the survey, 73 percent said that getting more sustainable takeout packaging was “very important” and 21 percent said that it was

“important.” Over 50 percent said they were “willing or extremely willing” to pay more for environmentally friendly food packaging. This survey is still available online for people to provide input.

– *Michele Gaynor*

## Sustainable homes made of gingerbread

Essex County held its fourteenth annual Sustainable Homes and Habitats Gingerbread Contest in December. The event is designed to incorporate Essex County’s mission to raise awareness about nature and environmental issues with a holiday theme. Members of the public were invited to create their own gingerbread homes or habitats and to enter their creation into the contest.

There were four categories in the competition:

- Individual Child (ages 14 or under);
- Group/Family (children 14 or under working as a group or with adult help);
- Adult Nonprofessional (ages 15 or older and not professional chefs);
- Adult Professional (ages 15 or older) who are professional chefs or culinary arts employees.

The environmental element of the contest required that the creation include at least three identifiable sustainable building design elements, such as glass



*A winning entry in Essex County's Sustainable Gingerbread House competition*

skylights, solar panels and or a natural habitat component. To assist contestants, the Essex County Environmental Commission staff held a Gingerbread House Making Workshop in early December.

Thirty five entries were on display for two weeks in December at the Essex County Environmental Center. Essex County Executive Joseph DiVincenzo, Jr. presented awards to contestants, noting: "This hands-on, family-oriented contest lets people of all ages learn about the environment in a fun way. I am amazed at the creativeness and ingenuity of the entries each winter. Everyone who participated in this contest is a winner."  
 – S.T. Carroll

## Montgomery promotes healthy lawns and water

All towns should be helping residents understand the importance of preventing water pollution from entering storm drains and waterways under the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection's stormwater management program.

To meet this need, Montgomery's Stormwater Pollution Prevention Team addresses nonpoint source pollution (litter, motor oil, fertilizers and pet waste to name a few), which is very often difficult to track.

that make their habitats in local waterways. Montgomery provides information to homeowners, lawn care services and landscapers on how to choose no- or low-phosphorus fertilizers and why this is so important to help maintain a healthy ecosystem.

Pet waste and motor oil are also often carried in stormwater runoff into local streams and lakes. Getting the information out to local citizens about proper disposal can do a great deal to prevent nonpoint source pollution. The municipality shares helpful information on how to protect water quality in the town newsletter, on the local TV channel and public service announcements on the radio. They also have a stormwater pollution prevention hotline so residents can notify officials if they see stormwater pollution occurring in their town.  
 – Michele Gaynor

## A place called home – Allamuchy Township

It started with a community's interest in putting up wood duck houses and bluebird nest boxes around a stormwater basin. Local resident Sue Ellen Mikowski called NJ Audubon and the Allamuchy Environmental Commission (EC) with the hope of

obtaining and installing the bluebird boxes. Along with the nest boxes the volunteers wanted to plant native wildflowers to help protect water quality and attract more insects and birds to the area by offering a sanctuary to wildlife.

The collaboration, dubbed “A Place Called Home,” brought together several Old Farm Village Panther Valley residents, NJ Audubon, the Allamuchy EC and the mayor. With a donation of a wood Duck house by John Parke of NJ Audubon and an offer by EC member Charlie Fineran to donate the money for a post, the project took shape.

The installation of the bird boxes and wood duck boxes will be an ongoing process of restoration and maintenance of the area around the detention basin. Creating a habitat of native plants will attract butterflies and insects for the birds and also add beauty to what was once just a mowed area and a feeding ground for geese. Detention basins and retention areas can be perfect places to enhance the community’s overall appearance. Visitors to the area now have a cinder walking path and educational opportunities for viewing wildlife.

The EC receives great support from the town’s mayor and council and also works with an extensive network of partners, including the Allamuchy Recreation Department and Sussex County Bird Club.

– Michele Gaynor



*Setting a post for one of Allamuchy’s bluebird houses are John Park (kneeling) and former Allamuchy Mayor Keith DeTombeur.*

# Why we protect and restore wetlands

By Cheryl Reardon, ANJEC Project Director

**W**etlands are important features in New Jersey's landscape that provide numerous beneficial services for people as well as for wildlife and agriculture. Wetlands protect and improve water quality, provide habitat, absorb and store floodwaters and maintain surface water flow during dry periods. These valuable functions are the result of the unique natural characteristics of wetlands.

Wetlands are diversely productive with an immense variety of species of microbes, plants, insects, amphibians, reptiles, birds, fish and mammals relying on the wetland ecosystem. Climate, landscape shape (topology), geology and the movement and abundance of water help to determine the plants and animals that inhabit each wetland. The complex relationships among the organisms inhabiting the wetland environment are called food webs, which are like a "biological supermarkets" that provide an abundant variety of foods that attract

many species. Many animals use wetlands for part or all of their lifecycle. Dead plant leaves and stems break down in the water to form small particles of organic material called "detritus" that feeds many small aquatic insects, shellfish and small fish that in turn become food for larger predatory fish, reptiles, amphibians, birds and mammals.

The functions of wetlands and the value they provide to humans depend on a complex set of relationships between the wetland and the other ecosystems in the watershed. A watershed is a geographic area in which water, sediments and dissolved materials drain from higher elevations to a common low lying outlet or basin at a point on a larger stream, lake, underlying aquifer or estuary.

## Agriculture thrives in wetlands

A wealth of natural products come from wetlands, including fish and shellfish,



*Freshwater wetlands in the Supawna Meadows Wildlife Refuge in Cape May*

# Important wetlands conservation in South Jersey

After conserving more than 7,600 acres of coastal wetlands, Ducks Unlimited and several partners aren't slowing down. They recently launched phase three to protect an additional 1,700 acres of land in South Jersey along with the birds and wildlife that depend on it for survival. The initiative was established in 2013 to protect, restore and enhance critical coastal wetland habitat.

Jim Feaga, Ducks Unlimited regional biologist in New Jersey, said these coastal habitats are sandwiched by threats on two fronts: "Much of New Jersey is heavily urbanized... It's the most densely populated state and nearly 40 percent of its historic wetlands have been lost. Offshore, rising sea levels mean increased damage to coastal habitat from extreme weather events, which will affect natural resources for generations."

Much of the third phase of the project includes acquiring intact wetlands systems and marsh migration areas, protecting them from development in Atlantic, Burlington, Cape May, Cumberland, Gloucester and Salem Counties,

The wetlands will become part of the National Wildlife Refuge System, State Wildlife Management Areas or various

state and nonprofit preserves that will be open to public access. Opportunities for the public include outdoor activities such as hunting, fishing, hiking, bird watching and research.

Several tracts already acquired in the third phase will be added to Supawna Meadows Wildlife Refuge, various Wildlife Management Areas and New Jersey Conservation Foundation preserves. The restoration of these habitats will make sure the birds are here!

These lands are an important part of the Atlantic Flyway, with much of the acreage falling within a Priority Stopover that provides birds with refuge along their long migratory journey. A number of high priority bird species will benefit from this preservation.

The project is funded by a \$1 million *North American Wetlands Conservation Act* grant and \$3 million in matching funds from Ducks Unlimited, the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, The Nature Conservancy, New Jersey Conservation Foundation, New Jersey Natural Lands Trust, NJ Waterfowl Stamp Advisory Committee, South Jersey Land & Water Trust, and the US Fish & Wildlife Service. 

cranberries and blueberries, which are particularly important to the New Jersey Pinelands. New Jersey's fish and shellfish industries harvest many wetland-dependent species. In the US Southeast, nearly all the commercial catch and over half of the recreational harvest are species that depend on the estuary-coastal wetland system. Louisiana's coastal marshes are tremendously valuable for their commercial fish and shellfish harvest.

## Wetland habitats

Many of New Jersey's threatened and endangered species live only in wetlands, and nearly half use wetlands at some point in their lives. A variety of other animals and plants depend on wetlands for survival. Estuarine and marine fish and shellfish, various birds and certain mammals, such as muskrats, beavers and minks, are dependent on coastal wetlands for food and shelter to survive.

Many breeding bird populations (ducks, geese, woodpeckers, hawks, wading birds and many songbirds) feed, nest and raise their young in wetlands. Migratory birds and waterfowl use coastal and inland wetlands as resting, feeding, breeding or nesting grounds for at least part of the year.

## Flood protection

Wetlands function as natural sponges that trap and slowly release surface water, rain, snowmelt, groundwater and floodwaters. Trees, root mats and other wetland vegetation also slow the flow of floodwater and distribute it more gradually over the floodplain. This combined water storage and braking action lowers flood heights and reduces erosion.

Wetlands within and downstream of urban areas, like the New Jersey Meadowlands, are particularly valuable because they counteract the greatly increased rate and volume of surface water runoff from communities with high impervious cover (pavement and buildings). This helps control flooding during storm events.

Preserving and restoring wetlands is essential to protecting New Jersey residents and communities from flooding, bolstering our economy, supporting fish and wildlife and our improving water quality. 



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## Got an idea for the ANJEC Report?

The ANJEC Report welcomes submissions or suggestions from our readers.

- Is there a topic or issue you'd like us to write about?
  - Have you recently completed a project that would be of interest to other local environmentalists?
  - Would you like to author an article in your area of expertise?
- If so, please let us hear from you. Your input is valuable. Just email the editor at [jlange@anjec.org](mailto:jlange@anjec.org).

# Funding for an EV-friendly state

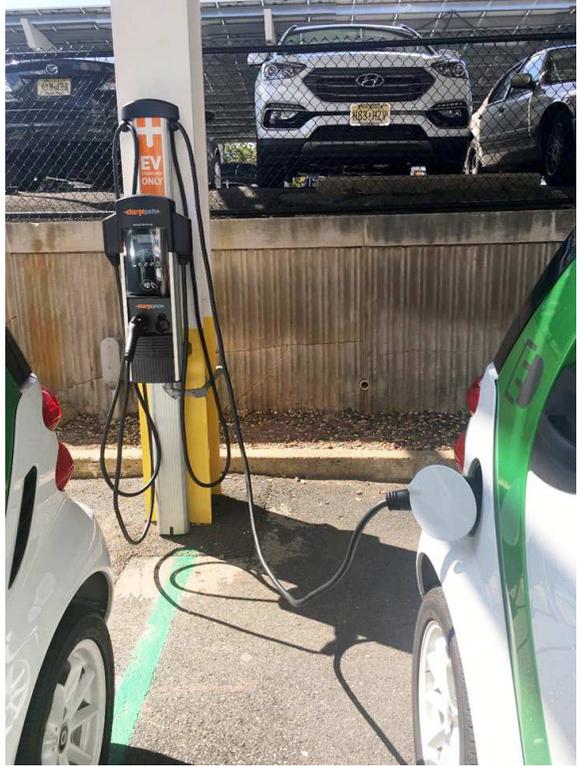
By Julie Lange Groth, ANJEC Report Editor

**A**dvancing New Jersey's commitment to clean transportation, Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) Commissioner Catherine R. McCabe announced on Feb. 28 that the Department intends to use \$11.2 million from the State's share of the federal Volkswagen Environmental Mitigation Trust settlement to install hundreds of electric vehicle (EV) charging outlets across the State and to purchase new electric NJ Transit buses for the City of Camden.

Of that amount, the DEP will use \$3.2 million to award grants for approximately 827 charging outlets at 533 EV charging stations under It Pay\$ to Plug In – New Jersey's Electric Vehicle Charging Grant Program. The program will more than double the 786 charging outlets New Jersey currently has at 322 public locations across the state.

Grantees in this first round of funding include 55 municipalities and counties, public parking lots and garages, apartment and condominium complexes, car-share services, hotels, private companies and nonprofit organizations. EV charging stations also will be installed at select NJ Transit commuter rail stations and at rest stops along the Atlantic City Expressway.

One focus of the funds will be on environmental justice for communities that are disproportionately impacted by pollution and resulting health impacts.



*An EV charging station in Secaucus*

New Jersey will be receiving a total of \$72.2 million from the Volkswagen settlement and the DEP is still evaluating more than \$400 million worth of project applications for additional awards that it expects to announce before the summer. 💧

## More information

- The Volkswagen settlement and the DEP's Beneficiary Mitigation Plan – [www.nj.gov/dep/vw/](http://www.nj.gov/dep/vw/)
- Info about the performance, availability and comfort of electric vehicles, as well as how to save money and reduce pollution – [www.drivegreen.nj.gov](http://www.drivegreen.nj.gov)

# Community science connects people with nature

By Isabella Castiglioni, ANJEC Project Director

If you're working in the environmental field, there's a good chance you've been interested in science or nature for a long time. But what sparked that interest? And how can you help foster an appreciation of the environment and science in others? The answers to these questions are connected to larger issues. On a basic, human level, spending time in nature can enrich anyone's life. And the more people understand science and the environment, the more likely we are to see smart decisions made in planning and policy. One strategy to answer these questions is through community science projects.

Community science, also called citizen science, seeks not only to collect data that can aid in research (and ultimately policy development and decision making), but also to help engage people in stewardship. If your organization is looking to foster a stewardship mentality among members of your community and begin a community science program, there are a few questions you should ask before you begin.

## What projects already exist in my area?

Linking up with an existing community science project is a smart way to get started. In New Jersey, we are fortunate to have countless opportunities for people to participate in community science.

- The New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) has several ongoing projects that exist throughout the State. Through the Division of Air Quality, groups wishing to study air pollution can borrow air samplers. School groups participating in air quality studies

in the past have learned about sources and types of air pollution, and then compared air pollution levels at different study sites in their community. To learn more, visit the DEP's Bureau of Air Monitoring Air Quality website at <http://njaqinow.net>

- The Coastal Keepers Program is a community-science-based monitoring program, capable of observing many different project types, including living shorelines, marsh restorations, dune and vegetated embankment projects, tidal flooding, marine debris, and other ecological efforts. The most common method used is photo-observation but volunteers are often able to use a variety of other tools. Coastal Keepers are monitoring several ongoing living shoreline projects, including one in Atlantic City, three in Brigantine, and one in Upper Township. They also have a pilot program monitoring flooding in Ocean City. The strength of this program lies with the volunteers and their local knowledge and eagerness to go out and observe, collect data and learn more about the local environment. The equipment used is minimal and most volunteers only need a camera or smartphone. To learn more, contact DEP employee Garrett "Matt" Warren at [Garrett.Warren@dep.nj.gov](mailto:Garrett.Warren@dep.nj.gov)
- The Watershed Ambassadors Program, an AmeriCorps program administered by the DEP, is a great resource for any organization wishing to do a sustainability project or water quality monitoring. The Watershed Ambassadors conduct visual and biological assessments; this includes

collecting, identifying, and counting macroinvertebrates (think of things like dragonflies and mayfly nymphs that live in the water). Watershed Ambassadors report their results to DEP; they also train other interested groups to do their own stream assessments. The stream assessments that watershed ambassadors perform follow a “Quality Assurance Project Plan,” or QAPP, ensuring that the data collected are reliable. Under the broad umbrella of stewardship, the Watershed Ambassadors organize projects like trash clean-ups, rain barrel workshops and rain garden installations. Often, there are data collected along with these projects. For example: how many tons of trash were collected? How many gallons of water were saved? While some of these projects go beyond the standard definition of community science, they provide an outlet for stewardship, and can become the basis for a community science project. To learn more about the DEP’s community water monitoring activities please visit: [www.state.nj.us/dep/wms/bears/comm\\_water\\_monitoring.htm](http://www.state.nj.us/dep/wms/bears/comm_water_monitoring.htm)



*Water quality monitoring by DEP*

counts, amphibian crossings and bat counts occur throughout the State, and may be hosted by county, state or national parks.

Consider your target audience. If possible, try to create opportunities for a diverse audience. For example, a bird count might be appropriate for parents with children, seniors, or people with limited mobility, especially if it can be held at one central location. A project that requires participants to go into streams or visit remote locations will be appropriate for a smaller range of people.

## Who will your participants be, and what sort of time commitment can they make?

When planning your community science project, consider what time commitment people will need to make in order to participate. Projects may be long-term, taking place over the course of a season or a few years; or they might be short-term, perhaps only requiring a few hours of volunteers’ time. Middle and high school classes, Scout groups, environmental clubs and volunteers from local organizations might be appropriate matches for long-term projects. If the goal is simply to engage as many people as possible, short-term projects might be more practical. Bird

## The takeaway

There are many ways to engage in community science. If starting your own project is too resource-intensive, you can check with your local park systems and the DEP to find out what projects already exist. Your efforts are going to be more fruitful (and hopefully less stressful) if you can help out with work that’s already been started. If you do choose to begin your own community science program, the US Environmental Protection Agency provides useful guidelines at [www.epa.gov/citizen-science](http://www.epa.gov/citizen-science).

Whether you choose to start simple and signal-boost an ongoing community science project, or you’d rather start a project all your own, you can enable people not only to care about the environment, but to participate in taking care of it. 💧

# Celebrating with friends

By Elizabeth Ritter, ANJEC Deputy Director

**A**NJEC kicked off our 50th Anniversary year with a gathering at the Somerset County Environmental Education Center. Attendees were treated to beautiful views of the Great Swamp and opportunity to tour the educational exhibits.

The program included storytelling by Nicolas Platt, Chair of the Great Swamp Watershed Association. Nic shared the story of the saving of the Great Swamp. In the 1960s, the Port Authority of NY/NJ wanted to create huge runways for jets that would be arriving

from Europe or California and needing to refuel in the New York area. Local residents wrote letters, called their legislators and were determined to fight the plans for the Jetport. Their victory marked the first time a Port Authority project was stopped.

The saving of the Great Swamp and designation of the area as a National Wildlife Refuge is often touted as the beginning of the environmental movement in New Jersey and was a huge victory for grass roots advocacy. One of the major players in the saving of the Swamp was Helen Fenske, who was instrumental in getting legislation passed to create municipal environmental commissions, followed by the founding of ANJEC.

*From left are Candace Ashmun, Jennifer Coffey and Patsy Wang-Iverson, East Amwell Environmental Commissioner.*

Ashmun. Candy shared a few stories of the early days at ANJEC, working on a shoe string budget from a card table set up in the offices of NJ Conservation Foundation. 🌊



*Nicolas Platt talks with Nancy Tindall, ANJEC Trustee.*



*A lively conversation about the Great Swamp*





# NJ's path to clean air and water: Footprints and milestones

By Julie Lange Groth, ANJEC Report Editor

At the time ANJEC was founded in 1969, laws protecting air and water had been the purview of individual states, and New Jersey wasn't doing a very good job of it. Foul odors from the refineries helped earn the New Jersey Turnpike its scandalous moniker as Cancer Alley, and the state's legacy of noxious landfills, industrial waste and polluted waterways added to its notorious reputation.

But a burgeoning environmental movement was sweeping across the nation. As the federal government took on primary responsibility for clean air and water during the 1970s, New Jersey became the third state to consolidate its environmental protection and conservation programs into a single, unified agency, the Department of Environmental

Protection, on April 22, 1970 – the nation's first official Earth day. Later that year, Congress established the US Environmental Protection Agency.

Today's version of the *Clean Air Act* was passed in 1970, and in 1972 growing public awareness and concern for controlling water pollution led to the law commonly known as the *Clean Water Act*.



Archive photo: Gov. Cahill with first NJ DEP Commissioner Richard Sullivan, ANJEC Vice President Helen Fenske and ANJEC Treasurer David F. Moore

# ANJEC: A force for nature since 1969

Friends of ANJEC understand that protecting our planet for future generations begins locally.

ANJEC's efforts to support local environmental action touch the entire state and beyond.

- The ANJEC Resource Center – providing information and support to hundreds of environmental commissions statewide
- ANJEC training – helping municipalities identify and prevent harmful environmental impacts of local decisions
- ANJEC Open Space Stewardship Grants – funding projects that provide habitat, protect trees, restore stream banks, reinforce dunes and repair trails
- ANJEC environmental policy partnerships – advocating for sound public policy to protect clean air and water

ANJEC friends realize that protecting our air and water isn't a spectator sport. They take action with their time and their wallets.

Thanks for being a friend of ANJEC!

For ideas on how you can help, check [www.anjec.org/support.htm](http://www.anjec.org/support.htm).



# Footprints

The actions by those who came before have led the way to a greener New Jersey.



1970

New Jersey's  
*Wetlands Act*  
is passed

## Milestones

Important environmental events have helped shape the NJ landscape and the health and quality of life of those who live here.

The New Jersey Water Policy and Supply Council gives environmental commissions the authority to review and comment upon stream encroachment applications.

1969

1970

1975

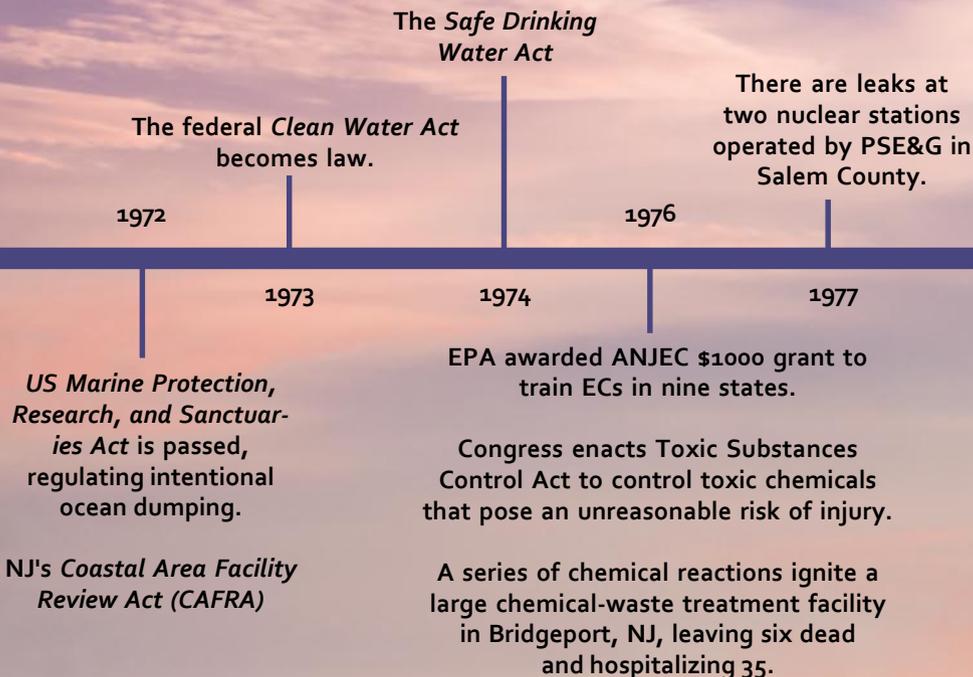
ANJEC publishes its first newsletter

1972

ANJEC holds its first statewide seminars on the role of environmental commission members and its first matching grant program to ECs for planning projects.

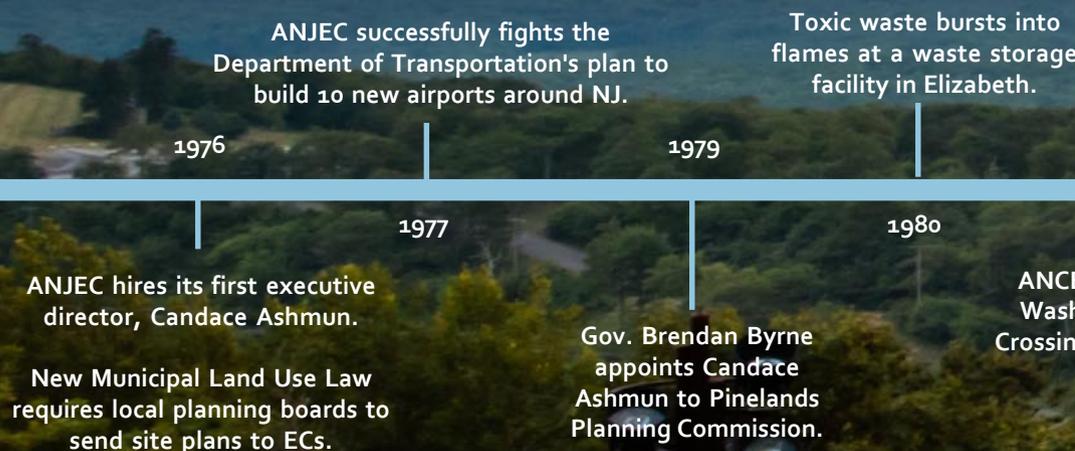
ANJEC publishes its first Environmental Consultants Directory, a 47-page booklet priced at \$3.

# Milestones (continued)



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# Footprints (continued)



View from High Point State Park Rabbitti

The federal Superfund program is created.

Congress passes the *Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA or Superfund)* and creates a Trust Fund.

New Jersey Board of Public Utilities establishes the Office of Clean Energy to administer New Jersey's Clean Energy Program.

Gov. Kean strengthens *NJ Freshwater Wetlands Protection Act*.

*Highlands Water Protection and Planning Act* is passed.

1980

1986

1987

1997

2003

2004

2005

1980

NJ enacts *State Planning Act*.

NJ enacts Energy Master Plan.

NJ joins with six Northeastern states to form the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI).



ANJEC announces first Smart Growth Planning Grants for municipalities.

ANJEC launches environmental justice initiative.

ANJEC launches...

1993

2000

2005

ANJEC opens Washington's office at its new location.

An epidemiological study finds an association between industrial contamination of well water in Toms River and the development of leukemia in girls.

2001

2002



ANJEC organizes South Jersey Bayshore Coalition.

Gov. John Corzine signs *Global Warming Response Act* setting statewide goals to fight climate change.

NJ voters pass constitutional amendment securing term, sustainable future, open space, farmland, historic preservation.

NJ passes one of the most restrictive fertilizer standards in the nation for nitrogen and phosphorus content.

2005

2010

2012

2007

2011

2014

with six other eastern states to the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI).

The Christie Administration passes the development-friendly Time of Decision Rule and reduces the required 300-foot buffer on C1 streams.

Superstorm Sandy leaves 6.2 million cubic yards of debris in its wake, remakes parts of the NJ coastline and causes tens of billions of dollars in damages.

Gov. Christie withdraws NJ from the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI) and passes the *Permit Extension Act*.

ANJEC develops guidelines for solar siting.



2011

2013

2010

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ey  
tion.

The 4,000-acre Candace McKee Ashmun Preserve in the NJ Pine Barrens is dedicated.

FEMA begins releasing updated flood maps considering the expected impacts of climate change.

ANJEC joins the Delaware River Watershed Initiative to protect the water supply in the Kirkwood-Cohansey aquifer and the NJ Highlands.

constitutional  
securing long-  
le funding for  
armland and  
ervation.

State legislators vote to install  
electric vehicle charging stations  
on toll roads in NJ.

EPA announces agreement with  
Port Authority of NY/NC to reduce  
truck idling at Port of Newark.

NJ Gov. Phil  
Murphy moves  
to rejoin RGGL.

2018

2015

2017

2019



New Jersey becomes first state to  
regulate dangerous chemical  
PFNA in drinking water. State  
passes new Water Supply Plan,  
the first update since 1996.



2017

People's Climate March in NYC draws tens of  
thousands of concerned citizens.

2014



ANJEC joins ChargeVC,  
a coalition to electrify  
transportation in NJ.

Three NJ municipalities pass  
ordinances or bans on plastic  
pollution (Rahway, Maplewood  
and Secaucus) followed by  
dozens more in 2018 and 2019.



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# Get in the Loop!

## *A new way to shop sustainably*

By Lyle Landon, ANJEC Development Director

**H**ang onto your hats and get ready to step into the future! On May 21, a revolutionary shopping system called Loop™ from TerraCycle will launch in New York State, New Jersey and Pennsylvania. Shoppers will be able to responsibly purchase some of the most popular, big-name-brand consumer products in specially designed durable, reusable or fully recyclable packaging. When empty, the shopper will simply place the packaging in a Loop Tote and be picked up directly from their home.

Loop's team of scientists has developed custom cleaning technologies so that product packaging can be safely reused. Available brands include Pantene, Tide, Cascade, Crest, Ariel, Febreze, Oral B, Gillette, Venus, Pampers and Always from P&G.

If you're thinking, "Wait....I'm returning old tooth brushes and used razors?" The answer is yes, any content which is recoverable, will be either recycled or reused. Nestles says that Haagen-Dazs is debuting a reusable, stainless steel, double-walled ice cream container with the launch of the service. Unilever's Dove, Axe, Degree, REN Clean Skincare, Hellmann's, Love Beauty and Planet, Love Home and Planet, and Seventh Generation products will be available as well as products from Mars Petcare, the Clorox Company, BIC, The Body Shop and others.



*A Loop pickup container*

TerraCycle, an international recycling leader headquartered in Trenton, is launching Loop as an initiative to change the world's reliance on single-use packaging. Loop offers a convenient and enhanced circular solution to consumers while securing meaningful environmental benefits. This approach to shopping was made possible as a result of innovation investments made by the founding partners and their commitment to developing more circular supply chains, from package design to manufacturing through consumer use.

Alan Jope, CEO of Unilever said, "We want to put an end to the current 'take-make-dispose' culture and are committed to taking big steps towards designing our products for reuse. We're proud to be a founding partner of Loop, which will deliver our much-loved brands in packaging, which is truly circular by design." Packaging is made from materials like alloys, glass and engineered plastics.

TerraCycle's mission is to eliminate the idea of waste and they are operating nationally across 21 countries and partnering with retailers, cities and facilities

to recycle products, from dirty diapers to cigarette butts, that would otherwise end up being landfilled or incinerated. They are also working with leading consumer product companies to integrate hard-to-recycle waste streams, such as ocean, plastic into their products and packaging. TerraCycle has won over 200 awards for sustainability and has donated over \$25 million to schools and charities since its founding fifteen years ago.

## Get involved

East Amwell Environmental Commission has been participating in a number of TerraCycle's ongoing recycling programs, so you don't have to wait until May 21 to become involved. Here are two helpful links:

- [www.terracycle.com](http://www.terracycle.com)
- [www.eastamwelltownship.com/DocumentCenter/View/353/Recycling-Depot-Collections-List---Jan-2019?bidId=](http://www.eastamwelltownship.com/DocumentCenter/View/353/Recycling-Depot-Collections-List---Jan-2019?bidId=)

# Honoring a champion of the Pines

*In December, the Pinelands Commission paid tribute to one of its original members for her longtime dedication and decades of service by unveiling the new Candace McKee Ashmun Education Center in Pemberton Township. Candy has served on the 15-member commission since its founding in 1979 and is the last original commissioner still serving. She was also ANJEC's first executive director.*



*New Jersey Conservation Foundation Executive Director Michele Byers, former Pinelands Commissioner Leslie Ficcgaglia, ANJEC's original Executive Director and Pinelands Commissioner Candace Ashmun, Ed Lloyd, Pinelands Commissioner and Director of the Environmental Law Clinic at Columbia Law School, and Pinelands Commissioner Mark Lobauer at the dedication of the Candace McKee Ashmun Education Center.*

# Saving water is on display

By **Steven E. Yergeau**, Agriculture & Natural Resources Agent - Ocean & Atlantic Counties, Rutgers Cooperative Extension of Ocean County

With over nine million people living in New Jersey and each resident using 70 gallons of water per day, the opportunity exists to help save part of the 630 million gallons used in daily activities. Rutgers Cooperative Extension (RCE) of Ocean County has created a water conservation display for use throughout southern New Jersey to teach residents about saving water.

The "Save Water! Every Drop Counts!" display consists of a digital picture frame, playing a slideshow, securely mounted onto a nonfunctional rain barrel. The slideshow suggests actions people can do every day to save water at home. A flyer accompanies the display so that people who view it can take the information home (<https://tinyurl.com/waterconserveflyer>).

To ensure as many people as possible see the display, RCE collaborated with municipalities in Ocean and Atlantic Counties for locations to exhibit the displays. As an incentive for municipalities, we designed the displays to fulfill the public outreach

and education requirements for their Municipal Stormwater General Permits as well as earn Sustainable Jersey certification points for the Water Conservation Education Program action item.

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

These displays show how outreach can be maximized when designed to achieve multiple goals that consider many users' needs. For example, the display hosted by the Brigantine Green Team helped promote a rain barrel workshop held last July. The display was part of the city's weekly farmers market with many people attending both the workshop and market. The Green Team plans to use both the workshop and display in their Sustainable Jersey certification. The displays have been exhibited throughout Ocean, Atlantic and Cape May Counties.

The Phillip Alampi Fund of the Department of Agriculture and Natural Resources provided funding for this project and the author gratefully acknowledges their support. 🌱



*Water conservation display at Seaside Borough Park.*

Steve Yergeau

## More information

For anyone interested in building a similar display, a parts list can be found at <http://ocean.njaes.rutgers.edu/ag/save-water.html>. If you are in Ocean or Atlantic Counties and would like the display for your town, please contact Steve Yergeau at [yergeau@njaes.rutgers.edu](mailto:yergeau@njaes.rutgers.edu).

# Happy retirement to a rare talent!

By **Elliott Ruga**, Director of Policy & Communications,  
New Jersey Highlands Coalition

**H**ow many of you have had the good fortune to be in the audience for a talk or workshop by Dave Peifer? It's a good place to discover the rare talents Dave has, and a talent that will surely be missed in the environmental community in New Jersey and beyond now that Dave is retiring from active duty. Dave is a masterful teller of engaging stories, *always*. Add to that rare ability the fact that I haven't yet found a subject under the sun that Dave can't speak intelligently about. In his amiable fashion Dave is a Renaissance man.

He has been an active member of the New Jersey Highlands Coalition's Policy Committee for the twelve years I have been on the Coalition's staff. The Committee meets monthly to discuss the looming threats to the natural and cultural resources of the Highlands and to craft appropriate responses. By looking at a problem from an angle no one else had considered, or doing the research no one else had bothered with, Dave has often halted a discussion with unexpected insights.

A few months ago we were celebrating our success in reversing the Christie Administration's weakening of the Highlands septic density provisions. Capping a three-year campaign, the Legislature

employed a rarely used provision of the New Jersey Constitution to invalidate the rule change. As we were reviewing the various components of the campaign, Dave shook his head and stated, "Nothing's changed."

We all turned to Dave.

"Nothing's changed," Dave repeated. He continued, "The old rule is still on the books; the weaker provisions still apply if anyone were to apply for a permit." Dave had discovered that the official online version of New Jersey's Administrative Code still had the Christie-era septic density provisions. Unless corrected, permits could be approved for developments at four times the density intended by the Legislature.

After a scurry of discussions with Legislators, the Governor's office and senior Department of Environmental Protection officials, DEP Commissioner Catherine McCabe issued the Administrative Order that officially corrected the Administrative Code. And thanks to Dave, before any development permits were applied for.

## The price of greatness

Dave's wisdoms, however, come at some cost. They are meted out at a single speed, Dave's speed. This can be maddening when you are rushed, or your time is limited, because Dave can veer off your intended course into what appear to be diversions.



*David Peifer,  
ANJEC Project Director, retired*

I've learned to be patient in these instances, because that's how a truly fertile mind operates – this is how Dave gets to perspectives that most of us never arrive at. This is Dave at his best, a brilliant thinker.

As Dave sets out to tell a story, the corners of his mouth upturn into a smile and his eyes glint sharply. I've seen this look many times, whether he's providing testimony at an agency hearing, or presenting an ANJEC sponsored public workshop, or when knocking elbows at a bar. Dave is very aware he has you in the palm of his hand and you are about to be taken for a ride. After these 12 years of my association with Dave Peifer, I know that when the ride is over, I will be the wiser for it. 🌊

## 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! 🌊

*Highlands Project Director David Peifer started his career at ANJEC in the 1970s and returned in 2006, retiring in February after 13 years at ANJEC. He will be greatly missed.*



## ANJEC training is an important benefit of membership

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- discounted fees for other outstanding programs, including our annual Environmental Congress and customized Road Shows on topics of your choice, delivered at your location.

Members also receive deep discounts on ANJEC Resource Papers and other scholarly publications. ANJEC membership is a bargain for any town. Find out more at [www.anjec.org/EnvCommMember.htm](http://www.anjec.org/EnvCommMember.htm). 🌊

# *Everywhere a song and a celebration:* **Greening your events**

By **Sheila Baker Gujral**, ANJEC Resource Center

**T**his summer marks the 50th anniversary of Woodstock. For many, the image of that festival is not necessarily one of peace, love, and togetherness – it's an image of almost half a million people in a field with inadequate facilities, tromping in the mud, trashing Max Yasgur's farm, and thousands of cars abandoned all over the area as hordes of people try to get to a free concert.

Festival planning has thankfully come a long way and festival promoters have made great strides in recent years to reduce and minimize the impacts of their events.

Outdoor events can have many impacts, from large amounts of waste, problems with transportation of people and goods to and from the event and electricity use to damaged or overused lands. There are economic, social, and environmental impacts (the "triple bottom line") which should be addressed throughout the planning process.

Reducing the environmental impact can improve the economic impact (using fewer resources can mean reducing expenses) and the social impact (over 80 percent of music fans think noise, waste and traffic have a negative impact on the festival experience – and nearly half say they would pay more for greener events).<sup>1</sup> Research has found that the biggest motivator for greening festivals is to gain competitive advantage, improve the festival image and respond to demands from the supply chain, corporations, and consumers.

## **Where to begin**

There are a variety of ways to green your outdoor event. The first thing to do is to make the commitment to do so and make

a plan. Even though your entire group will be involved in making the occasion more environmentally friendly, it is best to designate a sustainability coordinator to make sure things are planned properly. This person will also be present at the event to ensure that everything goes according to plan.

## **Outreach and communication**

A lot of outreach and communication can be done electronically, so use an existing website or set one up to handle online registration, and advertise electronically via email and social media. For a recurring event, consider having physical materials (banners, signs) that require only a date change. If you do print, use recycled paper (100 percent post-consumer content is best), soy-based ink, chlorine-free paper, and double-sided printing whenever it makes sense. Make sure you promote your sustainability commitment with a statement at the bottom of emails, on your website, etc.

Signage is an important part of the communications mix. Post signs at the event regarding your sustainable food and waste prevention efforts, and make announcements about your sustainability goals during the program.

Invite attendees to help make your event more sustainable by spelling out concrete actions they can take, like recycling properly, or refilling drink containers instead of throwing them out.

Set up a booth devoted to informing attendees about your green initiatives. If using name badges, choose the reusable kind. If you have a lot of information to

distribute, consider housing it on your website for download or providing it to attendees on USB drives.

And market your success. If you are able, tell your participants and vendors how much waste was kept out of the landfill or incinerator.

## Merchandise/concessions

The majority of consumption happens at the merchandise and concession stands. Make sure you have a vendor contract that reflects your sustainability goals and spells out specifically what is expected. Instruct vendors not to bring anything to the fair that is not recyclable and to prohibit balloons, polystyrene/Styrofoam and plastic straws. Ask vendors to refrain from using any plastic and to avoid generating electricity. Require that all vendors selling products must use minimal, environmentally responsible packaging.

To avoid using single-use dishes and cutlery, consider serving only finger foods or handheld fare, such as tacos or sandwiches. Offer vegan or vegetarian selections, which have a smaller carbon footprint. Use bulk containers for condiments and sides, instead of individually wrapped items. Make arrangements to donate usable leftovers to a food bank or shelter. Serve drinks in reusable cups/glasses if possible. Offer a discount to attendees who bring their own beverage containers. At the SeaHearNow festival in Asbury Park, reusable bottles were on sale (or you could bring your own) and free water bottle filling stations were available so attendees could easily forego plastic water bottles.

## Zero waste

At Folsom Field in Boulder, CO, the focus is on having only recyclable or

compostable items sold at the stadium. To ensure proper waste disposal, student volunteers at 30 stations instruct attendees how to dispose of waste correctly. This strategy of having volunteers engage the public about waste and recycling has also been seen at Austin City Limits in Texas and at the SeaHearNow Festival in our beloved Asbury Park, NJ. In fact, a SeaHearNow staff member bragged that her staff shirt sported the “Austin City Limits” name in addition to the “SeaHearNow” logo, because they repurpose leftover staff t-shirts.

At both of those festivals, attendees can volunteer for the Rock and Recycle program. Volunteers receive a large clear bag for collecting recyclables at the event, and once the bag is filled, it can be redeemed for a festival t-shirt (and the chance to win more). In addition, volunteers

are encouraged to help in the International Coastal Cleanup (big beach cleanup) a week or two prior to the festival. In return, they receive a reusable festival bag and the chance to win general admission tickets.

To maximize recycling at your event, place recycling bins next to garbage bins (and compost bins if you’re composting). Clearly marked containers (and volunteers if possible) will help minimize contamination of recycling. Use clear plastic bags to line recycling bins to help reduce contamination. If disposable plates, cups, etc. are absolutely required, use products made from compostable material (BPI-certified).<sup>2</sup> Make recycling announcements throughout the day and make sure you have clear and adequate signage, including having recycling/composting stations reflected on



<sup>1</sup> Icarus Foundation, Green Festivals and Events Guide

<sup>2</sup> <https://bpiworld.org/CertifiedCompostable>

any maps of the area. Again, volunteers both increase awareness and help minimize contamination.

## Transportation and energy

The larger the event, the more likely you will have people traveling long distances. This is a big chunk of event emissions. For starters, schedule the event so attendees can avoid peak commuting times (avoid travel times between 7:30 and 9 am and 4:30 and 6 pm Monday – Friday). Also, choose a location that can take advantage of public transportation. Provide bike parking for those riding bicycles. If attendees are paying for parking, consider tiered charges depending on whether people are carpooling or not. At the Lightning in a Bottle festival in California, their strategy to reduce transportation impact was to assess a \$30 surcharge for cars with only one passenger. If flying people in for your event, purchase carbon offsets for air travel. Remind vendors not to idle their cars/trucks/vans.

When possible, hold your event outdoors to take advantage of natural lighting. Use energy efficient audio/visual equipment and turn off equipment that is not in use.

Just say no to generators. Make it clear to your vendors that they cannot use gas-fueled generators. They are free to use an alternative energy source, such as a solar generator. Ice chests can work well to cool down drinks.

## Exhibits and displays

For vendors, enforce a “pack-in, pack-out” policy to make sure they leave with everything they brought and don’t leave excessive waste. Suggest to vendors that they reduce the use of paper by foregoing handouts and consider the environmental impact of giveaway items. Materials for decorations and displays should be reusable.

## Post-event

Do a waste audit to learn how much was recycled and how much went to the landfill or the incinerator. It will give you something to measure against for the next

event. Consider an exit poll/survey/evaluation to get attendees’ opinions and suggestions. Recognize exhibitors/vendors who demonstrated outstanding environmental stewardship. Write a press release to share your sustainability efforts and results as part of your larger event. If it’s a big festival, you can apply to A Greener Festival ([agreenerfestival.com](http://agreenerfestival.com)) for some international recognition. And always, as in everything you do, remember to thank your staff and volunteers, who help you to achieve your success.

Having a large community event is a big undertaking with a huge impact. Taking care of these details will help to minimize the environmental impact while also educating your attendees about sustainability initiatives. They will learn how all of these steps that help to reduce waste and consumption have a positive impact on the environment. As Crosby Stills & Nash sang in Joni Mitchell’s song Woodstock,

*“We are stardust, we are golden  
We are billion year old carbon  
And we’ve got to get ourselves  
back to the garden.”* 🌱

## For more information

- Helping Festivals and Events around the world to be more Environmentally Sustainable – [www.agreenerfestival.com/](http://www.agreenerfestival.com/)
- A Practice Guide for Sustainable Campus Events – [https://sustainable.stanford.edu/sites/default/files/Stanford\\_green\\_event\\_guidelines.pdf](https://sustainable.stanford.edu/sites/default/files/Stanford_green_event_guidelines.pdf)
- Greening The Festival Industry: Using the Triple Bottom Line Approach to Promote Sustainability in Music Events – [https://scholar.colorado.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1102&context=honr\\_theses](https://scholar.colorado.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1102&context=honr_theses)
- Icarus Green Festivals and Events Guide – <https://ecoclub.com/library/epapers/15.pdf>

# New law could mean cleaner air at the beach

By **Dan Kurela**, Liberty Township Environmental Commission

**Y**ou just finished a long run at your local park and you're basking in that exhausted, but exhilarated, feeling. You relax and take in a long, deep breath of fresh (choke, gasp) second hand smoke.

These days have come to an end thanks to the *NJ Smoke Free Air Act (S2534) (SFAA)* enacted in January, banning smoking and vapor products not only in New Jersey state parks and beaches, but also extending to county and municipal parks and beaches.

Scant attention has been focused on this new law, but as warmer weather draws people to municipal, county, and state beaches, parks and forests, expect greater awareness. You may be surprised that your town council or committee is unaware of this law, even though noncompliance can result in violations brought upon those in charge of local beaches and parks. The law authorizes the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), towns and counties to take measures to educate the public about the smoking ban and associated penalties, which can be \$250 for a first offense, \$500 for a second offense, and \$1,000 for each subsequent offense.

Environmental Commissions can help by using their most powerful and effective tools -- the written and spoken word. Inform your town about the new *SFAA*. Ensure your town posts the required no smoking signs at the entrances to parks and beaches. Reach out on the municipal website and social media to your neighbors, friends, and residents.

Cigarette smoking has decreased in the last few decades, but use of electronic

smoking devices by students has increased dramatically. Action can help keep our air cleaner and our parks and beaches more enjoyable, while helping to reduce the number of smokers in a new generation. 

## More information

New Jersey's *SFAA* - [www.njleg.state.nj.us/2018/Bills/PL18/64\\_.PDF](http://www.njleg.state.nj.us/2018/Bills/PL18/64_.PDF)



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Watch the ANJEC website ([www.anjec.org](http://www.anjec.org)) for details

**Save the dates**

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Most sails depart from the Alpine Boat Basin.

Entertainment, times and prices vary.

Watch the ANJEC web site ([www.anjec.org](http://www.anjec.org)) for times, starting points and destinations.

To sign up for a specific sail, email ANJEC at [info@anjec.org](mailto:info@anjec.org) or call 973.539.7547.



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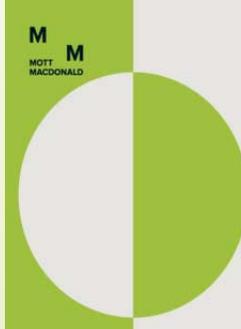
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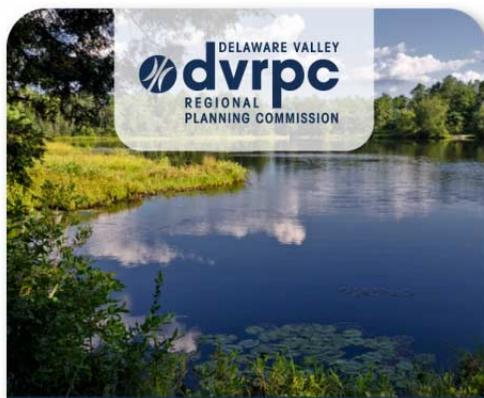
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## Special 50th Anniversary Timeline (see center spread)