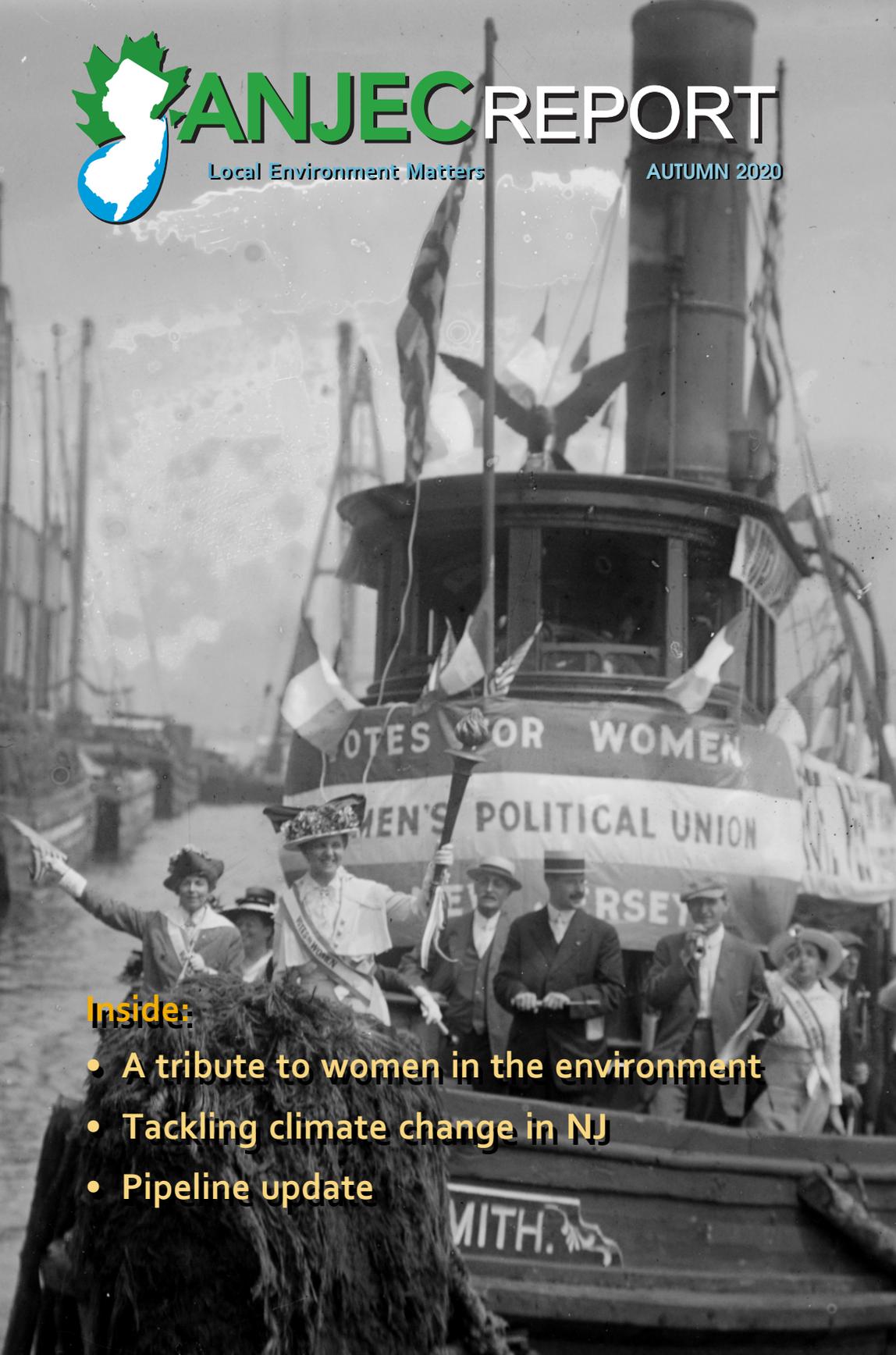




ANJEC REPORT

Local Environment Matters

AUTUMN 2020



Inside:

- A tribute to women in the environment
- Tackling climate change in NJ
- Pipeline update



Director's Report

Women's voices matter

In 1848, 172 years ago, women gathered in Seneca Falls, New York for the first ever Women's Rights Convention, where Elizabeth Cady Stanton declared that "all men and WOMEN are created equal." Three years later, Sojourner Truth commanded delegates' attention with her historic speech, *Ain't I a Woman*, at the third Women's Rights Convention in Akron, Ohio, in 1851. "Where there is so much racket there must be something out of kilter," she declared.

Neither Stanton nor Truth would live to see women win the first imperfect battle for the right to vote in 1919 or for mostly white women to cast their first votes in 1920. Stanton and her writing and advocacy partner, Susan B. Anthony, foresaw the long and bloody struggle for the right to vote when they referred to the crusade as "not for ourselves alone."

It would take another 45 long years before Black women were legally guaranteed the right to vote in the *Voting Rights Act of 1965*. Yet today, in 2020, 100 years after the first women gained the right to start voting, and we are witness to the first Black and South Asian woman to run on a major party ticket, in many, many ways we are still struggling for access to free and fair voting and elections.

This should be a joyous centennial celebration, but instead, we will multi-task and also continue the long embattled tradition of fighting to have our voices heard. As I write, news of how New Jersey

will be holding the general elections on November 3 amidst the Covid-19 pandemic is just breaking with many more details to come. ANJEC is proud to have forged a partnership with the League of Women Voters this year to disseminate information on voter registration and casting ballots.

What we do know at this moment is that the **Deadline for Voter Registration in New Jersey is October 13**, but given the challenges facing the United States Post Office, sooner is better. New Jersey does not have online voter registration. To register to vote in the Garden State, you must print your county registration form and mail it to your County Commission of Registration. Forms can be found at: www.state.nj.us/state/elections/voter-registration.shtml or by searching "New Jersey voter registration" and clicking on the link for the New Jersey Department of Elections and then navigating to your county. (Page 25)

In this issue, we set out to celebrate the accomplishments of women in the environmental field, mostly in New Jersey, and some with national and international impact. From Greta Thunberg to our recently and dearly departed Candy Ashmun we want to be sure to remember the contributions of women in the past 100 years. These women certainly worked "not for themselves alone." It is our solemn privilege and obligation to carry that tradition forward.

Not for ourselves alone

Many of the contributions of the women highlighted in this issue were made possible because government priorities changed when women started voting. Policies central to health, family, and inevitably environment rose with the women's votes. Representation matters.

ANJEC in partnership with the League of Women Voters will continue to post up-to-date voting information on our social media channels, website, emails, and throughout the 47th annual Environmental Congress held virtually for the entire month of October. We invite you to join us in encouraging others to register to vote and to vote for candidates that support environmental protection and restoration on November 3rd. We ask you to vote not just for this generation alone, but for the next as well.


Jennifer M. Coffey
Executive Director

In this issue:

- 2** Director's Report
- 4** 10 "sheroes" of the environment
- 8** Candace McKee Ashmun Memorial Fund
- 9** New Jersey's groundbreaking environmental justice bill passes state Legislature
- 11** Acting Locally
- 14** Addressing climate change in NJ
- 18** NJ pipeline update: Un-needed fossil fuel projects on shaky ground
- 20** Electrifying buses and trucks – big wheels and big deals
- 22** Important information for CSO communities about Long Term Control Plans
- 25** ANJEC'S 47th Annual Environmental Congress
- 25** Make a plan to vote
- 26** Environmental Commissions overcoming pandemic challenges
- 27** A tool for local nonpoint source pollution accountability

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ANJEC REPORT
Local Environment Matters

Vol. 40 / No. 4 AUTUMN 2020

565 MUNICIPALITIES ONE ENVIRONMENT

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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On the cover: During the summer of 1915, suffragists in New Jersey, New York, and Pennsylvania carried the Torch of Liberty to demonstrations. In August, the Torch went by tugboat across the Hudson River to meet in mid-stream, where it was passed to Mina Van Winkle, president of the Women's Political Union of New Jersey.

10 “sheroes” of the environment

By **Cheryl Reardon** and **Randi Rothmel**, ANJEC Project Directors, and **Julie Lange Groth**, ANJEC Report Editor

This year marks 100 years of women’s suffrage in the United States. Over the past decades, having a voice in self-governance has empowered women to step into leadership roles and make enormous strides in all walks of life, including the environment.

When ANJEC set out to honor women who have made the greatest difference in protecting the environment, choosing just 10 became a daunting task. We uncovered so many remarkable achievements by so many courageous, clever and committed female pioneers, from saving threatened resources to getting new laws passed, conducting groundbreaking research, authoring game-changing books, founding entire movements and even winning the Nobel Peace Prize!

The cumulative impact of women’s efforts on the world’s natural resources and inhabitants is immense and impossible to calculate – far too many to enumerate in these pages! So we did our best to choose just 10. Here they are, our top ten women environmental pioneers.

Erin Brockovich

(1960 – present) didn’t set out to become a consumer advocate and environmental activist when she took a job working as a file clerk at a law firm. Then she uncovered

documents linking drinking water contaminated by hexavalent chromium to the Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E). Despite not having a law degree, she was instrumental in building a case against PG&E in which more than 600 residents of Hinkley, California, filed a lawsuit in 1993 resulting in a \$333 million settlement. Her story, made famous in a 2000 film, led to continued advocacy on other anti-pollution lawsuits. Her company, Brockovich Research & Consulting, partnering with Google, curates a crowd-sourced map to track possible environmental health hazards around the world. Brockovich says she has identified 1,700 communities in the US



alone where residents are concerned about environmental contamination. “There’s a very fundamental basic value system that I think America was built upon and that’s mutual respect, honor, integrity and concern for our environment and the right to clean water,” she said. “And we have moved away from it.”

Rachel Carson (1907 – 1964) is widely known for her landmark book, ***Silent Spring***, documenting the adverse environmental effects caused by the indiscriminate use of pesticides. She began as a marine biologist

studying at the Woods Hole Marine Biological Laboratory and received her MA in zoology from Johns Hopkins University. Working at the US Fish and Wildlife Service, she published numerous scientific articles on conservation and natural resources, rising to



Editor-in-Chief. As a literary career ensued, she turned her research into books. *Silent Spring* (1962) sounded a warning to the public about the long-term effects of chemical exposure and was instrumental in creating a presidential commission and the banning of DDT. In Carson's words, "For the first time in the history of the world, every human being is now subjected to contact with dangerous chemicals, from the moment of conception until death."

Marjory Stoneman Douglas (1890 – 1998) dedicated her life to preserving the Florida Everglades, once considered a worthless swamp to be drained and developed. Her 1947 best seller, *The Everglades: River of Grass*, raised America's consciousness of the importance of protecting this ecosystem as a national park. The Friends of the Everglades, a conservation organization she founded, is still active today. As an editor at her father's newspaper, now *The Miami Herald*, she drew awareness to the problem of Florida's rapid commercial development. She also championed various social causes for women, including the ratification of the Women's Suffrage Amendment. Awarding Douglas the Presidential Medal of Honor in 1993, President Clinton said, "Long before there was an Earth Day, Mrs. Douglas was a passionate steward of our nation's natural resources, and particularly her Florida Everglades."



Dian Fossey (1932 – 1985) was one of the foremost primatologists in the world and a member of the "Trimates," a group of prominent female scientists sent by



anthropologist Louis Leakey to study great apes in their natural habitat. During her time in Rwanda, she actively supported conservation efforts, opposed poaching and tourism in wildlife habitats, and raised awareness for protecting mountain gorilla groups. Her book, *Gorillas in the Mist*, adapted into a film, chronicles her studies at the Karisoke Research Center, which she founded. Since Fossey's brutal murder in 1985, the center has expanded its research of the region, training the next generation of conservationists. She left us with these words, "Conservation of any endangered species must begin with stringent efforts to protect its natural habitat by the enforcement of rigid legislation against human encroachment into parks and other game sanctuaries."

Lois Gibbs (1951 – present) became an advocate for human rights and environmental justice in 1978, when she discovered her son's elementary school and neighboring blue-collar community were built on a toxic waste dump. Through a grassroots effort – the Love Canal Homeowners Association – residents battled against Occidental Chemical, local, state and federal government until 900 families were relocated. Their efforts led to signing the US Environmental Protection Agency's *Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act (Superfund)* to locate and clean up toxic waste sites. Founder of the Center for Health, Environment and Justice, Gibbs continues to assist community groups with organization, technical and general information. As her work has demonstrated, "Average people and the average community can change the world. You can do it just based on common sense, determination, persistence and patience."



Jane Goodall (1934 – present) while visiting a friend in Kenya in 1960, met the anthropologist Louis Leakey who hired her to study chimpanzees in the wild, beginning her long-term study in the Gombe Stream National Park.



Numerous discoveries, such as observing chimpanzees making tools for gathering food, took the scientific world by storm, redefining the relationship between humans and animals. In 1977, she founded the Jane Goodall Institute in support of her research and for the protection of chim-

panzee habitat. She continues to this day as an activist on behalf of animal welfare and conservation causes, because as Jane Goodall exclaims, “Only if we understand, will we care. Only if we care, will we help. Only if we help, shall all be saved.”

Winona LaDuke (1959 – present) is a member of the Mississippi Band Anishinaabeg and a voice for Native American economic and environmental concerns. At 18, she was the youngest person to speak to the



NJ’s great women of the environment

New Jersey has more than its share of accomplished, dedicated women leading the charge to protect the natural resources throughout the State. For example, it’s hard to imagine the environmental movement in NJ without

Candace Ashmun (1924 – 2020), ANJEC’s first executive director and considered by many to be the Godmother of the Pines, having been a member of the state Pinelands Commission since its founding in 1979.



She also served on the State Planning Commission and was a longtime volunteer for New Jersey Conservation Foundation.

Helen Fenske (1922 – 2007) led the citizens’ campaign in the late 1950s and early 1960s that thwarted the plans of the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey to build a metropolitan jetport in the Great Swamp and helped create the Great Swamp National Wildlife Refuge that was dedicated in 1964. She was also instrumental in getting legislation passed to enable municipalities to form environmental commissions.



While still in office as our State’s first female governor, **Christine Todd Whitman** was appointed Administrator of the US Environmental Protection Agency. And Lisa Jackson, who served as Commissioner of NJ’s Department of Environ-



United Nations about Native American Issues. She founded the White Earth Land Recovery Project focusing on recovery, preservation, and restoration of land on the White Earth Reservation. As Executive Director of Honor the Earth, she works with indigenous communities on environmental justice, renewable energy, climate change, sustainable development and food sovereignty. Fighting for water rights, she actively protested the Dakota Access and Keystone XL pipeline. Winona LaDuke warns, "I see a lot of damage to Mother Earth. I see water being taken from creeks where water belongs to animals, not to oil companies."

Wangari Maathai (1940 – 2011) was a renowned Kenyan social, environmental, and political activist and the first African woman to win the Nobel Peace Prize. In 1977, after being introduced to the idea of planting trees, she founded the grassroots Green Belt Movement to assist women planting trees on farms, schools and churches conserving the environment and improving their quality of life. The Movement expanded to other African countries as the Pan African Green Belt Network. Over 30



mental Protection from 2006 to 2008, became the first African-American appointed to serve as Administrator of the United States Environmental Protection Agency, a position she held from 2009 to 2013.

More great NJ women environmentalists

- Sandy Batty, ANJEC Executive Director from 2002 till 2014
- Ana Baptista, Board Member, NJ Environmental Justice Alliance, and Earth Justice clean air ambassador
- Michele Byers, Executive Director, NJ Conservation Foundation
- Sally Dudley, (1939 – 2016), ANJEC's Executive Director from 1999 to 2014, and Harding Township's first female mayor
- Cindy Ehrenclou, Executive Director, Raritan Headwaters Association
- Heather Fenyk, Ph.D., Board President, Lower Raritan Watershed Partnership
- Jane Galetto, Board President, Citizens United to Protect the Maurice River and Its Tributaries
- Amy Goldsmith, State Director, Clean Water Action

- Marie Curtis, Former League of Women Voters of NJ lobbyist and Co-president, LWV Township of Ocean
- Debbie Mans, Former Deputy Commissioner, NJ Department of Environmental Protection
- Catherine McCabe, Commissioner, NJ Department of Environmental Protection
- Kelly Mooij, Deputy Director, NJ Clean Energy Program, Board of Public Utilities
- Christine Nolan, Executive Director, South Jersey Land & Water Trust
- Lisa J. Plevin Executive Director, NJ Highlands Council and former Regional Director, EPA
- Jaclyn Rhoads, Ph.D., Assistant Executive Director, Pinelands Preservation Alliance
- Barbara Rich, Fierce open space advocate and longtime member of the Moorestown Environmental Advisory Committee
- Julia Somers, Executive Director, NJ Highlands Coalition
- Cindy Zipf, Executive Director, Clean Ocean Action

million trees have been planted in 30 years. Elected to the Kenyan parliament in 2002, she was appointed Assistant Minister for Environment, Natural Resources and Wildlife. Wangari Maathai's vision was clear, "We owe it to ourselves and to the next generation to conserve the environment so that we can bequeath our children a sustainable world that benefits all."

Margaret (Mardy)

Murie (1902 – 2003) is known as the Grandmother of the Conservation Movement. She worked tirelessly alongside her husband Olaus to advocate for protecting America's remaining wilderness. Their expedition to

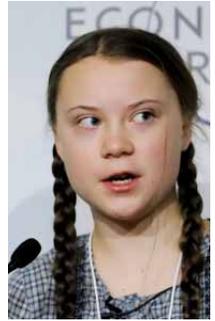


Alaska to gather information about the area's wildlife, led to the creation of the eight million-acre Arctic National Wildlife Range, now Refuge after its expansion to 19 million acres under the 1980 *Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act*. Murie, emotionally testifying before congress in support of the Act proclaimed, "Beauty is a resource in and of itself. Alaska must be allowed to be Alaska, that is her

greatest economy." Today, the Murie Center continues to inspire people to explore the important connection between nature and the human spirit.

Greta Thunberg (2003

– present) is a teenage Swedish environmental activist who has gained international recognition for promoting the view that humanity is facing an existential crisis arising from climate change. In 2018, Thunberg began a global movement by skipping school to camp out in front of the Swedish Parliament holding a sign reading, "School Strike for Climate." Working to get world leaders to take climate threat seriously, she has addressed heads of state at the UN, met with the Pope and inspired four million people to join the largest global climate strike in human history on September 20, 2019. Greta's words are both inspiring and haunting, "Adults keep saying we owe it to the young people to give them hope...but I don't want your hope...I want you to act as you would in a crisis...I want you to act as if our house is on fire.... Because it is." 🌊



Candace McKee Ashmun Memorial Fund

The ANJEC family honors the memory of our founding executive director, friend, colleague and mentor Candy Ashmun, who was our most loyal supporter and volunteer right up to her last days.

ANJEC has established the Candace McKee Ashmun Memorial Fund in her honor. Donations to the fund will be used to support the ANJEC Open Space Stewardship Grant Program, an annual program for municipal environmental commissions to carry out local stewardship projects.

Candy's support of ANJEC's mission and her unwavering belief in the power of the local environmental commission makes this program a perfect way to remember her legacy for years to come.

To donate

Mail a check to ANJEC, PO Box 157, Mendham NJ 07945. 🌊

New Jersey's groundbreaking environmental justice bill passes state Legislature

By **Alex Ambrose**, ANJEC Policy Associate



On Juneteenth (June 19th), Governor Murphy announced his support for the legislature's environmental justice (EJ) bill. What seemed improbable just a few short months ago was on the brink of becoming law – the strongest environmental justice bill in the nation had passed in the Senate, had the full support of the Governor, and was up for its final vote in the State Assembly. Then, with just minutes till the voting session, the bill was inexplicably pulled. Fortunately, as of the writing of this article, the bill was reposted, passed the full Assembly, and is awaiting the Governor's signature. So what's the big deal with this bill?

What is environmental justice?

While it has several definitions, environmental justice, defined broadly, is the equitable distribution of environmental benefits and burdens. Most would agree that EJ also acknowledges that people of color (POC) are largely overburdened and overlooked when decisions are made that affect their health and environment, and that we should be working towards correcting those injustices.

In New Jersey especially, communities struggle with something called cumulative impacts – multiple environmental threats that, when combined, amplify the risk to the livelihood and wellbeing of that community. Some examples include air pollution from ports and highways, industrial pollution of soil, air and water,

and lead in drinking water, combined with the historic racism in the mainstream environmental movement that purposely restricted POC from accessing green spaces. Together, these toxic conditions are the reality of far too many New Jerseyans, and they are also the reason environmental justice should remain a top priority of our State Legislature.

Environmental justice bills and legislation

For several years, advocates and State legislators have tried to pass a bill addressing these disproportionate threats to low income communities. The bill, S232/A2212, would require the NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) to take into account these cumulative impacts when evaluating certain permit applications for land uses such as landfills, incinerators, or really any facility that could contribute to the pollution problem. The bill requires applicants to prove that they will not be harming the community by operating their facility before the DEP will consider the application, and it gives the Department authority to deny a permit based on the potential threats.

This bill also, for the first time ever, defines what an overburdened community is. Definitions are extremely important in legislation, and this one is truly groundbreaking. There are three criteria, separated by "or," which means a community only needs to meet one of the criterion

to qualify. According to the most recent version of the bill that passed in the Senate, an overburdened community is “any census block group, as determined in accordance with the most recent United States Census, in which: (1) at least 35 percent of the households qualify as low-income households; (2) at least 40 percent of the residents identify as minority or as members of a State-recognized tribal community; or (3) at least 40 percent of the households have limited English proficiency.” The Murphy Administration stated that over half of NJ’s municipalities have communities that meet one or more of these criteria, making this bill a potentially transformative piece of legislation.

The Legislature is also working on S2484, which establishes an Office of Clean Energy Equity in the Board of Public Utilities (BPU) and creates clean energy programs for overburdened communities. This bill largely overlaps with much of the *Energy Master Plan’s* goals: ensuring overburdened communities have access to affordable

clean energy; creating workforce development trainings for clean energy projects; and providing grants to community-based, diversity-driven organizations developing clean energy. Since the Legislature controls the purse strings, however, it also directs the BPU to allocate at least \$50 million annually to the Office of Clean Energy Equity, to be used to “address the unique barriers faced by low income households and overburdened communities.” This bill passed the Senate Environment Committee and is still awaiting review by the Senate Budget Committee, while the Assembly counterpart has not moved at all.

What’s next?

Fortunately, the EJ bill successfully moved through the legislature. For a while though, the bill’s fate seemed uncertain. Speaker Coughlin didn’t make public his reason for pulling the bill the first time. What we are left to assume is that the industry and polluter advocates that fought so hard against this bill – one even going

so far as to use a racist term to describe what he felt was unfair treatment against polluters – successfully lobbied to get it temporarily pulled. It is more important now than ever that we as environmentalists show our support for bills such as these and remind our elected officials how critical they are to restoring justice in our State. We are watching a social justice revolution happen right before our very eyes and our elected officials are paying attention; let us not squander this opportunity to make environmental justice a top priority in New Jersey. 🌊



The Environmental justice bill aims to reduce the cumulative impacts of development on environmentally burdened communities

Acting Locally

By **Michele Gaynor**, ANJEC Resource Center;
Jenny Ludmer, Princeton Environmental Commission;
and **Susan Rowley**, Cresskill Environmental Commission

Princeton's backyard chicken ordinance

Chickens are amazing creatures. Not only do they make great pets, they also can serve as food waste handlers, they provide fresh eggs and natural fertilizer and help control bugs and weeds without chemicals.

Jenny Ludmer, Princeton Environmental Commission (PEC) member, has become quite the chicken advocate. Over the years, she has taken them to schools, camps, and festivals, but ultimately, when people showed interest, the first question was always, are they legal?

Until recently, this was a difficult question to answer. Princeton's codes did not directly address backyard chickens, so her answer was always a hesitant yes. Initially, town representatives agreed, often saying, so long as your neighbors don't mind it's fine. But over time,

that advice shifted. She began hearing of town representatives advising residents that they were illegal, and of chicken owners being told that they had to remove their chickens because a neighbor didn't approve.

As Jenny learned of these incidents, she joined forces with another EC member, Karen Zembler, and a few other chicken owners and drafted an ordinance to define and regulate backyard chickens. They talked with Gwen Baille (South Jersey's "chicken lady") and learned about ordinances in other NJ towns. They also surveyed all the Princeton chicken keepers they could find (about a dozen), asking about their chicken coop setup, so they could craft a suitable



Princeton has passed an ordinance allowing residents to raise chickens.

Credit
Jenny Ludmer

ordinance. The PEC developed an outreach campaign to help raise awareness and worked with the Board of Health to gain their support.

All of this effort paid off. The Council vote was unanimous and without any opposition. Now, Princeton residents have a set of guidelines to know how to safely and responsibly keep chickens. Noise, odor, or rodents are still valid reasons to object to a neighbor having chickens, but merely the dislike of chickens is not.

– Jenny Ludmer and Michele Gaynor

The pandemic hasn't stopped some towns from working to reduce plastic waste

Readington, Millburn and Pennington are among several towns that have passed and or implemented plastic bag ordinances amid the pandemic. The Readington Environmental Commission (EC) started the process of enacting a plastic bag ordinance before COVID-19 hit. ANJEC's Dini Checko attended an EC meeting to do a presentation on the impacts of single-use plastic pollution. The EC and the township continued their work on the ordinance through virtual meetings and with no resistance during the public comments session of the Council meeting, the ordinance quickly passed 5-0.

Readington's EC has the benefit of a highly environmentally aware and committed Township Committee, of which the mayor is also a member. There was plenty of buy-in for the plastic ordinance right from the start. EC member Neil Hendrickson also sits on the Open Space Committee, which allowed him to get the word out. He and others asked the businesses in the Township for input on the ban and received no pushback. Most said it was overdue, or at least looked forward to it. The ordinance goes into effect in January 2021.

Although Millburn's plastic ordinance was passed in December 2019, the EC continued to work through the pandemic in order to initiate an education program. The ordinance went into effect on June 12 as planned, and the implementation includes recycling containers for polystyrene at retail establishments. The township also seeks to reduce the use of single-use straws, which are now only available upon request. Millburn's website also directs residents to ANJEC's "Are Reusables Safe?" FAQ sheet which provides information on safe use of reusable products during the pandemic. (See anjec.org/action-alerts/.)

Pennington Borough voted unanimously to adopt their plastic ordinance on May 4th. The EC will head up a six-month education and outreach period prior to implementation. The EC also continues to hold their monthly meetings via Zoom.

It's encouraging to see what can be achieved by hard working environmental commissioners and town officials, even in the middle of a crisis. – Michele Gaynor

Cresskill Environmental Commission Celebrates Poster/Essay Contest Winners

Award-winning posters and essays from Cresskill students in grades 3 to 8 were celebrated at a virtual awards ceremony on June 25th for the 15th annual Poster/Essay Contest of the Cresskill Environmental Commission (CEC).

Each year, the CEC 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 "Using Your Voice To Demand Environmental Change." Winning students received a proclamation signed by Cresskill Mayor Ben Romeo and a gift card prize.

The winning posters and essays are being shared on the CEC's Facebook page

Cresskill EC honored participants in their school contest via an online event.

the use of an electric power-assisted tricycle with two rear seats to sightsee. The experience convinced him he had to get one to keep his life moving. Wyndrum ordered his Pedego

Tricycle, which comes with an electric motor in the hub of the front wheel for those times when he doesn't want to pedal. The 20AH battery, situated between the rider's legs, powers four to five hours of use without pedals. The tricycle also has a trunk. Other models have storage available in front or back. The maximum speed of his tricycle is less than 15 mph. Other models have a speed up to 23 mph and can go 40-50 miles on a charge with assistance from pedals.

Wyndrum regularly uses the trike for shopping trips in town or for exercise. He believes he will break even on the cost of the tricycle after he completes 150 round trips to the local grocery store. He views the tricycle as an ADA-friendly vehicle, which he drives on local streets where he can, and also on sidewalks.

– Michele Gaynor



@CresskillEC. The Cresskill Environmental Commission can be reached at environmental@cresskillboro.org.

– Susan Rowley

Just a short trip to the local market...take your tricycle

Ralph Wyndrum, Fair Haven EC chair, was dealing with Age Related Macular Degeneration and by last September, though he had bought a new car a few years ago, he felt he could not focus sufficiently to drive safely. He decided he had to stop driving.

While Uber and Lyft are available in Fair Haven, and he does use them when he must, sometimes he just needs to run to the local grocery or hardware store for something small but vital, like a quart of milk or small tool. He also needed to get to the municipal building for EC and Council meetings until the pandemic made them virtual. At 83, Wyndrum had no intention of stopping his routines.

On a recent trip to Quebec, a retired police officer offered him

Ralph Wyndrum, Fair Haven EC chair, gets around town on his tricycle.

Credit Bill Tice



Addressing climate change in NJ

By **N. Dini Checko**, ANJEC Resource Center,
and **Isabella Castiglioni**, ANJEC Outreach Manager

In January 2020, the State of New Jersey enacted legislation (P.L. 2019, c.442) to establish the NJ Climate Change Resource Center to carry out collaborative interdisciplinary research, analysis and outreach to help New Jersey adapt, mitigate and prepare for climate change. Housed at Rutgers University, the Center will conduct applied research, create planning tools, develop technical guidance, undertake pilot projects and provide practicable support for addressing climate change.

We asked and you answered...

To help inform its priorities and work plan, the Center wanted to get a snapshot of

what's already happening in and what's desired by municipalities throughout the State. ANJEC was asked to reach out to our members with a request to participate in a survey and/or listening sessions. We received a tremendous response with 174 survey respondents and 29 listening session participants. **Thank you!**

The results are in...

Here are some key insights from ANJEC's research:

- There continue to be a lot of local and regional projects being done throughout the State, such as pollinator gardens, rain gardens and establishing electric vehicle charging stations. However, when

NDJEP 2020 Climate Change Scientific Report

The NJDEP's first scientific report on climate change summarizes the current state of knowledge regarding the effects of climate change on New Jersey's environment. www.nj.gov/dep/climatechange/docs/nj-scientific-report-2020.pdf

Here are the key findings* from the NJ DEP's Executive report:

* New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection. 2020. New Jersey Scientific Report on Climate Change, Version 1.0. (Eds. R. Hill, M.M. Rutkowski, L.A. Lester, H. Genievich, N.A. Procopio). Trenton, NJ. 184 pp.

Temperature

- New Jersey is warming faster than the rest of the Northeast region and the world. Since 1895, New Jersey's annual temperature has increased by 3.5° F.
- Historically unprecedented warming is projected for the 21st century with average annual temperatures in New Jersey increasing by 4.1° F to 5.7° F by 2050.
- Heatwaves are expected to impact larger areas, with more frequency and longer duration by 2050.
- Climate change could result in a 55 percent increase in summer heat-related mortalities.



The NJDEP's first scientific report on climate change summarizes the current state of knowledge regarding the effects of climate change on New Jersey's environment.

educating the community about these projects, the link to climate change is not always explicitly explained. The public is often not made aware of climate change threats and how the municipality is responding.

- There is a desire for more coordinated efforts. Respondents said there are often too many people and groups working on similar projects/programs, sometimes within the same town. On the other hand, coordinated regional actions have been successful on a variety of topics,

from Earth Day events to passing plastics ordinances.

- Since most local environmental efforts are connected to climate change, participants expressed a desire to understand how all these actions can be “rolled up” as part of a cumulative effort to better understand how we as a State are adapting, mitigating and preparing to this threat.

- Tools such as model ordinances, communication materials and training are critical for engagement. Participants said more resources are needed that are scientific enough to be credible, but understandable enough to be thought of as doable and urgent.

(continued)

Precipitation

- The intensity and frequency of precipitation events is anticipated to increase, resulting in greater and more frequent floods due to climate change.
- Droughts may occur more frequently due to the expected changes in precipitation patterns.
- Tropical storms have the potential to increase in intensity due to the warmer atmosphere and warmer oceans that will occur with climate change.

Sea-level rise

- Sea-levels are increasing at a greater rate in New Jersey than other parts of the world.
- By 2050, there is a 50 percent chance that sea-level rise will meet or exceed 1.4

feet and a 17 percent chance it will exceed 2.1 feet.

- “Sunny day flooding” will occur more often across the entire coastal area of New Jersey and it is extremely likely that Atlantic City will experience “sunny day flooding” 95 days a year, with a 50 percent likelihood it will experience 355 days a year by 2100 (under a moderate emission scenario).

Ocean acidification

- If carbon dioxide emissions continue at current rates, ocean pH levels are expected to fall, creating an ocean that is more acidic than has been seen for the past 20 million years.

(continued)

- Public engagement tools must highlight how fighting climate change can help residents improve property values and save money, while a failure to act can cause negative impacts.
- The most trusted information sources cited were nonprofit groups, state universities, and the NJ State government.

NJ Climate Change Resource Center – What’s already being done?

- The Center is up and running with a variety of educational offerings, such as Climate Change 101, practitioner guides, and the Summer Climate Academy. The Academy provides free webinars on a wide range of topics, such as “Ocean Acidification” and “Historic and Cultural Preservation at the Local Level.” <https://njclimateresourcecenter.rutgers.edu/>
- The New Jersey Department of Environ-

mental Protection (NJDEP) has established an integrated Climate and Flood Resilience program, and an Interagency Council on Climate Resilience to develop a Statewide Climate Change Resilience Strategy to promote the long-term mitigation, adaptation and resilience of New Jersey’s economy, communities, infrastructure and natural resources. www.nj.gov/dep/climatechange/resilience.html

- Learn about the State’s Climate Resiliency plans from NJDEP staff featured in ANJEC’s webinar: www.youtube.com/watch?v=ztlwLmoCXi8
- NJ is the first state to mandate climate change education in K-12th grade curricula.
- The Rutgers Green Infrastructure Champions program trains volunteers to implement green infrastructure as a stormwater management approach town by town. water.rutgers.edu/Projects/GreenInfrastructureChampions/GIC.html

- Southern New Jersey counties rank second in the United States in economic dependence on shelled mollusks, which will suffer from increasing ocean acidity.

Air quality

- The effects of climate change are likely to contribute to an increase in air pollution, leading to increased respiratory and cardiovascular health problems, like asthma and hay fever, and a greater number of premature deaths.
- Environmental degradation from climate-induced increases in air pollution will reduce visibility and cause damage to crops and forests.

Water resources: supply and quality

- Water supplies will be stressed from the longer growing season and extreme temperatures expected due to climate change.
- Rising sea levels may lead to increased saltwater intrusion in New Jersey aquifers

where wells are overpumped.

- Freshwater intakes and aquifer recharge areas may be threatened as the salt front pushes further upriver.
- Combined sewer overflow communities may be further challenged as sea level rise and/or increased rain events submerge discharge points that are currently above the waterline.
- Surface and groundwater quality will be impaired due to runoff from more intense rain events.

Agriculture

- The productivity of crops and livestock are expected to be affected by the climate-induced changes in temperature and precipitation patterns.
- New Jersey may become unsuitable for specialty crops like blueberries and cranberries in the future as higher temperatures reduce necessary winter chills.

- Energy aggregation programs at county, municipal and school levels have proven to be successful and are ready to be rolled out across the State. For example, the Essex–Hudson Regional Cooperative purchasing system, which includes 40 towns and two county governments, can significantly save a township money through lowered electric supply rates while increasing the amount of electricity generated from renewable sources.
- The NJ Clean Energy program offers free Local Government Energy Audits (LGEA) for local governments, State universities, public schools, and certain nonprofits. The audit will help realize maximum energy efficiencies in municipalities and schools resulting from actions ranging from replacement or upgrading of old equipment to LED lighting. The program also helps with funding. <https://njcleanenergy.com/commercial-industrial/programs/local-government-energy-audit/local-government-energy-audit>

- NJDEP released the first comprehensive scientific report on climate change in June. See page 14 for more info.

Next steps

- ANJEC will host a Climate Resiliency workshop at our 47th Annual Environmental Congress in October.
- We are working on a Climate Change Toolkit that will include model ordinances and training. We continue to gather feedback on what you need to help make a difference on climate change readiness in your town. Let's keep the conversation going! Contact us at info@anjec.org.

Forests

- The persistence of Southern pine beetle in New Jersey represents an early example of the destruction of invasive pests that can occur due to climate change impacts.
- Wildfire seasons could be lengthened, and the frequency of large fires increased due to the hot, dry periods that will result from increased temperatures.

Wetlands

- Increased flooding and salinity are projected to lead to a loss of 92 percent of brackish marshes, 32 percent of tidal swamps, and 6 percent of tidal fresh marshes in the Delaware Estuary by 2100.

Terrestrial carbon sequestration

- The loss of coastal wetland and forest habitats due to climate change will result in carbon losses and increase New Jersey's net greenhouse gas emissions.

Terrestrial systems

- Climate change is likely to facilitate expansion of invasive plant species.
- 29 percent of NJ's bird species are vulnerable to climate change, including the American Goldfinch, the State bird of New Jersey.

Marine systems

- Climate changes could result in more "dead zones" from hypoxic events, which are of particular concern for summer flounder, New Jersey's largest recreational fish species.
- Many commercially important shellfish species, including hard clam, scallops, and oysters, will develop thinner and frailer shells due to ocean acidification.



NJ pipeline update: Unneeded fossil fuel projects on shaky ground

By **Patty Cronheim**, Campaigns Director, NJ League of Conservation Voters

Across the country, the health and safety threats of pipelines and dwindling need for more fossil fuels are shifting the legal – and literal – landscapes.

NATIONALLY

Dakota Access Pipeline

Out west, the fight over Energy Transfer's Dakota Access Pipeline saw some legal victories. On July 6, a US District Court found that the US Army Corps of Engineers violated the *National Environmental Policy Act* by allowing part of the pipeline to be built without writing the required Environmental Impact Statement. The Court ordered the 570,000 barrels-per-day pipeline shut down and drained by August 5. The dirty-oil pipeline crosses the Missouri River upstream from the Standing Rock Sioux Reservation's drinking water supply. While the US Court of Appeals for the DC Circuit reversed the order to shut down the pipeline after Energy Transfer claimed it would take \$24 million and three months to empty and close it, the Court declined Energy Transfer's motion to block the move through environmental review. The Standing Rock Tribe vowed to show during the environmental review process that the Pipeline is too dangerous to operate.

Federal tolling orders

Also this summer, the DC Circuit Court made it harder for pipeline companies to seize private land while landowners wait for their day in court. The Court ruled that the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) – the agency that determines

whether pipelines constitute a "public necessity" and receive a certificate to be built – can no longer issue "tolling orders." In the Court's words, tolling orders do nothing more than buy FERC more time to act on a rehearing application and stall judicial review, sometimes long after land is seized and the pipeline already installed.

NEW JERSEY

Burlington/Ocean/Monmouth County

On July 8 the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) suspended a permit for horizontal-direction drilling on New Jersey Natural Gas's 30-mile Southern Reliability Link, a fracked gas pipeline through the Pinelands. The drilling fluid polluted freshwater wetlands and streams, and drilling mud severely cracked the foundation of a house in Upper Freehold, causing it to be condemned. Industry records indicate that this kind of spill accident – called "inadvertent returns" – can occur up to half the time during pipeline construction. By effectively ending pipeline construction, NJDEP handed a major victory to opponents of the pipeline, who warned of the high risks of horizontal-direction drilling and showed that the pipeline is unneeded and dangerous. The Pinelands Preservation Alliance and other groups joined with the municipalities of Bordentown and Chesterfield in a lawsuit before the State Appellate Division to kill the project and are asking the State of New Jersey to halt all construction until the case is resolved.

Somerset/ Monmouth County

Last spring, the New York and New Jersey environmental agencies each denied the required water permits for William Transco's Northeast Supply Enhancement Project (NESE), designed to transport fracked gas from the Marcellus Shale region in Pennsylvania to New

York City. The project also proposed building a polluting compressor station in Franklin Township and trenching a new pipeline segment through Raritan Bay. NJDEP cited lack of public need, writing: "New reporting from New York indicated that the energy needs proposed to be served by this project could be met through existing infrastructure, energy efficiency, and other means." Williams Transco states they do not plan to refile for the project.

Hunterdon/Mercer County

The unneeded 116-mile fracked-gas PennEast Pipeline project – often referred to as the "solution in search of a problem" – has reached the US Supreme Court. PennEast appealed the Third Circuit Court of Appeals' decision to overturn the lower court's ruling that had allowed PennEast to seize state lands. The Third Circuit ruled that the 11th Amendment gives states sovereign immunity from litigation by private parties in federal court. Before deciding to take the case, SCOTUS asked the US Solicitor General to weigh in. If the high court refuses PennEast's appeal, the Third Circuit decision stands and PennEast will not be able to cross 42 properties along its proposed route in New Jersey.



Citing PennEast's appeal to the Supreme Court, the DC Circuit Court has temporarily delayed an opponent lawsuit challenging the FERC certificate for the project. PennEast must still secure permits from the Delaware River Basin Commission and the NJDEP.

To leapfrog over its court obstacles, PennEast has split its project into two phases – Pennsylvania and New Jersey – and convinced FERC to consider Phase 1 – the Pennsylvania half – as merely an amendment to its proposed route. Opponents argue that FERC has no jurisdiction to fundamentally change the project now that the certificate challenge is in front of the DC Circuit. Challengers also emphasize the glaring lack of evidence that Phase 1 is needed.

Gloucester County

Of continuing concern is New Fortress Energy's Gibbstown Logistics Center, a liquid natural gas shipping facility proposal in Gibbstown on the Delaware River. It poses safety and health threats from contamination to the river, Gibbstown, and the surrounding areas. Moreover, the project spurred changes to federal rail safety regulations. Ignoring the vigorous bipartisan objections of State legislators,



the US Department of Transportation's Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration now allows highly explosive liquid natural gas to be transported by rail through our towns.

Other newly announced pipeline projects on the New Jersey horizon include:

- Gloucester/Somerset – Williams Transco Regional Energy Access – added capacity of 760 million cubic feet/day, with a new compressor station in Gloucester County and expansion to compressor Station 505 in Branchburg; and
- Passaic County – Kinder Morgan's Tennessee Gas Pipeline's East 300

Upgrade Project proposal to build a new compressor station in West Milford, designed to increase capacity to transport fracked gas to New York State. Opponents contend the polluting compressor station will compromise the drinking water of the Monksville Reservoir – part of a network that serves millions of North Jersey residents.

New Jersey does not need more large transmission pipelines. Period. Multiple studies show New Jersey has adequate gas supply for even the coldest winter days, and independent energy analysts along with the Murphy administration's *Energy Master Plan* predict demand to decrease over the next 30 years – even in the short term. Natural gas is not, as the fossil fuel industry likes to claim, a bridge to fighting climate change. Natural gas takes us in the opposite direction from the clean, renewable energy future essential to New Jersey's health.

In this rapidly changing legal, political, and economic landscape, we anticipate that unneeded, outdated, dirty fossil fuel projects that threaten our health, safety, and environment will be on increasingly shaky ground.

Patty Cronheim can be reached at patty.cronheim@njlcvo.org. 

Electrifying buses and trucks – big wheels and big deals

By **Lyle Landon**, ANJEC Development Director

Converting to electric vehicles is essential to attaining New Jersey's Green House Gas (GHG) reduction goals as transportation accounts for 42 percent of these emissions. Statistics from 2017 show that 75 percent of trucks used diesel fuel and 84 percent of transit buses were powered by diesel engines and fuel in 2018. While trucks and buses only account for 4 percent of vehicles on the road, they are responsible for nearly 25 percent of total transportation

sector GHG emissions. Therefore, decreasing the number of diesel vehicles is especially important as they account for an outsized portion of pollutants. These are big numbers, but in the last two years two factors – funding and alliances – are helping to combat this dirty problem.

First, in 2019 NJDEP Commissioner Catherine McCabe announced that part of the \$11.2 million New Jersey received from the Volkswagen settlement would fund the

purchase of hundreds of electric vehicles and electric charging stations. Another focus of the funds will be bringing environmental justice to communities that are disproportionately impacted by pollution and resulting health impacts.

Second, in July, 2020 Governor Murphy announced that New Jersey was part of the joint memorandum of understanding (MOU) for fifteen states plus the District of Columbia committing to work collaboratively to advance and accelerate the market for electric medium and heavy-duty vehicles, including large pickup trucks and vans, delivery trucks, box trucks, school and transit buses, and long-haul delivery trucks (big rigs). The goal is to ensure that zero-emission vehicles account for 100 percent of all new medium- and heavy-duty vehicles by 2050, with an interim target of 30 percent zero-emission vehicle sales by 2030.

Eight new e-buses and charging stations were scheduled for purchase under a pilot program in Camden. The initiative is currently on pause after some problems with similar programs in other cities. For example, the use of air conditioning and heating in the e-buses, which consumes a lot of electricity, diminished the battery charge and the expected travel range, in some cases stranding customers. On the other hand, these problems did not affect the eighteen e-buses currently in use by the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey as they shuttle passengers between the three NYC area airports.

E-vehicles are making sense for more private and commercial operations too. The cost savings for fuel and maintenance of e-buses

The cost savings for fuel and maintenance of e-buses and e-trucks can be as much as 50 percent.

and e-trucks can be as much as 50 percent. Anheuser-Busch purchased a large, zero emissions e-truck manufactured by BYD for deliveries in the Oakland area. BYD, a Chinese manufacturer, has sold over 100 e-trucks in the US and over 10,000 globally. Red Hook Terminals has ordered 10 BYD all-electric yard tractors. Once deployed at their yard in Port Newark, NJ, it will be the largest fleet of heavy-duty electric trucks operating on the US East Coast. Once again New Jersey is a leader.

ANJEC awarded an Environmental Achievement Award in 2019 to the city of Elizabeth and the Rutgers Center for Environmental Exposures and Disease for their diesel exhaust reduction project. They teamed up with street scientists to monitor diesel air pollution in certain residential neighborhoods and presented their findings to officials who in turn enacted a ban on truck traffic through that area. Post ban measurements showed about an 80 percent decrease in pollution. Acting locally matters!

Whether e-buses or e-trucks, McCabe noted that they "...will be beneficial in helping to reduce harmful emissions that contribute to smog. Better air quality means better health for our communities and residents."

More information

Stop the Soot website: www.nj.gov/dep/stopthesoot/ 



Important information for CSO communities about Long Term Control Plans

By Sheila Baker Gujral, ANJEC Resource Center

Big decisions are looming on the horizon that will affect 20 communities around New Jersey. More than two million people live in combined sewer overflow (CSO) communities – that’s more than 22 percent of the total population of New Jersey. On October 1, 2020, these communities and utilities will be submitting Long Term Control Plans (LTCPs) to the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) anticipating billions of dollars’ worth of water infrastructure spending. (Trenton, the 21st CSO community, has already completed theirs.)

The individual CSO permits, issued by NJDEP in 2015, “encourage permittee and community collaboration on the planning and development of projects that will provide urban redevelopment opportunities, improve water quality, beautify neighborhoods, and improve the overall quality of life in our urban communities.” The goal of these permits is to meet the requirements of the National CSO Policy and the federal *Clean Water Act* by reducing or eliminating the remaining CSOs in New Jersey. Five years later, the the final LTCP deadline approaches, but have the people in these communities had adequate opportunities to have their input considered?



Citizen involvement is crucial

In some of the CSO communities, there has been considerable action from a group of dedicated community members working with municipalities, utilities, and nonprofit organizations – such as Camden SMART (Stormwater Management and Resource Training), NewarkDIG (Doing Infrastructure Green), Paterson SMART and Perth Amboy SWIM (Stormwater Infrastructure Management). Newark, Paterson and Jersey City held a series of community meetings in wards throughout their municipalities to garner feedback. Sewage Free Streets and Rivers (SFSR), a coalition coordinated by New Jersey Future, has worked tirelessly to reach out to residents in these communities and in other less-represented municipalities, such as Bayonne, Elizabeth, Harrison and Kearny. These groups found that, too often, towns would use occasional CSO Supplemental Team Meetings or poorly attended,

hastily called meetings to fill the NJDEP requirement for “community involvement” in the development of these plans. Where was the dedicated funding set aside for broad, cohesive community outreach?

Such groups had their plans to bring in citizen involvement stymied with the stay-at-home restrictions caused by COVID-19 this year. Undaunted, NewarkDIG, along with Jersey Water Works (JWW) and ANJEC, and led by Mo Kinberg at SFSR, held a series of online workshops in the summer to help communities understand the proposed plans and learn how to have their comments heard and considered. The first workshop (recording at <https://bit.ly/3kZWdl4>) on June 9th was a comprehensive webinar on Reviewing Long Term Control Plans for CSO communities. They used an NJDEP outline of the LTCP (known as SIAR-Selection and Implementation of Alternatives Report), to guide participants through all nine sections of the report with a particular focus on environmental and engineering specifications, green infrastructure specifications, local jobs impacts and financial analysis.

In part two, the first reports that were submitted to NJDEP were used as examples to walk participants through actual documents and help them to develop useful comments to give to the municipalities and then on to NJDEP. Camden County Utilities Authority Executive Director Scott Schrieber explained the triple-bottom-line approach the authority used in its LTCP, and JWW CSO Committee Co-Chair Andy Kricun discussed how environmental justice communities should be considered in these plans. Rosana Da Silva, Water Quality Manager, New York – New Jersey Harbor & Estuary Program, talked about how green infrastructure can save money and deliver local benefits. (see <https://bit.ly/2QayCjf>) Kim Irby from NJ Future demonstrated how to use an online tool to guide you in evaluating the lengthy and intimidating documents. (The tool can be found at <https://bit.ly/3aG8oP6>.) Finally, Nicole Miller, cochair of NewarkDIG, discussed the possible ramifications of a regional plan.

Improve quality of life and create jobs

So, what can you do about it? If you are in a CSO community¹ and you would like to see your quality of life improve while also increasing property values and providing local jobs, here is a list of things you can do leading up to October 1st and after.

1. Watch the CSO/LTCP Review Workshop Part 1 to understand the infrastructure challenges of your community and the opportunities for using green infrastructure as a means of improving stormwater quality, addressing flooding issues, reducing CSOs, and providing multiple ancillary benefits to communities (increasing green space, improving air and water quality, reducing the heat island effect, improving property values, providing local jobs). (Part 1 – <https://bit.ly/3kZWdl4>)
2. Watch CSO/LTCP Review Workshop Part 2. In particular, Part 2 will show you how to go through the plan and develop your own comments, using a template questionnaire. (Part 2 – <https://bit.ly/3aHfhjq>).
3. Share the CSO LTCP Review Workshop materials with concerned residents, business owners and community advocates in your CSO town. With potentially billions of dollars on the line, it is imperative that the community be actively engaged in how their money will be spent.
4. Check to see if your municipality or utility/authority has submitted their report (www.nj.gov/dep/dwq/cso-ltcp/submittals.htm).
5. If not available, request a draft of the report and for the report to be posted.

1 CSO communities in NJ – Bayonne City, Fort Lee Borough, Harrison Township, Newark City, Ridgefield Park Village, West New York Town, Camden City, Gloucester City, Hoboken City, North Bergen Township, Trenton City, East Newark Borough, Guttenberg Town, Jersey City, Paterson City, Union City, Elizabeth City, Hackensack City, Kearny Town, Perth Amboy City, Weehawken Township.

(Use this directory to find CSO contact information – <https://bit.ly/3kZGd2r>)

6. Use this LTCP Review Tool (<https://bit.ly/3aG8oP6>) to help you review your LTCP and develop your comments.
7. Request a public meeting on the draft LTCP before October 1, 2020.
8. Submit your comments to:
 - a. The NJDEP Team Leader for your community (www.nj.gov/dep/dwq/cso-contacts.htm)
 - b. The NJDEP Bureau Chief Susan Rosenwinkel at Susan.Rosenwinkel@dep.nj.gov
 - c. Permit holders – (<https://bit.ly/3kZGd2r>)
 - d. Local elected officials
9. Understand that this is not your last chance to have your voice heard on these issues! The NJDEP open public comment period will not begin until after the plans have been submitted for

review. Get involved with an environmental commission in your town and join with a group like SFSR, NewarkDIG or the JWWorks CSO Committee to find information and resources.

More Resources:

- Green Infrastructure Toolkit – gitoolkit.njfuture.org/
- Stormwater Utility Resources – flooddefensenj.com
- ANJEC publications – <https://anjec.org/publications/>

Special thanks to Mo Kinberg from NJ Future and Nicole Miller from the Newark EC.

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new virtual format!

ANJEC'S 47th Annual Environmental Congress



Keynote speaker - **Catherine McCabe**, Commissioner,
NJ Department of Environmental Protection

Featured speaker - **Judith Enck**, Founder, Beyond Plastics, former
Regional Administrator, US Environmental Protection Agency

Throughout the month of October, we will feature exciting speakers, informational presentations and panel discussions on the pressing environmental issues of our time, a networking session on EC operations in the time of COVID-19 – plus an evening of fun and entertainment. We will also present the ANJEC 2020 Environmental Achievement Awards.

Please mark your calendar now,
and watch your email for more details soon!
Registration and more information -
<https://anjec.org/conferences-workshops/>

Make a plan to vote

You can register by mail to vote in New Jersey by printing a voter registration form, filling it out, and mailing it to your local election office. You can also register to vote in person if you prefer. You can find a voter registration application for your state as well as poll locations at www.state.nj.us/state/elections/voter-registration.shtml



Key dates and deadlines

- Election day is Tuesday, November 3, 2020.
- The deadline for registering by mail to vote is (postmarked by) Tuesday, October 13, 2020.
- The deadline to register in person to vote is Tuesday, October 13, 2020.
- This year, the early voting period runs from Saturday, September 19, to Monday, November 2, but dates and hours may vary based on where you live. 

Environmental Commissions overcoming pandemic challenges

By Elizabeth Ritter, ANJEC Deputy Director

Environmental commissions (ECs) around the state have been forced to learn new skills and find new ways to meet, host programs, and perform other tasks due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Many ECs have embraced the new technologies for meetings and some have experienced better attendance and more public participation at meetings. To meet the challenge of trying to schedule activities and other community programs when in-person events were cancelled, many ECs found unique ways to keep the community engaged.

Princeton pushes forward

The Princeton EC has noticed greater public attendance at their online meetings, and this year's Earth Week Cleanup went virtual with individuals and family groups sharing their cleanup progress. The cleanup week included partnership with many other community groups, including the Watershed Institute, which shared stories on their website.

EC members have managed to work on other goals as well. The Planning Board approved a Green Building and Sustainability Element which will help ensure that new development is done in a forward-thinking way. The EC is also working on getting an Electric Vehicle ordinance in the township and has a big project going to identify potential open space properties and the attributes of each property.

The Princeton EC has also created a new set of posters for public spaces, reminding



visitors not to litter; the new signs include a note on using gloves and masks and their proper disposal.

Closter plows new ground

In Closter Borough the McBain Farm project is going strong with new pandemic-friendly rules and safety precautions. The farm is run mostly by a large troop of local volunteers. Community members are welcome to visit the farm (masks and social distancing required) and pick farm produce at no cost. Families are still welcome to visit and children are still encouraged to see the farm in action and learn about farming at this beautiful community site.



The EC worked carefully on the plan for opening the farm during the season so the community members would not only have the food the farm produces, but also would still have the opportunity to volunteer, to enjoy the farm and see the agriculture season in action.

Hammonton marches on

The small town of Hammonton (The Blueberry Capital of the World) established its EC in 1975, which has great support from the governing body and the community. The small pine barrens town enjoys a terrific community feel, and neighbors and friends have stayed in touch with each other to help out at-risk folks and to alleviate negative emotions during the COVID-19 situation. The EC cancelled the April meeting, but then started meeting in May remotely and found that it was great for members and brought the return of humor to the group, which was very needed. The humor was mostly due to the fumbling associated with learning the new remote technologies – members were able to encourage each other along while sharing a smile or two.

EC Chair Dan Bachalis said he was glad to see that projects and other programs in the community have begun to resume. Cleanup day is now slotted for September. The EC is also continuing work on a Green Building and Sustainability Element to the Master Plan. The Commission is supported by many community groups and continues to have a great relationship with town officials, receiving lots of support from the Hammonton Department of Public Works, which is a great partner working for the community. The resumption of community activities and EC programs will strengthen the good connection with the community and the municipal officials as they all work together to get through the Covid-19 situation and enjoy and protect the natural resources of the community.

ANJEC is happy to hear about the work ECs are doing during the Covid-19 situation. If you have an experience to share or are having trouble meeting, feel free to contact ANJEC at info@anjec.org. 🌊

A tool for local nonpoint source pollution accountability

By **Dan Kurela** and **Jess Howk**,
Liberty Township Environmental Commission

Municipalities face a host of environmental challenges stemming from nonpoint source pollution (NPSP), also known as stormwater pollution. But while human behavior is responsible for most nonpoint pollution sources, the issue remains, to a large degree, out of the public consciousness. These less obvious sources of pollution cause immense damage to New Jersey's environment. Our

Garden State has the highest population density of all 50 states, with more than 80 percent of all land in NJ privately owned. Use and practice on this privately held land has a dramatic impact on our air, water, and environment as our actions and inactions impact everyone.

There is a need for a framework by which individuals can understand their responsibilities and hold themselves environmentally

accountable to take actions that will benefit their communities. The Liberty Township Environmental Commission (EC) developed a chart to educate local residents and businesses about how they can reduce or mitigate their own contribution to NPSP. This chart can serve as a handout at local events and be presented at

environmental forums, workshops and webinars to provide a steady and consistent message to achieve NPSP awareness. It can be modified and tailored to the needs and issues in a particular community. 

Environmental responsibilities for homeowners and businesses <i>to reduce stormwater pollution</i>		
Resource	Issue	Suggestions
Water	Conservation	Energy star-rated appliances; flow reducers in showers & toilets; sprinkler timers; hand held watering; fix leaks. state.nj.us/dep/watersupply/conserv.htm
	Septic Management	Pump out tank every 2-3 years; no deep rooted plants in drain field; no additives; only septic-safe toilet paper & black-water go into the system; don't overload the system – spread out laundry loads, shorter showers; use septic safe detergents & soaps. https://anjec.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/SepticSystems-2017.pdf
	Wastewater Discharge	Graywater should be treated as sewage unless discharged into a certified graywater system. NJ 7:9A-7.5 www.state.nj.us/dep/dwq/pdf/njac79a.pdf
	Stormwater Runoff	Divert runoff from roofs and driveways into rain gardens, dry wells, infiltration trenches, planted buffers and rain barrels; check & correct for proper grading. Prepare for 4" of rain in 30 minutes as our climate is changing. www.fairfaxcounty.gov/soil-water-conservation/drainage-problem-control-runoff
	Pet Waste	Pick up waste left by your pets and livestock or it will turn up in your drinking water. www.nj.gov/dep/watershedrestoration/waterbook_chp5.html
Soil	Plantings	Reduce turf grass and choose an eco-friendly lawn. Use native plants & warm season grasses for downspout gardens, mass plantings, meadows, and dry soil plantings. www.energy.gov/energysaver/design/landscaping-energy-efficient-homes/landscaping-water-conservation
	Erosion	Seeding, blankets, riprap, terraces, mulch www.fs.fed.us/t-d/pubs/pdf/hi_res/06772203hi.pdf
	Fertilizer	Before you fertilize, test your soil. Avoid synthetic fertilizers and use organic materials. https://indiana.clearchoicescleanwater.org/lawns/fertilizer-faqs
	Herbicides	Alternatives include sustainable garden design, mulching, ground cover, organic weed killers, flame guns, hand weeding, trimming. http://npic.orst.edu/pest/weeds.html
	Insecticides	Practice Integrated Pest Management (IPM) Most insecticides kill beneficial insects as well as your target. These beneficial organisms take 3x's longer to recover. www.epa.gov/safepestcontrol/integrated-pest-management-ipm-principles
Energy	Carbon Footprint	Refuse-Reduce-Reuse. From your car to your lawnmower go electric, install solar panels, consider eating less animal products, choose green transportation, reduce waste. www.sustainablejersey.com/
	Electricity Usage & Efficiency	Energy Star appliances, timer on electric water heater, LED lighting, turn things off when not in use. Perform an energy audit in your home including appliances, electronics, insulation, air leaks, heating & cooling, water heating, windows and doors. www.energystar.gov/products/energy_star_home_tips
Environment	Noise pollution	Landscape equipment, barking dogs, noisy neighbors, loud music, unwanted sound. www.pca.state.mn.us/sites/default/files/p-gen6-01.pdf
	Light Trespass	Use outdoor lighting respectfully towards neighbors, insects, bats, birds, and the night sky. You should see the light but not the light source from your property line. www.darksky.org/
	Air Pollutants	Vehicle and engine exhaust, dust, burning and chimney fumes cause major health hazards. www.nj.gov/dep/cleanairnj/contrib.html
	Wildlife	Plant for food, cover, and security. Landscape to recreate an environment that your house and property replaced. www.conservewildlifenj.org/

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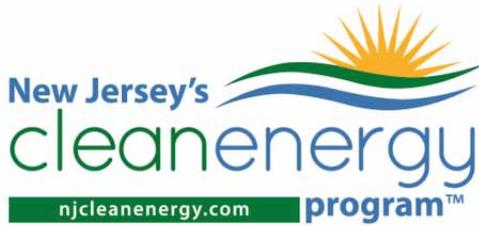
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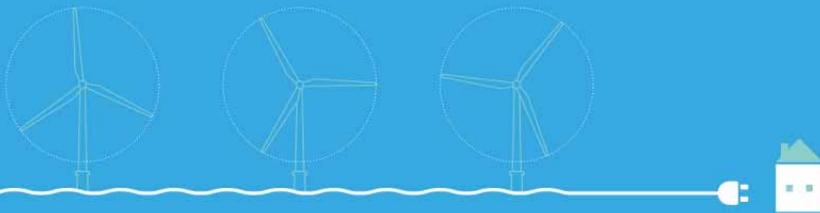
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