



ANJECREPORT

Local Environment Matters

WINTER 2025

Inside:

- Special section - ANJEC Environmental Congress recap
- Restoring marshland with dredge spoils
- Protecting open space easements





ANJEC
Executive
Director
Jennifer Coffey

Photo by Taylor McFarland

Director's Report

The results of the 2024 general election are clear. In New Jersey, we have newly elected Senator Andy Kim, who has been a champion of the environment and healthy communities in the 3rd Congressional District, and Assemblyman Herb Conaway has been elected as the new Congressman for the same district. ANJEC congratulates Senator-elect Kim, Congressman-elect Conaway and all the newly- and re-elected Congressional and local representatives.

We are highly concerned, however, about President-elect Trump's expressed commitment to rescind numerous US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) regulations as well as his espousals to dismantle the EPA and other agencies. The EPA is established by law and would require an Act of Congress to dismantle it. De-funding agencies is more of an immediate threat.

If past is prologue

We have already experienced one term under President Trump, so we know what we are facing when it comes to our shared environment – acceleration of extraction and drilling for fossil fuels and expansion of pipeline infrastructure, weakening clean water protections, dismantling toxic substance management provisions, climate crisis denial and rescinding United States leadership in international agreements aimed at combatting climate change. In his last term, Trump also dismantled several food and farm safety policies. Based on his rhetoric, we anticipate his second term will be even more aggressive.

At ANJEC, we are clear-eyed about the upcoming threats to the air we breathe, the water we drink and the food we eat. We believe Trump when he tells us about his

priorities to dismantle environmental protections.

We also know that environmental and community health protections have always been a non-partisan issue in New Jersey. We will continue to call on and work with representatives at the local and State levels of government to ensure that NJ is a shining star in a time of wavering national commitment to protect residents, communities and our natural environment from the growing threats of climate change and weakening federal protections. We encourage environmental commissioners to reach out across the aisle and build relationships with their local and State officials to buttress protections on the ground.

Our continuing commitment

ANJEC is finalizing our next strategic plan in the early months of 2025, and we look forward to sharing it with you. Nothing about established and emerging knowledge about climate, water quality and other natural sciences has changed with the national election.

ANJEC will continue to focus on combating the climate crisis and environmental injustice. We will continue to prioritize those among us who are most vulnerable to the impacts of pollution and flooding.

ANJEC will redouble our work to empower local action through environmental commissions and municipal officials, and we will continue to elevate those actions that protect natural resources statewide and in communities. Join us in continuing to stay focused on collaboration and partnership for strong environmental protections in New Jersey! Thank you for your support and partnership with ANJEC.

ANJEC will continue working with partner organizations to identify emerging threats as they appear at the federal level, and we will support statewide action to protect residents, small businesses, communities and our shared environment in the Garden State.

While we will lose some battles, we will celebrate local and statewide wins. We will provide actionable pathways to transform anxiety into action, including future "hours


of action" designed to harness grassroots measures to help strengthen New Jersey's laws and policies.

We will resist dismantling 50 years of environmental progress

Arm in arm with our members and partners, we will be unyielding in our principles and mission to protect and restore New Jersey's natural resources and to ensure healthy communities for today and the future.

Please join us in continuing to stay focused on collaboration and partnership for strong environmental protections in New Jersey! Thank you for your support and make sure you are on our email list so that you receive all ANJEC action alerts and program options. If not, email us at info@anjec.org and ask to join our list.


Jennifer M. Coffey (she/her)
Executive Director

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Executive Director Jennifer M. Coffey
Editor Julie Lange Groth

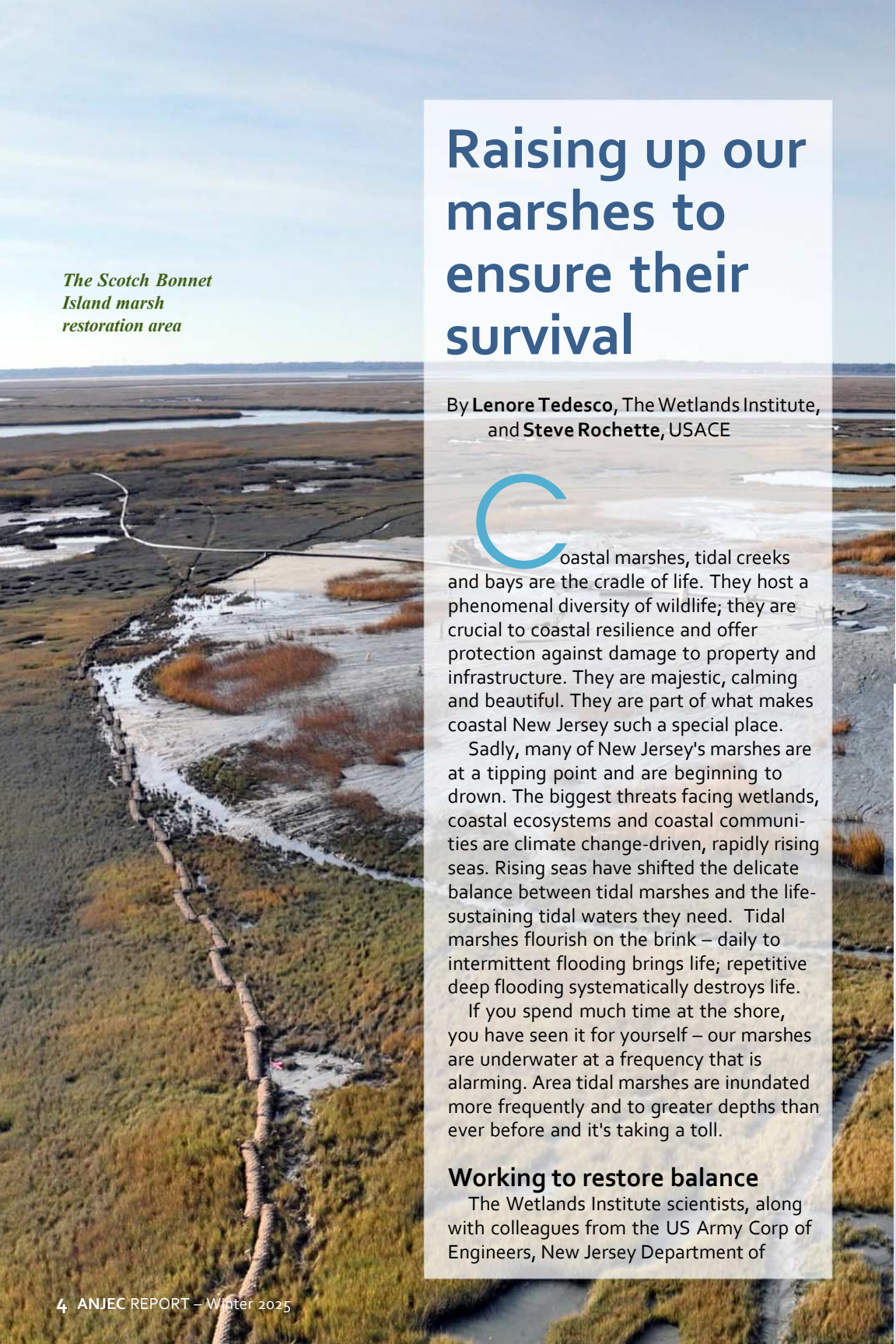
The mission of ANJEC is to promote local action to protect and restore New Jersey's natural resources and to ensure healthy communities for today and the future. ANJEC advances its mission by engaging in equitable and inclusive practices through leadership, partnerships, education, advocacy for strong public policy, and in support of environmental commissions, public officials, and communities throughout New Jersey.

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On the cover: The Northern Cardinal can be seen year-round in NJ backyards, especially shrubby areas. Photo by Andrew F. Kazmierski



*The Scotch Bonnet
Island marsh
restoration area*

Raising up our marshes to ensure their survival

By **Lenore Tedesco**, The Wetlands Institute,
and **Steve Rochette**, USACE

Coastal marshes, tidal creeks and bays are the cradle of life. They host a phenomenal diversity of wildlife; they are crucial to coastal resilience and offer protection against damage to property and infrastructure. They are majestic, calming and beautiful. They are part of what makes coastal New Jersey such a special place.

Sadly, many of New Jersey's marshes are at a tipping point and are beginning to drown. The biggest threats facing wetlands, coastal ecosystems and coastal communities are climate change-driven, rapidly rising seas. Rising seas have shifted the delicate balance between tidal marshes and the life-sustaining tidal waters they need. Tidal marshes flourish on the brink – daily to intermittent flooding brings life; repetitive deep flooding systematically destroys life.

If you spend much time at the shore, you have seen it for yourself – our marshes are underwater at a frequency that is alarming. Area tidal marshes are inundated more frequently and to greater depths than ever before and it's taking a toll.

Working to restore balance

The Wetlands Institute scientists, along with colleagues from the US Army Corp of Engineers, New Jersey Department of

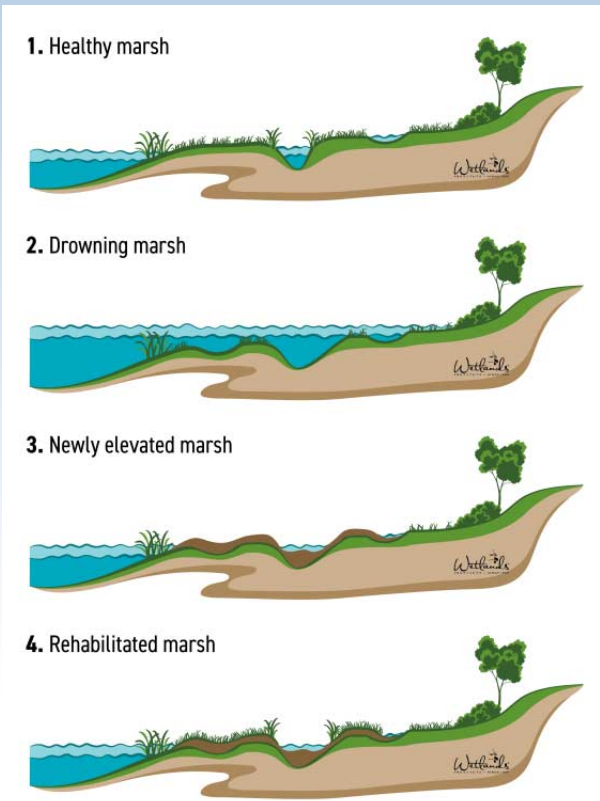
Environmental Protection (NJDEP), and five universities,* are diligently evaluating and monitoring marshes in the Seven Mile Island Innovation Lab (SMIIL) in Cape May County to understand how rapidly rising seas are degrading them and impacting the wildlife that depends on them. This work has determined that the marshes in the Cape May Coastal Wetlands Wildlife Management Area are drowning. What were lush meadows of unbroken grasses only a few years ago are changing to mudflats and open water pools right before our eyes.

The SMIIL has been developing the tools and techniques to save drowning marshes by utilizing clean sand and mud from water-way dredging to raise marshes and reestablish the balance they need to thrive. The project team has developed the experience and knowledge from eight projects that have already been implemented to enhance more than 85 acres of marsh so far. New Jersey is now a national leader in marsh restoration using tools developed right here. It's in our nature to respond and we are!

Moving into action

Thankfully, along with our partners, we have again moved from evaluation to action for our marshes and recently completed construction on the Scotch Bonnet Island marsh enhancement project. The initiative involved beneficially using 22,000 cubic yards of dredged sediment from the New Jersey Intracoastal Waterway to elevate roughly four acres of marsh by two to three feet. This equates to roughly 60 million pounds of sand or 2,500 dump truck loads of material. The sediment,

*Villanova University, Stockton University, Boston College, University of Pennsylvania and United States Naval Academy



tested and confirmed to be free of contaminants, is a mixture of fine sand and mud that creates a favorable substrate for marsh rehabilitation.

The channel dredging, performed by the Army Corps' contractor Barnegat Bay Dredging Company, was executed via hydraulic cutter-head dredging techniques. The sand and mud slurry was pumped through a floating pipeline to the receiving marshes where it was sprayed onto the marsh surface.

The slurry contains a high percentage of water that moved across the marsh surface. The team used 100 percent biodegradable coconut-fiber "logs" to create partially contained areas, which allowed them to build elevation in the most vulnerable areas of the marsh and retain the sediment in the areas where it is most needed while directing the sediment away from areas that are important to diamondback terrapins.

Once a sufficient volume of sediment was placed, a low ground pressure mini bulldozer

was used to spread material to the final construction target elevations. These elevations account for consolidation so that when the project fully settles the marsh is at suitable elevations for appropriate tidal inundation resulting in a healthy marsh. The project timing coincides with low levels of wildlife usage of the marsh to minimize short-term impacts, while maximizing the long-term benefits.

The dredged sediment will continue to stabilize over the winter prior to the return of wildlife in the spring. The goal is to elevate a portion of the marsh so that it has the appropriate balance with life-giving tides while enabling the marsh platform to regain resilience. The project area is part of the core of the Institute's laboratory and classroom, and this work helps ensure there are healthy and vibrant marshes for research and exploration for decades to come.

What we're learning

Our experience at completed beneficial use projects has shown that the resultant barren mud surface will cover over the marsh grasses and that it typically takes two growing seasons before new marsh grasses will begin growing back. We have found that planting has not been effective, nor has it accelerated the marsh recovery time, but there is plenty of marsh grass seed available for natural recruitment. Thus, we will be letting natural processes work their magic.

There will be different usage of the marsh areas during this recovery time. For example, we have seen gulls loafing and feeding on the higher marsh surfaces created by the projects, which is then followed by nesting attempts by some of the early adopters that include American Oystercatchers. Importantly, we have seen the resultant higher marsh areas serve as important refuge for birds of all types during storm flooding of the marsh. We know it will take a while for the marsh to regain the look of a marsh, but the added resilience that is gained by the marsh and the wildlife that depend on these marshes is well worth the wait.

A very large group of scientists and engineers have been working at Scotch Bonnet Island for the past several years to document wildlife usage and marsh structure and function. Our team was diligent in planning and designing this project and have a commitment to monitoring and managing the site to ensure the best possible outcomes. The project has provided important opportunities for natural resource managers, local municipalities and state and federal partners to see firsthand how clean dredged materials can be used to rehabilitate drowning marshes.

For more information please visit <https://wetlandsinstitute.org/scotchbonnet/>.



*In honor of
ANJEC's Founder and
First Executive Director*

Candace McKee Ashmun Memorial Fund

ANJEC established the Candace McKee Ashmun Memorial Fund in her honor to support the **ANJEC Open Space Stewardship Grant Program**. The annual program provides small grants to help environmental commissioners carry out local stewardship projects.



ANJEC.ORG/DONATE

To donate, use the QR code or mail a check to ANJEC, PO Box 157, Mendham NJ 07945.

Acting Locally



By **N. Dini Checko**, ANJEC Project Director; **Sheila Baker Gujral**, ANJEC Resource Center Director; **Michele Gaynor**, ANJEC Resource Center; and **Julie Lange Groth**, ANJEC Report Editor

Turning pages, not wasting them

*"Helping all children build their own library,
one story at a time."* – [Booksmiles.org](https://booksmiles.org)

When Environmental Commission (EC) member Mimi Zukoff, also Chair of the Summit Recycling Advisory Committee, found out that donated books were being incinerated, she jumped into action and started a program with BookSmiles.org. Previously, Summit residents would drop off books at the Book Barn but, according to Zukoff, "it frequently became unmanageable due to the high volume of books dropped off by residents." While paperback books could be recycled, hardcover books often had to be discarded.

"By partnering with BookSmiles.org, we're not only keeping more materials out

of the waste stream but also making books and reading accessible to more children," Zukoff explained.

BookSmiles' mission is to collect, sort and distribute donated books to children and families living in underserved communities in New Jersey and Philadelphia by providing other nonprofits and educators with children's books for classroom libraries, book fairs and food bank distributions. By diverting used children's books from landfills or pulpsters, they give new life to millions of books. Starting in infancy, children living in "book deserts" can build robust libraries of their own, inviting academic success. Since its inception, BookSmiles has promoted literacy and the joy of reading by giving more than 1,500,000 books to Philadelphia and New Jersey children who need them most.

The Summit Division of Public Works stores boxes of excess books at the Transfer Station until the next BookSmiles pickup. An estimated 300 million books end up in landfills each year! Communities and nonprofits can partner with Booksmiles.org through a variety of programs, such as "teacher take" programs, book drives or book upcycling.

– N. Dini Checko



Mimi Zukoff, Summit Recycling Advisory Committee Chair and Summit EC member (left) and Carter Fichter, Booksmiles Warehouse and Estate Manager. Photo by Summit EC

Keeping it cool in Camden

On August 24, deep in the dog days of summer, New Jersey American Water (NJAW)



Fun spinning ANJEC's water wheel at the Camden WaterFest

Photo by Sheila Baker Gujral

hosted a refreshing educational event, the first-ever Camden WaterFest. This gathering of community groups provided an array of educational and environmental demonstrations, children's activities and more. The event was held at Camden's Von Neida Park Splash Pad (which you can see at <https://tinyurl.com/bdf4zrwe>).

In addition to the fun water play, attendees could learn about water quality, stormwater, green infrastructure and stormwater utilities while talking with a slew of representatives from nonprofit organizations. ANJEC, NJAW, Flood Defense/New Jersey League of Conservation Voters, the Center for Aquatic Sciences, Sustainable South Jersey, PSEG, Urban Promise, the Center for Environmental Transformation, Hopeworks, Camden Special Services District, Girl Scouts of Central and South Jersey, the Food Bank of South Jersey, and the Salvation Army were all on hand to educate and share resources with local residents.

All these organizations focused on educating about some aspect of water. ANJEC offered a water footprint game wheel where people could test their water knowledge and learn about conservation efforts. Sustainable South Jersey had a blind taste test inviting attendees to choose between bottled water and tap water. (Spoiler alert – tap water won.) The Center for Aquatic Sciences provided live animal exhibits and promoted their upcoming Pyne Poynt Paddles, a recurring event that ANJEC has been happy to

participate in (<https://aquaticsciences.org/kayaking/>). To watch an interview with the Center for Aquatic Sciences that took place at the Pyne Poynt Paddling event this past September, visit www.instagram.com/anjecposts/reel/DABjo5tRskJ/.

Do you have an event where you want to educate about water? Or climate change? Environmental commissions can borrow educational games and displays from ANJEC that cover a variety of topics. Check out the options at <https://tinyurl.com/yyw347rc>.

– Sheila Baker Gujral

Jersey City embraces native plant ordinance

NJ is one of the top 10 producers of pollinator-dependent crops such as blueberries, cranberries, peaches, apples, tomatoes, bell peppers, eggplants, cucumbers and squash in the US, according to the Natural Resources Conservation Service. Some NJ towns realize this and are working to make sure pollinators have much needed habitat and food sources.

Recognizing the need to incorporate more native plants into the natural landscape, Jersey City developed one of the state's first native species ordinances, which was officially enacted this past spring. The new law is meant to ensure that current and future residents, along with their pollinator guests, enjoy the beauty of native plants and appreciate what pollinators bring to an urban environment.

What's unique about the Jersey City ordinance is the addition of a penalty clause for the destruction of rain gardens. Two of the City's rain gardens were mistakenly mowed over and they want to be sure this does not happen again.

The initial idea and wording for the ordinance were provided by Carol McNichol, Vice President of Wild Ones Gateway Chapter, and Lorraine Freeney, a co-leader of the Hudson Chapter of the Native Plant

Society of NJ. The ordinance was a collaborative effort between McNichol, Freeney and many City officials. Select council members were tapped to gauge interest, and drafts went back and forth for several months.

The ordinance will maximize the use of native plants on municipal properties and requires that a minimum of 50 percent of new plantings in the first year must be natives and the number will increase to 70 percent by the third year. The finished ordinance is very close to the original version, with the addition of the penalty clause for destruction of rain gardens. As the ordinance came to fruition, the Jersey City Environmental Commission (JCEC) provided a formal letter of support as well as education and outreach to help make the ordinance effective.

Other NJ towns with native plant ordinances include Mendham, Chatham Twp. and Millburn (pending passage). Contact ANJEC to obtain the Millburn EC's native plant slide show that was presented to the Township Committee.

– Michele Gaynor

Watch out for trolls in Burlington County!

If you happen to be visiting Burlington County, keep an eye out for their newest residents, 18 trolls made largely from recycled and natural materials. They can be found in locations throughout the county as part of the

Burlington County Troll Trek, a new public art exhibition organized by Burlington County Commissioners and the Burlington County Parks System to help spread a message about the importance of recycling, sustainability and the power of imagination.

Inspired by Big Rusty, the large troll created by world renowned artist Thomas Dambo at the site of Hainesport's future Creek Turn Park, the new trolls were made by artists and teams of artists in response to a Burlington County Parks System prospectus. Each artist/team was awarded a \$500 stipend to help cover their expenses. Among the various supporting sponsors were the Rancocas Valley High School Environmental Club, the Delanco Environmental Advisory Board and the Bordentown City Environmental Commission.

"Our Board of Commissioners and Parks System are very proud of the program and the response has been fantastic," reports David Levinsky of the Burlington County Public Information Office.

A downloadable PDF with active GPS coordinates to all 19 Trolls can be found at www.co.burlington.nj.us/2076/Troll-Trek-2024.

Sponsors encourage visitors to take photos with the trolls and post them on the Troll Trek Facebook event page @Troll Trek Launch @ Arts After Dark.

The new trolls are expected to remain on display through Dec. 31.

– Julie Lange Groth

Gracie the Gardener Troll located in Historic Smithville Park in Eastampton, created by Norma and John Neimeister
Photo by Burlington County



Stewarding your town's open space easements

By **Amanda Brockwell**, ANJEC Director of Development

New Jersey's open spaces are among our most precious resources. As one of the most densely populated states, New Jersey faces increasing pressure to develop land. However, through the dedication of local governments, environmental organizations and concerned citizens, many municipalities have established open space easements to protect land for public enjoyment, wildlife habitat and ecosystem services such as flood mitigation and carbon sequestration. Stewarding these easements – ensuring that they are maintained and protected over time – requires ongoing commitment, and environmental commissioners can play an important role

What are open space easements?

An open space or conservation easement is established by a legal agreement between a landowner and a municipality or conservation organization that restricts development or certain uses of the land. These easements are often voluntarily established by landowners who wish to

preserve the natural state of their property while still retaining ownership. Once in place, the easement becomes legally binding for current and future property owners, protecting the land in perpetuity.

Municipal open space easements are particularly important because they ensure that local governments have a role in protecting land within their communities. Many of these easements are acquired through open space preservation programs funded by local property taxes or state grants, such as New Jersey's Green Acres Program. Other municipal easements are required as part of the land development approval process to protect natural resources on a property from being degraded.

Challenges to stewardship

Establishing an easement is only the first step. The real challenge is ensuring that the land remains protected and that the conditions of the easement are upheld over time. Stewardship involves a range of activities, from monitoring the property for violations of the easement agreement to maintaining trails, removing invasive species and restoring



habitats. One of the most critical components of effective stewardship is regular monitoring.

Municipalities, often in partnership with local environmental commissions or non-profit land trusts, must inspect the property periodically to ensure compliance with the easement terms. For example, unauthorized development, illegal dumping or harmful land use changes must be identified and addressed promptly. Some municipalities rely on volunteers to assist with monitoring, while others hire professional staff or work with regional conservation organizations to ensure that easements are properly managed.

While the importance of stewardship is clear, municipalities often face challenges in fulfilling their responsibilities. Limited budgets and competing priorities can make it difficult for local governments to allocate sufficient resources for open space management. And, as the number of preserved properties grows, so does the need for ongoing maintenance, creating a strain on municipal staff and resources.

To address these challenges, municipalities can explore partnerships with environmental organizations and regional land trusts. Preservation groups such as the New Jersey Conservation Foundation or other local land trusts offer guidance, training and support for municipalities seeking to improve their stewardship efforts. Some towns have also created dedicated open space funds to finance long-term stewardship, ensuring that money is available for monitoring, enforcement and restoration activities.

The role of public engagement

Public involvement is key to the success of any open space stewardship program. Many municipalities in New Jersey encourage members of their environmental commissions to organize or volunteer for monitoring efforts, habitat restoration projects or invasive species removal initiatives. EC educational outreach also helps residents understand the value of open space and the importance of respecting easement boundaries.

Engaging the community not only enhances stewardship efforts but also builds broader support for future open space initiatives. When residents feel connected to the land, they are more likely to advocate for its protection and take pride in the preservation of local natural areas.

Stewarding municipally held open space and conservation easements is an essential, ongoing process that requires vigilance, resources and community support. By committing to the long-term care of these lands, New Jersey communities play a critical role in preserving the state's natural heritage for future generations. Through collaboration with environmental commissions, local environmental groups, State agencies, and the public, municipalities can ensure that these open spaces remain vibrant, healthy and accessible to all. 🌊

More info

- ANJEC guidance on creating a conservation easement inventory, easement acquisition, monitoring and stewardship: <https://anjec.org/conservation-easements-land-use/>
- Bernardsville's guidance to landowners with conservation easements: <https://tinyurl.com/95juk3s2>
- Conservation Easements in Monroe Twp. brochure: <https://tinyurl.com/mr2ehy6p>

Wetlands easements help landowners protect, restore and enhance wetlands. Credit USDA

ANJEC Environmental Congress Recap

NJ's changing climate and what to do about it

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



ANJEC was honored to host Dr. David Robinson, distinguished Professor of Geography and NJ's State Climatologist, Rutgers University, as the keynote speaker for ANJEC's 51st Environmental Congress.

In his presentation on climate change he described the phenomenon as long-term shifts in temperatures and weather patterns. Such shifts can be natural, due to changes in the sun's activity or large volcanic eruptions. But since the 1800s, human activities have been the main driver of climate change, primarily due to the burning of fossil fuels like coal, oil and gas. Burning fossil fuels generates greenhouse gas emissions that act like a blanket wrapped around the Earth, trapping the sun's heat and raising temperatures.

NJ's annual average temperatures are rising, Robinson explained. Record-keeping in NJ began in 1895 and, since then, 2012 stands as the warmest year on record, followed by 2022 as the second warmest, and 2023 as the third. Notably, since 1990, New Jersey hasn't had a single month rank among the five coldest on record.

NJ is also experiencing increased periods of drought. October 2024 has been the driest month in 130 years. At the same time, annual rainfall has been increasing by more than 14 inches per hundred years since 1980.

Dr. Robinson highlighted how many factors are related to weather and climate

such as altitude, latitude, surface conditions and land-water contrasts. For instance, surface conditions refer to temperature absorption, urban heat islands, humidity and precipitation.

New Jersey's climate future is ripe for intensifying temperatures, increased weather variability and extremes, and rising sea levels. As the Earth warms, ice caps and glaciers melt, and this water occupies more space, causing sea levels to rise. For every 1°C increase in atmospheric warming, there is a potential for 7 percent more water vapor. This added moisture leads to increased precipitation.

NJ is also prone to storm surges. A moderate risk assessment suggests that by 2100, there's a 17 percent chance that sea levels will rise by more than 5.1 feet, which could cause significant flooding in areas like Hoboken and Seaside Heights, leading to inundated streets, disrupted transportation, increased property damage and potential weather-related mortality.

What we can do

Dr. Robinson implored the audience to "... keep a watchful eye on NJ's weather and climate and be part of the solution. We have time to change this course through mitigative and adaptive actions. Locals trust Locals." He recommended:

- **Knowledge:** Develop a better understanding of the details of future



NJ State Climatologist David Robinson gave the keynote presentation at the ANJEC Environmental Congress on Sept. 27.

Photo by Taylor McFarland

(NJ PACT), a partnership with New Jerseyans to help both stave off the worst impacts of climate change and

climate change. Learn from the NJ Climate Change Resource Center (<https://njclimateresourcecenter.rutgers.edu/climate-change-101/>)

- Mitigation: Reduce emissions of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases that cause climate change (<https://dep.nj.gov/climatechange/>)
- Adaptation: Enhance the resilience of communities to the unavoidable impacts of climate change (<https://dep.nj.gov/climatechange/resilience/resilience-strategy/>)
- Participation: Increase public awareness of the challenges posed by climate change. Encourage involvement and be part of the solution. Vote. Participate in citizen science by taking daily observations through a program called the "Community Collaborative Rain, Hail and Snow Network (CoCoRaHS)." The program is open to volunteers of all ages (<https://cocorahs.org>).

NJ Protecting Against Climate Threats (NJ PACT)

In 2020, NJDEP began a regulatory reform effort to help reduce greenhouse gases (GHG) and other pollutant emissions while making our natural and built environments more resilient to the impacts of climate change that are now unavoidable. These reforms represent New Jersey's efforts to protect against climate threats

adapt to impacts already occurring across the state (<https://dep.nj.gov/njpact/>). There are two components of NJPACT: Resilient Environments and Landscapes (REAL) and Climate Pollutant Reduction (CPR).

Our long-term future has not yet been determined. We need to hold the vision and stay on the path by co-creating a healthier, stronger, safer NJ. 🌊

Resources:

- <https://climate.rutgers.edu/stateclim/>
- <https://cocorahs.org>

Thanks to ANJEC member communities

We are grateful to the thousands of volunteers serving as local officials in more than 300 municipalities and counties that are members of ANJEC. These dedicated people – from municipal and regional environmental commissions and green teams to open space committees, planning boards, governing bodies, shade tree commissions and zoning boards – dedicate their time and efforts to assure a clean environment and high quality of life in their communities throughout our State. Thank you! 🌊

ANJEC Environmental Congress Recap

2024 Environmental Achievement Awards

Environmental Commissions

Evesham Township Environmental Commission – 2023 Open Space and Recreation Plan Element of the Master Plan

The Evesham Township Community Development Office updated the municipal Open Space and Recreation Plan (OSRP) element of the Master Plan, taking over two years to complete. The adopted OSRP exceeds the minimum requirements of the NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) Green Acres program, serving as a visionary document to guide both preservation and park development goals to meet the needs of the community. The open space and recreation goals and objectives focus on protecting and preserving Evesham's natural resources, its agricultural heritage and scenic views while expanding and connecting preserved open spaces and providing recreational opportunities for residents.

Madison Borough Climate Action Committee – Climate Hub on Borough Website

Recognizing that local action is critical to the success of New Jersey's Energy Master Plan, Madison established a Climate Action Committee in 2022. The Committee works



Evesham's 2023 Open Space & Recreation Plan element of the Master Plan won an Environmental Achievement Award. ANJEC Executive Director Jennifer Coffey, second from left, is shown with EC Members.

Photo by Gary Szelc

with Borough department heads to consider climate goals in all facets of decision making. In 2023 the Committee broadened its outreach and launched an online Climate Hub (www.rosenet.org/1468/Climate-Hub) to inform residents and encourage them to take action. Hosted on the town's website, the Climate Hub details actions for the five major categories in the Borough Council's 2023 Climate Action Report, which was adopted in January of 2023. The categories are: 1) reduce transportation emissions; 2) accelerate renewable and clean energy; 3) improve energy efficiency and affordability; 4) reduce building emissions through electrification; and 5) build climate resilience.

Princeton Environmental Commission – Green House Tour

In September 2023, the Princeton Environmental Commission hosted a tour and



A Radically Radiant representative speaking at one of the stops on the award-winning Princeton Green House Tour. Photo by Sheila Baker Gujral

collection in May at the Hunterdon Land Trust market at a reasonable cost to those wishing to continue with the program.

Somerville Borough Environmental Commission – Peters Brook Tree Planting through NJ DEP Grant

As heavy rain events become more frequent, the Somerville Environmental Commission has

worked hard to mitigate flood damage in partnership with the Borough and the DEP in the tributary of Peters Brook. This area takes the brunt of storm water flooding in Somerville, which results in severe erosion and instability of its banks, further burdening the river system down-stream. The EC worked to replace the trees lost during past hurricanes along the riparian buffer zone to mitigate the effects of inland flooding. The newly presented reforestation project will plant approximately 150 trees in four parks, at street intersections, and along the greenway of Peters Brook.

event showcasing healthier, more energy-efficient homes and environments through green building practices, such as solar panels with energy storage, rain gardens, superior insulation, and much more. The two-day event allowed visitors to attend in-person house tours while engaging in dialogue with the owners, or to hear a presentation at the Princeton Public Library with a panel of homeowners, contractors and experts. The videos featured in the presentation are housed on the municipality's YouTube channel to serve as a resource for the community.

Raritan Township Environmental Commission – Food Waste Recycling and Composting

The Raritan Township Environmental Commission and Green Team partnered with Neighborhood Compost and two local farmers' markets, Stangl Market and Hunterdon Land Trust Market, to host weekly compost collections. With a \$10,000 grant from Sustainable Jersey/ PSEG Foundation and a handful of volunteers, the EC was able to implement a free household food waste collection program from June 2023 to May 2024. The program collected 6 ¼ tons of food waste from 115 households, demonstrating enough interest in food waste to enable the EC to recruit One Compost Can to take over the weekly

Spring Lake Heights Environmental Commission – Logo Design Contest

In an effort to increase community engagement, the Environmental Commission worked with the Spring Lake Heights Elementary School (K-8) to create a logo for the EC through a design contest. School staff and EC members judged the entries and, in June 2024, two winners were chosen who collaborated to create the final design. Through this partnership, the EC, elementary school staff, and the students themselves are excited to involve the children in future environmental projects, knowing how their inclusion will make a positive and lasting impact on the town and will open the door to many future projects and collaborations.

Toms River Township Environmental Commission – *Beach, Butterflies and Bees*

In 2023 Environmental Commissioner Sharon Quilter was in search of a unique project to complete her Rutgers Environmental Stewardship certification and, when walking Ortley beach, she spotted the sand and weeds between the parking lot and the boardwalk, and she imagined a pollinator garden. The Toms River Environmental Commission embraced the project and, with a grant from the American Water Company and help from the Ortley Beach Voter's and Taxpayers Association, hard-working volunteers, the Township and Ocean County, the project took shape. Plants were carefully selected to bloom from April until October and residents and visitors have delighted in the garden's beauty.

Watchung Borough Environmental Commission – *Riparian Buffer Restoration*

In early 2022, the Watchung Environmental Commission identified an area adjacent to a local lake in need of tree planting and native riparian vegetation. With the Borough's approval, the EC created a plan that included planting native trees, shrubs and flowering plants along the stream to help with flood control, improve water quality, and provide habitat for wildlife such as birds and other pollinators. The area was enlarged in 2023 and again in 2024 with more large trees as well as an educational sign informing the public about the riparian zone, the native vegetation and the benefits of the restoration.

Westville Borough Environmental Commission – *Environmental Resource Inventory*

In 2021, Westville Environmental Commission members attended an ANJEC webinar explaining the contents and value of an Environmental Resource Inventory (ERI.) Shortly afterward, the Commission petitioned the mayor and council to use state grant funds to create an ERI for Westville. The project was approved by all involved and later that year the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC)

was awarded the contract. After numerous hours and a three-hour bus tour of the Borough, the ERI was completed in July 2024. The Commission is especially proud of the EC logo that was designed by member Jeff Storms, which is displayed on the cover page. The ERI can be found online at www.dvrpc.org/products/22180.

2024 Recurring project awards AmeriCorps New Jersey Watershed Ambassadors Program – *Projects in the Parks 2024*

Now in its fourth year, the legacy initiative Projects in The Parks is a stewardship program planned and coordinated by AmeriCorps Watershed Ambassadors during the month of March in partnership with a New Jersey state park, forest, or historic site. The initiative has included invasive species removal, trash clean-ups, rain barrel sales, tree plantings, and maintenance or cleanup of pollinator gardens. With an increased presence across the state during National AmeriCorps Week-the second week of March- Projects in the Parks is timed to improve our state parks before the busy spring season.

Chester Township Environmental Commission – *Native Plant Sale*

Dormant for almost a decade due to a lack of volunteer help, the Chester Township Environmental Commission revived its native plant sale in 2023. The second annual sale occurred this past May. Through the dedication of volunteers and Julie Gause's leadership, 300 plants were sold. Positive feedback from Township residents and beyond reminded the community of the popularity and necessity of a native plant in the area.

NONPROFIT ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS

Advocates Transforming Landscaping in New Jersey (ATL-NJ) – *Lets Transform Landscaping in New Jersey*

ATL-NJ was formed in January of 2020 to support a shared desire to reduce the use of gas-powered leaf blowers and other two-

stroke lawn maintenance equipment as well as to promote sustainable landscaping practices. The goal of ATL-NJ is to support members' local efforts (i.e. education, ordinance development, etc.) and advocate for statewide legislation. The group meets on a quarterly basis and over the past year has testified before the NJ Senate Environment and Energy Committee, held virtual educational sessions, and created a Sustainable Landscape checklist that is available in both English and Spanish.

East Brunswick Hadassah, East Brunswick Sustainability Task Force, East Brunswick Public Library and Friends of the East Brunswick Environmental Commission – *Food Choices for a Small Planet*

In May 2024, the East Brunswick Hadassah, East Brunswick Sustainability Task Force, East Brunswick Public Library, and Friends of the East Brunswick Environmental Commission hosted an in-person event titled Food Choices for a Small Planet: Sustainable Diet and Food Waste Practices for Families and Communities. This hybrid event took place at the East Brunswick Public Library as well as online via Zoom. It featured a forum of four Rutgers faculty members discussing how to prevent food waste and decrease the consumption of meat at home, school and work. One lucky participant won a book titled, "Cook More, Waste Less," and the participants enjoyed sustainable, healthy snacks before and after the presentation.

Fair Haven Borough Green Team – *Third Street Trail Pollinator Garden*

Fair Haven's Third Street is a frequented passageway that connects the Borough's elementary school to the middle school. It is adjacent to three open spaces, one of which is the Third Street Trail connecting pedestrians to the Borough's sports fields and recreation areas. In 2022 the trail had been overlooked for a long time and overgrown with invasive plants when volunteers took charge and planted over 113 native trees after removing the

invasives. This pathway inspired the Fair Haven Green Team to plant a pollinator garden along the route later that year and educated residents on native plants and pollinators, their plight and importance.

Musconetcong Watershed Association – *Musconetcong Island Park*

In January 2023, the Musconetcong Watershed Association (MWA) demolished a former two-story concrete abandoned laboratory in Asbury with a vision of creating a park. Formerly Asbury Carbons on a quarter-acre parcel in the middle of the Musconetcong River, the piece was deeded to MWA who secured funding to document the history of the area and build a new public park in the middle of the River. Since its opening in April 2023, Musconetcong Island Park has become a favorite spot for parties, plant sales, fishing events and other river-related activities. The park is connected to the Asbury Historic District in Franklin and Bethlehem Townships by a sidewalk on County Road 643.

Northern New Jersey Community Foundation – *Green Infrastructure for Environmental Justice*

Green Infrastructure for Environmental Justice is a diverse collaborative initiative designed to reduce flooding and address other environmental issues in Hackensack. Its goal is to make the city greener, cleaner, healthier, more beautiful and more sustainable for everyone. The program is led by the Northern New Jersey Community Foundation (NNJCF) in partnership with the City of Hackensack, Hackensack Public Schools, Greater Bergen Community Action, and several community-based organizations in Hackensack. Since March 2023, more than 200 people have gotten involved in rain garden installations, education on rain barrels and environmental art projects.

Social Responsibility Through Me – *Community Health and Clean Air Project*

The Community Health and Clean Air Project is a vital initiative conducted by

Camden nonprofit organization Social Responsibility Through Me (SRTM) in collaboration with Johns Hopkins University and Rutgers University. This research-driven effort is dedicated to analyzing air quality in Camden City and empowering community members with the knowledge and tools necessary to address and manage poor air quality. An important goal of the project is to build strong coalitions among existing environmental justice initiatives in Camden and, through these efforts, the Community Health and Clean Air project seeks to foster a healthier, more informed and proactive community capable of advocating for its environmental rights and wellbeing.

Somerset County Office of Emergency Management – Reforestation Efforts to Build a More Resilient Somerset County
Through the New Jersey American Water environmental grant program, the Somerset County Office of Emergency Management (OEM) was granted funds to reforest a floodplain in the Weston section of Manville where the Royce Brook runs before joining the Millstone River. Natural stormwater "storage areas" were created by planting a total of 280 native trees and shrubs to help with runoff while providing clean water, habitat and food for wildlife.

2024 MUNICIPAL LEADERSHIP AWARDS

Alfred Anthony, Mayor, Livingston Township, Essex County
Mayor Alfred Anthony served as an Environmental Commissioner in Livingston as well as the liaison to the Environmental Commission when he was a Livingston Council member. As the current mayor, Anthony



Livingston Mayor Al Anthony (center front) won an ANJEC Municipal Leadership Award. He is flanked by ANJEC Board President Marion McClary, Jr., Ph.D., (left) and NJDEP Commissioner Shawn LaTourette, and with ANJEC Executive Director (back left) and Livingston team members in the rear.

Photo by Taylor McFarland

continues to support the EC and has approved the appointment of high school students to the Commission. Anthony is an environmental attorney and serves as Special Counsel to the Attorney General for Natural Resource Damages litigation on behalf of the State of New Jersey.

Talaya Loftin, Council Member-at-Large, Florence Township, Burlington County
Elected as Council Member-at-Large in 2023, Talaya Loftin got to work revamping the Environmental Commission in Florence Township. The Commission's efforts have earned the Sustainable Jersey Bronze certification and a successful grant application has afforded the opportunity to establish pollinator gardens. Loftin has worked with a team of dedicated volunteers representing the EC at community events, handing out vegetable seedlings and other plants to encourage backyard gardening, as well as inviting residents to join tree planting and community cleanup events.

Sarah Pomphrey, Council Member, Rumson Borough, Monmouth County
As Borough Council liaison to the Environ-

mental Commission, Council member Sarah Pomphrey demonstrates strong leadership and support for environmental initiatives within the Borough of Rumson. Pomphrey has helped facilitate the installation of green infrastructure projects in two parks and a local school, aided in the creation of a speaker series at the Green Fair to help

educate folks on ways they can become more sustainable, and fought to have the Borough's Environmental Resource Inventory assessed and added to Master Plan. Pomphrey's dedication is also evident through her active involvement in the Rumson Junior Green Team. 🌱

Special Section:

ANJEC Environmental Congress Recap

Candace McKee Ashmun Environmental Legacy Award

Christopher C. Obropta, Ph.D., PE is the Director of the New Jersey Water Resources Research Institute, an Extension Specialist in Water Resources with Rutgers Cooperative Extension, and a Professor with the Department of Environmental Sciences at the School of Environmental and Biological Sciences, Rutgers University. Dr. Obropta leads a highly specialized staff from the Rutgers Cooperative Extension Water

Resources Program to identify and address water resources issues by engaging and empowering communities, helping them employ practical, science-based solutions to help create a more equitable and sustainable New Jersey. Over the last twenty years, he and his staff have been working with communities throughout New Jersey to implement green infrastructure practices to help increase their climate resilience. 🌱



Chris Obropta (center) and his team accepted the Candace McKee Ashmun Award Photo by Taylor McFarland





51st ANJEC Environmental Congress



Photos by Gary Szelc and Taylor McFarland



ANJEC Environmental Congress Recap

A call to act on PFAS contamination

from DEP Commissioner Shawn LaTourette

By **Hana Katz**, ANJEC Policy and Project Manager

Environmental challenges can unfold over decades and build momentum until their impacts are unavoidable and damaging. Speaking at ANJEC's 51st Environmental Congress New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) Commissioner Shawn LaTourette stressed the shared responsibility of all stakeholders to care for our environment and underscored the vital role of environmental commissions in overcoming these challenges.

"Environmental problems take a long time to materialize and then, once they do, they take a long time to fix," LaTourette observed, framing the issue as a generational challenge. "That means we all have an obligation and responsibility to it and, by extension, to one another." He called on government, businesses and individuals to work collaboratively toward solutions, recognizing that environmental stewardship is a collective endeavor.

PFAS a growing threat

Among the critical issues LaTourette addressed was the growing concern over per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS), often called "forever chemicals." These



NJDEP Commissioner Shawn LaTourette

Photo by Taylor McFarland

synthetic compounds are resistant to environmental breakdown, making them notoriously difficult to manage. Found in products ranging from firefighting foam to household items, PFAS contamination presents a significant risk to public health and ecosystems.

Reflecting on the DEP's approach, LaTourette shared an honest assessment of

the complexities involved in tackling PFAS.

"We need to think longer on a greater time horizon," he said, urging stakeholders to consider the lasting impact of their actions. The Commissioner emphasized the importance of addressing contamination at its sources, focusing on waste streams and legacy pollutants such as landfills.

Despite the difficulties, LaTourette reaffirmed the DEP's commitment to advocating for federal funding to support PFAS mitigation efforts and called on attendees to engage their local officials. He encouraged environmental commissions to play a proactive role, suggesting they investigate potential PFAS leaching from legacy landfills – a significant but often overlooked source of contamination.

ECs can lead the charge

Environmental commissions are uniquely positioned to translate LaTourette's vision into tangible municipal action. These local bodies can serve as both watchdogs and collaborators, identifying sources of contamination and advocating for sustainable policies. For instance, environmental commissions can push for comprehensive testing and remediation programs for PFAS-contaminated sites, such as aging landfills, while also promoting public awareness about the risks of these chemicals.

Environmental commissions can also work alongside municipal governments to develop and implement ordinances that reduce reliance on PFAS-containing materials. Partnering with State agencies, they can help ensure that federal funding for remediation is utilized effectively within their communities.

"Environmental commissions were established as a feature of our municipal governments to offer accountability partnership to the other actors within this political and governance system," LaTourette explained. He emphasized that their role is rooted in the understanding that "there is no one single steward responsible for the environment that we all share."


Environmental commissions play a key role in regulation by being important advisors to municipal officials. They can engage residents through education and outreach, raise awareness about the risks of contamination and the importance of remediation, and bridge opportunities for the municipality to utilize. By uniting stakeholders and shaping policies that prevent further pollution, commissions ensure remediation efforts protect both community health and environmental safety.

Looking around the corner

LaTourette's call to think beyond short-term political and economic cycles is particularly relevant for municipalities. Environmental commissions can champion policies that prioritize sustainability and resilience over immediate gains. For example, they can promote stormwater management practices that prevent chemical runoff or support land-use planning that minimizes environmental impacts. By fostering a culture of accountability and collaboration, environmental commissions can also engage residents in meaningful dialogue about environmental challenges. Educating communities about PFAS and other contaminants can build public support for local and statewide initiatives.

A challenge and an invitation

LaTourette's reflections on the difficulty of managing PFAS highlight the urgency of proactive measures, while his emphasis on shared responsibility calls for collaboration at every level. Environmental commissions are critical to bridging the gap between State-level priorities and local action, ensuring that New Jersey's environmental goals are both ambitious and achievable.

As LaTourette noted, "We need to better care for our shared resources, even if other people don't want to hear it." This commitment to long-term thinking and collective action is essential for protecting the environment we all depend on. 

Affordable housing update

By **Sandy Batty**, former ANJEC Executive Director

A new law signed by Gov. Murphy on March 20, 2024, sets the procedures for implementing the fourth round of New Jersey's affordable housing regulations (<https://tinyurl.com/4xuh57bm>). It requires the State Department of Community Affairs (DCA) to establish obligation numbers and municipalities to submit plans describing how they will provide for their fair share of affordable housing over the next decade. The law exempts urban aid municipalities from any obligation.

The legislation revised the *Fair Share Housing Act*, which was created in response to the Mount Laurel court decisions saying that each municipality has a constitutional obligation to provide for low- and moderate-income housing.

On October 20, the DCA released a report on the methodology (<https://tinyurl.com/3yv8hrer>), and the numbers for the municipalities' present and prospective need for housing. Municipalities must now pass a binding resolution by January 31, 2025, that adopts their present and prospective fair share obligations and describes the basis for the municipality's determination of its numbers. Towns that comply will have immunity from exclusionary zoning litigation by developers to increase the density of their projects.

Municipal officials will probably need help from

professional planners to respond to the technicalities of determining obligation numbers. However, local officials should be actively involved in the next step – planning how to meet the obligations. The municipality must adopt a housing element and fair share plan of its master plan by June 30, 2025.

In planning for housing, environmental commissioners can help their towns analyze the potential of remaining vacant land. The information in their environmental resource inventories can identify land constrained by slopes, wetlands and floodplains or protected as open space and parkland. Ruling sensitive areas out, the municipality can then plan for new housing on suitable land without constraints. They can also identify areas in need of redevelopment, or vacant office or industrial areas that might be rezoned for housing. With a comprehensive plan that considers the land capacity for additional development, a municipality can meet its affordable housing requirement. 💧



Grant will support ANJEC efforts

By Julie Lange Groth, ANJEC Report Editor

ANJEC has been awarded a \$190,500 grant from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) to help build capacity for construction of natural green stormwater infrastructure projects in underserved communities in the Rancocas Creek Watershed. The grant will provide strategic resources and support to nine existing municipal environmental commissions in the watershed and help to establish additional environmental commissions. These efforts will help to advance comprehensive watershed improvements that prevent flooding and water pollution and provide pollinator habitat.

The Rancocas Creek Watershed covers 360 square miles in west central New Jersey, including 33 municipalities within portions of Burlington, Camden and Ocean Counties.

"We are thrilled to have NFWF advance the work of environmental commissions in the Rancocas Watershed to improve community resilience to the impacts of climate change," said ANJEC Executive



A painted turtle suns himself on a log in Rancocas Creek in Burlington County NJ.

Director Jennifer Coffey. "We're very proud that ANJEC, along with our member environmental commissions, have played an influential role in NJ's recent environmental milestones, from the strongest plastic pollution law in the nation to landmark flood hazard regulations that will save untold lives and property."

Funding for this grant came from the US Fish and Wildlife Service, with additional support this year from the USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service, AstraZeneca, and the William Penn Foundation. 💧

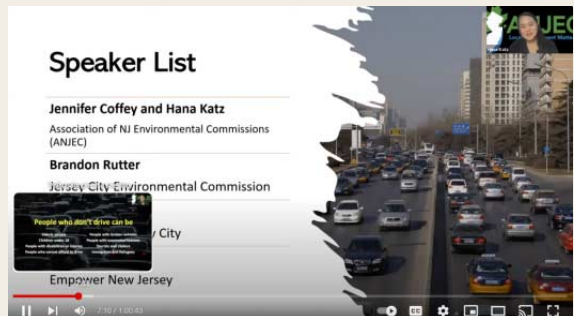
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- View presentations you may have missed;
- Provide training for new environmental commission members; and
- Share valuable content with municipal officials.

Find it all at ANJEC Views at YouTube.com. 💧



Local flood reporting – There is an APP for that!

By **Randi K Rothmel**, ANJEC Project Director

Whether you live along the coast or near a creek, river or bay we have all experienced flooding from stronger and more intense rainfall, hurricanes, sea-level rise or just tidal inundation. Many areas are flooding that have never flooded before, and understanding where that flooding is occurring is important for government agencies, business owners, residents and other stakeholders to make informed decisions on ways we can become more resilient in the face of climate change.

Our waters connect us all – not just the coast – and reporting a flood event through the MyCoast NJ APP (<https://mycoast.org/nj>) is a way for citizens to document flooding throughout NJ. The MyCoast APP is a portal used to collect and analyze your photos of flooding events by linking them to data about weather and tides to create reports.

The APP – downloadable for both iPhones and androids – consists of these five tools:

- **High Water** – You can upload your photos here to track flooding across the state. Photos and reports of flooding submitted by other citizen scientists are also available here. In addition, the high water photos are integrated as a layer on the NJAdapt Flood Mapper (www.njfloodmapper.org/), an interactive mapping tool developed by Rutgers University that allows users to conduct flood exposure analysis based on best available science.
- **Know Your Tides** – This tool allows you to check your local tide level. Tracking tide heights and times is essential to planning a perfect day anywhere on the water.

- **Places We Love** – This tool simply allows you to upload pictures of your favorite spots along the water (ocean, river, creek or bay) to document the places we love in NJ. A new project led by Stockton University Coastal Research Center (USCRP) is looking for photos of Little Egg Harbor (LEH) to help understand sediment transport. Upload LEH photos to "places we love" and tag USCRP.
- **Photo Stations** – This is a community shoreline monitoring tool. Currently six stationary camera stands are positioned at five coastal locations: Liberty State Park (2 stations), Cheesquake State Park, Island Beach State Park, Margate City and Cape May Point State Park. By using these stations to take and submit pictures, you are helping to document climate/coastal changes through a time-lapse collection of photos. For more information view this short video – <https://youtu.be/49PNtSrtfHE?t=19>
- **Rising Together NJ** – This tool allows you to share your own personal flooding story on the MyCoast website or through social media. A simple form can be filled out to document your story and submit pictures or a short video.

How can environmental commissions(ECs) be involved?

ECs can promote the use of this app within your community through social media and posting a link to MyCoast on your township website. ECs can also download reports from MyCoast to present to your town council so they are aware of where and when local flooding events are occurring and can use this information in planning for the future. Reports can be utilized in many ways including planning, project siting and grant



Cliffwood beach before high tide...and after hightide. Photos by Pat Noble

proposals. You can also sign up for information on Coastal Training programs at <https://tinyurl.com/2s763kua>.

More information about MyCoast and how it has been used by a local resident in Aberdeen can be viewed in a webinar recorded in June 2024 at <https://youtu.be/gWgd9BhAevA>.

The MyCoast NJ program is funded by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and the New Jersey Coastal Management Program, Department of Environmental Protection in partnership with the Jacques Cousteau National Estuarine Research Reserve and Rutgers University Department of Marine and Coastal Sciences.



On October 9, the New Jersey Keep It Green (NJKIG) coalition celebrated the 10-year anniversary of voter approved funding to protect New Jersey's open spaces, historic sites and farmland. NJKIG is made up of more than 150 statewide, local, and regional organizations committed to land preservation and conservation, agriculture, historic preservation, parks and recreation, and environmental protection. Among its recent successful campaigns is the restoration of \$60M annually in State funding for farmland, historic and open space preservation and hazardous community cleanup funding that was lost in January 2024 with the elimination of the CBT surcharge. NJKIG leaders supported and successfully advocated for the Corporate Transit Fee to be implemented through the Corporate Business Tax securing approximately \$1B in annual funding for the next five years as well as the restoration of funding for preservation and hazardous cleanup funding again totaling approximately \$200M annually.

Pictured from left are current and past NJKIG leaders: Liz Silvernail, Conserve Wildlife Foundation; Jaclyn Rhoads, Deputy Director Pinelands Preservation Alliance; Tom Gilbert, President Pennsylvania Environmental Council; and Jennifer Coffey, Executive Director ANJEC. Not pictured: current NJKIG cochairs Alex Ireland, President & CEO NJ Audubon, and Ed Potosnak, Executive Director NJLVC.

The power of planned giving

Securing a healthy environment for future generations

By **Amanda Brockwell**, ANJEC Director of Development

Planned giving is a vital way for individuals to make a lasting impact on causes they care about by including charitable organizations in their estate plans. It involves making a financial gift as part of a long-term strategy, such as through a will, trust or retirement plan. Planned givers leave a legacy that aligns with their values while providing essential support to nonprofits like ANJEC.

For ANJEC, planned giving is a crucial source of stability. Unlike annual donations or one-time contributions, planned gifts are often more substantial and are designed to have a long-term effect on the organization's future. This forward-thinking approach enables nonprofits to invest in their mission with greater confidence, ensuring they can continue their work for years to come. A planned gift to ANJEC contributes to sustained environmental education, advocacy and protection of NJ's natural resources, helping to address environmental challenges like climate change, water quality and open space preservation.

People make planned gifts for a variety of reasons. Many do so to create a meaningful legacy that reflects their lifelong values and priorities. For some, it's an opportunity to support causes they may not have been able to fund as significantly as they wished during their lifetime. Others are motivated by financial benefits, such as tax incentives, or the opportunity to provide for loved




Your contribution supports local environmental action like this wildflower meadow planting in Liberty Twp.

Photo by Liberty Twp.

ones while also giving back to their community.

Why make a planned gift to ANJEC?

By making a planned gift to ANJEC, donors play a vital role in ensuring that future generations inherit a healthier, more sustainable environment. Planned giving not only strengthens ANJEC's ability to address today's environmental challenges but also guarantees that ANJEC's work will continue far into the future.

For more information on how to include ANJEC in your estate planning, please contact your financial planning professional. If you are considering a planned or Donor Advised Fund gift to ANJEC, the EIN to utilize is 23-7123285. If you have additional questions, please contact Amanda Brockwell, Director of Development & Donor Relations, at abrockwell@anjec.org. 



ANJEC Membership Information & Forms
anjec.org/memberships

The value of ANJEC membership for effective ECs

By Georgia Madiba, ANJEC Membership Manager

There are plenty of great reasons why more and more environmental commissions (ECs) are enjoying the benefits of ANJEC membership. ANJEC provides ECs with education and resources to accomplish their vital work.

Education is at the core of ANJEC membership with training and webinars offered year-round on timely environmental topics, including our annual fundamentals training for new and existing EC members. Membership also includes a subscription to both the ANJEC Report (our quarterly magazine), the *ANJEC News* (a bi-weekly e-news digest) and timely email alerts. Lauren Wasilauski of the Montgomery Township Environmental Commission attests to how ANJEC membership helps ECs become strong and knowledgeable: **"ANJEC helps to keep us up to date on the latest innovations, legislation and challenges facing the environmental community."**

Members are continually empowered by the expertise, toolkits and sample ordinances provided by ANJEC's Resource Center staff, another benefit of membership. **"The people with ANJEC are a priceless resource, generous with their time and knowledge, and if they don't know the answer they'll direct you to someone who does,"** wrote Michelle Tyler of the Glen Rock Environmental Commission.

ANJEC bolsters local action and believes that opportunities to network with other environmental groups will foster positive change to protect New Jersey's natural resources.

In a recent survey, Tammy Sands of the Princeton Environmental Commission affirmed the value of networking as an ANJEC member: **"Being a member has allowed Princeton to network with other ECs and attend various ANJEC offerings to expand our knowledge and obtain inspiration for the municipality's further development and effectiveness."**

Remember to renew for 2025

Visit anjec.org/memberships to join or renew your membership. Submit the invoice to your municipal office and please remember to send a current list of EC members to ANJEC so everyone will enjoy full membership benefits. For questions, please contact Georgia Madiba, ANJEC Membership Manager, at gmadiba@anjec.org.

Insider Tip: Remember to include membership in your EC's 2025 budget 💧

ANJEC membership offers:

- Trainings, workshops, and webinars offered in-person and virtually on timely environmental topics
- Expertise and toolkits from ANJEC's Resource Center staff
- Access to sample ordinances, plans, resource papers and manuals
- Subscription to the ANJEC Report, the *ANJEC News* bi-weekly e-news digest and timely email alerts
- Opportunities to network with other environmental groups
- Portable games and displays for loan on a variety of environmental topics, for use at fairs and events



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Virtual Sessions:

Tuesday, March 18, 7:00 pm

Wednesday, March 19, noon

Wednesday, March 19, 7:00 pm

Thursday, March 20, 7:00 pm

In person session:

Date and time to be announced

Details and registration will be available soon at www.anjec.org

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