



ANJEC REPORT

Local Environment Matters

SPRING 2025

Inside:

- **Special section – Defending native species**
- **Innovative funding for stormwater protection**
- **Hard working landscape makeovers**



ANJEC
Executive
Director
Jennifer Coffey

Photo by Taylor McFarland

Director's Report

ANJEC's Board of Trustees adopted a new Strategic Plan in February. It guides the ways in which we build community and develop new programs to support the increasingly important roles of Environmental Commissions (ECs). ANJEC is leaning into solving the biggest environmental challenges of our day while advancing ANJEC's mission to promote local action to protect and restore New Jersey's natural resources and ensure equitable, healthy communities.

Here is our vision for the next five years:

ANJEC and Environmental Commissions will lead the way for New Jersey's continued progress enhancing climate resilience and a healthier environment for all. We will invest in community solutions to national, State and local challenges. Science and data-driven policies and practices will guide our actions to protect and regenerate our shared environment and support inclusive, equitable access to New Jersey's natural resources.

We know that when local activism and statewide policy are effectively connected, they influence each other to create meaningful progress. ANJEC plays a fundamental role in this process, providing resources and support to local environmental and community health advocates, driving statewide policy initiatives and connecting local and statewide priorities to generate progress.

In our Strategic Plan, ANJEC also reaffirms our commitment to advancing environmental justice. We are committed to ensuring that everyone in NJ lives in a safe, healthy environment. Communities of

color, Indigenous communities and low-income neighborhoods are often subjected to the worst environmental conditions, experiencing the negative health impacts of pollution at higher rates than other areas.

The environmental justice movement aims to reverse the impacts of environmental policies that create disproportionate harm so that all people can benefit from a healthy environment. This work also improves the overall quality of New Jersey's environment, since the impact of pollution does not confine itself to municipal borders. By supporting local involvement in environmental advocacy and sound State policy, ANJEC helps to ensure that all communities have a voice in the health and safety of their towns.

Underscoring the importance of ECs

In the coming months, you will hear more about our plans to strengthen the interconnections, influence and impact of more than 5,000 environmental commissioners in over 300 urban, suburban and rural communities across the Garden State. ANJEC is adopting goals that lean into efforts where we have been successful together and challenge us where there is more work to be done. Our goals for the next five years include:

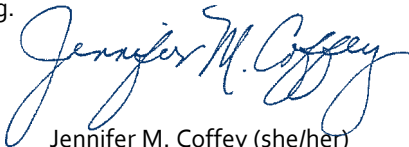
- *strengthening the role that ECs play in ensuring strong policies and actions that favor the environment and promote healthy communities;*
- *advancing NJ's efforts to reduce the impact of climate change and protect clean drinking water;*
- *advancing environmental justice in overburdened communities and preventing the harm that exacerbates injustices;*
- *enhancing ANJEC's position as trusted and reliable resource for local environmental action among multiple constituencies.*

Change is upon us


We're predicting significant changes in both environmental policies and the availability of federal funding over the next

few years. We know that local action to protect our shared environment and build cleaner, healthier communities is even more important now. With traditional funders reducing support for environmental work, you will see new programming in alignment with our goal to promote stable, long-term success so ANJEC can continue to be your go-to source for tools, resources, technical support and small grants.

We are grateful to the hundreds of individuals who participated in group discussions, one-on-one interviews and surveys that helped us to build this plan to meet the needs of ECs and the communities they serve. We owe a special thanks to the talented Allison Trimarco of Creative Capacity for leading the yearlong effort that culminated in ANJEC's new Strategic Plan. Watch for more information on anjec.org.



Jennifer M. Coffey (she/her)
Executive Director



ANJECREPORT
Local Environment Matters

Library Subscription
\$18.00
ISSN 1538-0742

Vol. 45 / No. 2 SPRING 2025

564 MUNICIPALITIES ONE ENVIRONMENT

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.

The *REPORT* welcomes articles and photographs but is not responsible for loss or damage. Opinions expressed by guest authors do not necessarily reflect ANJEC policy. Articles may be reprinted with permission and credit. Please address correspondence to ANJEC REPORT, PO Box 157, Mendham, NJ 07945; tel: 973-539-7547. E-mail: info@ANJEC.org. Website: www.anjec.org.

In this issue:

- 2 Director's Report
- 4 Acting Locally
- 8 Maplewood approves stormwater utility to manage flooding and improve infrastructure
- 10 NJ activist Alice Paul honored with a rain garden
- 12 Special section: Defending native species
- 12 Smart planting for a healthy environment
- 16 What towns are doing to promote native plants and discourage invasive species
- 18 The Landscape Makeover Program: Restoring New Jersey's ecosystems
- 20 Landscape Makeover in Action
- 22 Ordinances for climate friendly landscapes
- 24 Ninth try is the charm for plastics bill
- 25 Bill to control invasive species moves forward
- 26 The language of hope: Reframing environmental narratives
- 28 Remembering Anne Farlow Morris 1938-2024
- 29 Tax-free IRA contributions protect NJ's environment
- 30 2025 Fundamentals for Effective Environmental Commissions Training

On the cover: A spring peeper perches on the stem of a native bleeding heart plant. Photo by Jay Ondreicka



By Jennie Aylward, ANJEC volunteer;
Randi Rothmel, PhD, ANJEC Project Director;
and Julie Lange Groth, ANJEC Report Editor

Everyone wins with clean storm drains

A simple solution to flooding and waterway pollution may be literally right around the corner at your nearest storm drain. People can help municipalities remove the debris that clogs and pollutes local storm drains. Last autumn, Kim Diamond wanted to give residents a little motivation to keep storm drains clear in Berkeley Heights Township, where she is an Environmental Commission (EC) member.

"People are always down for a friendly competition," Diamond observed, so she had the idea to challenge neighboring Chatham Township to a contest.

"It's great to do things that make people feel like they have skin in the game, are easy to do, and are fun," she explained.

Residents of the two towns were asked to track and compare how much debris they collected from storm drains they signed up to "adopt" between October 31 and November 28. Given the contest's Halloween start date, Diamond added a catchy seasonal theme, calling it the "No More Scary Drain" contest.

Municipal Adopt-a-Drain programs originated in Minnesota in 2014 and are now in 11 states. Berkeley Heights became an Adopt-a-Drain partner city in 2021, and Chatham joined in 2024.



Kim Diamond removes debris from a storm drain in Berkeley Heights, which was selected this year as a model national Adopt-a-Drain municipality. Photo by D. Steiner

How they did

Chatham's residents removed an estimated eight pounds of debris from their adopted drains during the 2024 contest, which also raised awareness and prompted the adoption of five new drains. Berkeley Heights residents collected an estimated 91 pounds, maintaining momentum for a program that has removed over two tons of debris from drains over the past four years.

There are only winners when communities come together to protect water and prevent flooding. Chatham Environmental Commission member Jessica Romeo agreed that the contest was a success.

“Our community embraced it,” Romeo said.
— Jennie Aylward

Engineered tree bed captures stormwater runoff in Vineland

Founded in 1952, the City of Vineland has significant untreated stormwater runoff that contributes to the nonpoint source pollution of local waterways. ANJEC received a grant from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation to help Vineland manage stormwater by installing several green infrastructure projects.

One of the proposed projects was to install an extended tree pit to treat previously unmanaged stormwater runoff from a parking lot. According to the Rutgers Stormwater Tree Bed Guidance (<https://tinyurl.com/yt8gut8j>), “Using stormwater tree pits to capture and filter stormwater runoff before it enters local waterways is a great way to improve the

health of urban and suburban waterways and to take pressure off of existing storm sewer systems.”

ANJEC’s grant partner Rutgers Cooperative Extension Water Resources Program worked with Vineland engineers to design the project, which was installed on East Elmer Street in Vineland City by Rahn Contracting (Williamstown, NJ).

An existing section of the asphalt parking lot and adjacent turf planting strip were removed and replaced with 4,615 square feet of structural subsoil. The Cornell University-engineered subsoil (CU-Structural Soil) is designed to bear the load of the pavement and provide room for the roots of the installed trees to grow. Many urban trees have limited soil volumes due to compacted soils that affect their health. In urbanized areas, engineered tree beds provide benefits to both tree health and stormwater management.

Open trench drains installed along the new parking lot curb intercept and collect the stormwater runoff and direct it into the structural soil below the parking lot and tree beds. The expanded storage volume allows infiltration through the structural soil into the groundwater while providing water to the four serviceberry trees planted in the turf strip.

This is the first successfully installed tree bed project coordinated by ANJEC and Rutgers, and it demonstrates an environ-

A tree pit under construction in Vineland

Photo by Randi Rothmel



mentally friendly approach to stormwater management. This one project will manage 464,818 gallons of stormwater per year with a yearly pollutant removal of 0.6 lbs. of total phosphorus, 5.3 lbs. of total nitrogen, and 77.4 lbs. of total suspended solids. A maintenance program included as part of this project ensures it will continue to improve water quality and reduce flooding for years to come. — Randi Rothmel



E-scooter trips replaced more than 20,000 car trips in Asbury Park in 2024.

Asbury Park avoids emissions with e-scooters

From the waterfront to downtown to their homes, Asbury Park residents and visitors have embraced electric scooters as a convenient and eco-friendly way of getting around. People take about 100,000 e-scooter trips per year across the 1.4-square-mile coastal city. Most trips last between five and ten minutes, and the median distance is 1.3 miles.

"Our biggest goals for the program are lowering congestion, making parking more available and lowering emissions," said James Bonanno, the city's Director of Transportation. "A lot of people, especially residents, will forgo taking a car downtown or to the beach, and will take a scooter instead."

The program is so successful that city officials have twice made the effort of finding a new vendor after their existing vendor ceased operations because of business challenges in other locations. Asbury Park's provider since last May has been Veo. When previous provider Super-pedestrian ceased operating in late 2023, Bonanno said, "We knew we had to get another one – before the summer, especially – so we could get people riding again."

Per-mile greenhouse gas emissions from electric scooters are less than half those of cars, so public e-scooter rental programs are a useful tool against climate change. Veo estimates that e-scooter trips replaced more than 20,000 car trips in 2024 in Asbury Park, helping to avoid 18,505 pounds of CO₂ emissions. But Bonanno thinks their effect is even greater, prompting some people to buy their own personal micromobility vehicles.

"We do see a lot of private e-scooter and e-bike ownership in the city, and I think part of that is because people got their foot in the door by riding the city's e-scooters," said Bonanno. "I think that is driving even further greenhouse gas reductions than we realize."

– Jennie Aylward

Seven really cool Red Bank maps

The Red Bank Environmental Commission has taken a novel approach to introducing the town's new Environmental Resource Inventory (ERI) to residents. A dedicated page on the Red Bank Green website breathes life into the new ERI with an entertaining article by journalist Brian Donohue.

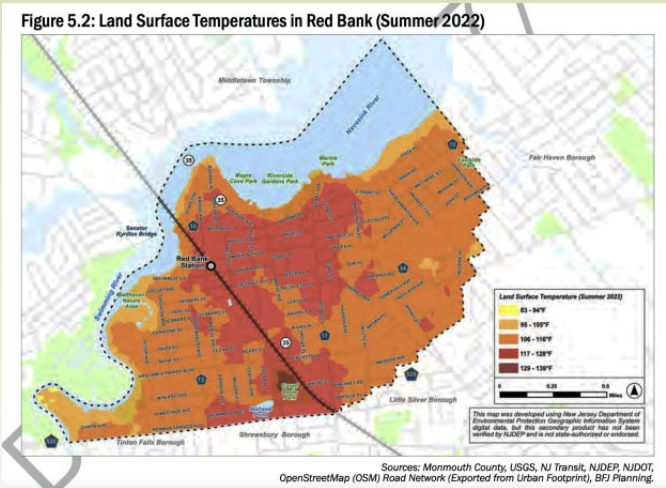
"Okay, fellow nerds, map lovers and geology geeks. We are here with the good news that at least some small portion of your property tax dollars have recently been spent building a series of really cool maps about our town," he writes.

He describes various maps in the ERI with funny observations about their significance to ordinary people. He introduces the otherwise dull-sounding Land Surface Temperatures map, for example, by commenting on how it shows the warming impact of artificial turf: "My running route

Land Surface Temperature Map in the new Red Bank ERI

on freezing winter days has always shifted to the track at Count Basie Park, where the sun warms the artificial turf and track, and the west wind is blocked by the bleachers. It feels like you can gain ten degrees on a January day. In summer, I avoid it like the plague for the same reasons.”

Writing about the surficial geology of the Borough, Donohue writes, “I can’t wait for spring when I can turn to my wife and say, “I’m going out to dig in the Upper Stream Terrace Deposits.” Or my next conversation with my friend on Harrison Avenue when I can say, “Bruh, how’s it going over in the Upper Colluvium?”



Read the article about the Red Bank ERI at <https://tinyurl.com/3x5aatnh>. The Planning Board approved the ERI as an appendix to the *Master Plan* on Jan. 8. The 93-page document was prepared by BFJ Planning and can be found at <https://tinyurl.com/44b9skvy> – Julie Lange Groth

Roughly 30 participants fashioned mini backyard greenhouses out of translucent milk cartons and planted native seeds in them at a winter sowing workshop on January 29. The Fanwood Environmental Commission hosted the event at the Forest Road Park Recreation Building.

Borough of Fanwood

Maplewood approves stormwater utility to manage flooding and improve infrastructure

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



In December 17, 2024, the Maplewood Township Committee unanimously passed an ordinance to set up a stormwater utility. Maplewood is the second municipality in New Jersey (after New Brunswick) to do so.

A stormwater utility is a dedicated and equitable funding mechanism that contributes funds directly and exclusively to stormwater management. While stormwater management is included in municipal budgets (often in multiple and various line items), the funds are not dedicated and can therefore be redirected to other purposes.

Taxpayers finance stormwater management expenses without any contributions from tax exempt nonprofit organizations

like hospitals, universities and houses of worship, whose huge parking lots generate a great deal of stormwater runoff. The cost burden lies on the taxpayers – unless a separate stormwater utility is set up. Then everyone (agriculture/horticulture excluded) can pay their fair share.

The Maplewood stormwater utility ordinance was passed in accordance with the *New Jersey Clean Stormwater and Flood Reduction Act* of 2019, which authorizes local and county governments (and certain utilities) to create stormwater utilities. While this funding mechanism is a recent development for New Jersey, it is not new – over 40 states and over 2,000 communities around the country have turned to a stormwater utility as a fair and equitable

way to plan for costly upgrades and maintenance projects.

A stormwater utility is an equitable way to fund needed infrastructure to manage stormwater and prevent flooding.

Photo by Pixabay



To learn more about Maplewood's decision, ANJEC held a lightning round of questions with Maplewood Committeeman Vic DeLuca to find out more about the motivation for adopting a stormwater utility and how the process worked.

Why did you pursue a stormwater utility as a means of addressing stormwater management?

The intensity of storms and increase in flooding made it necessary to do something. We need a steady supply of funds to make improvements in a very old storm sewer infrastructure. We had been discussing a stormwater utility for years and applied for a Department of Environmental Protection technical assistance grant. Once we got that assistance, it became clear we had to move on it.

What kind of community outreach/discussion was there?

Our consultants made a presentation at a Township Committee meeting. We had a few other discussions at previous meetings. The consultants also presented to the Environmental Advisory Committee. We also had coverage in the Village Green, an independent news site.

What was the response? Has there been any opposition?

There was no vocal opposition. The Senior Advisory Committee asked a few questions, and we provided answers.

Have you hammered out the credit program yet? What will that look like?

We've worked out a credit plan that will be introduced in an ordinance in February. We will give a one-time \$20 credit for installing a 50-gallon rain barrel. There are other measures like rain gardens, green roofs, retention basins and tree planting that will also generate credits.

During a discussion of stormwater utilities at ANJEC's Environmental Congress

in 2022, Patricia Lindsey Harvey (Commissioner of the Willingboro Municipal Utility Authority and Chair of the Willingboro Environmental Commission and Green Team), was asked what it would take to get a stormwater utility passed. She responded, "At some point, we've got to take the blinders off. We've got to get some cojones here and tackle this problem before it really gets out of hand or before the State mandates communities to create one."

Kudos to Maplewood for tackling their stormwater management challenges head on.

If you are interested in exploring stormwater utility for your municipality, please contact us at sbakergujral@anjec.org or info@anjec.org. 🌊

Further reading/viewing:

- ANJEC webinar – Unlocking Sustainable Solutions: How a Stormwater Utility Can Fund the Future of Stormwater Management – www.youtube.com/watch?v=htm3xMsRPZo
- Maplewood's Stormwater Utility Ordinance – <https://ecode360.com/45817946#45817946>
- New Jersey Clean Stormwater and Flood Reduction Act of 2019 – https://pub.njleg.gov/bills/2018/PL19/42_.PDF
- DEP technical assistance grant for stormwater utilities – https://dep.nj.gov/wlm/grants/swgrant/#tech_assistance
- NJDEP stormwater utility guidance – <https://tinyurl.com/yz6rp6ey>.

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! 🌊

NJ activist Alice Paul honored with a rain garden

By Cheryl Reardon, ANJEC Project Director

As part of the Delaware River Watershed Initiative, ANJEC received funding from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation to install a very special rain garden at the Alice Paul homestead, Paulsdale (Mount Laurel), which is now also home to the Alice Paul Institute and Center for Gender Justice. The Alice Paul Institute is a nonprofit organization founded in 1984 (as the Alice Paul Centennial Foundation) to commemorate the centennial of Paul's birth.

Alice Paul was born on January 11, 1885, to Hicksite Quaker parents who instilled their faith's belief in gender equality into their children. They also impressed upon their four children that they each had a duty to work for the betterment of society. Alice's Quaker faith not only established the foundation of her belief in equality, but also provided a rich legacy of activism and service to her country. She grew to be a feminist, suffragist and political strategist who dedicated her life to securing equal rights for all women. A leader in the fight to ratify the 19th Amendment in 1920 to extend voting rights to women, Alice Paul authored the *Equal Rights Amendment*

and spent the rest of her life fighting for its ratification to ensure the *US Constitution* protects women and men equally.

The Institute is a National Historic Landmark that serves to further the legacy of Alice Paul and her life's work and also takes a leadership role in bringing recognition to women and the organizations that honor them. The organization is a model of adaptive reuse of a historic site, currently hosting leadership development and civic engagement programs to engage women leaders and to inspire young people to make a difference in their communities.

A labor of love

ANJEC, in collaboration with the Rutgers Cooperative Extension Water Resources Program and the Pinelands Preservation Alliance, began the task of identifying possible sites to install rain gardens in the Pennsauken Creek Watershed. The Alice Paul Institute was one of the sites consid-

Last May, Tyrese Gould Jacinto, a leader of the Nanticoke Lenape Nation and the DEP Environmental Advisory Council (third from right) led a blessing over the rain garden and Alice Paul's farmstead, hosted by ANJEC.



ered for this project because its mission of gender equality and community service is strongly supported by each of the sponsor organizations. Also, as a National Historic Site it offered abundant public exposure and educational opportunities to educate about green infrastructure.

Our next step was to meet with the Board of Directors of the Alice Paul Institute to discuss the possibility of having a rain garden installed on the property to collect rooftop stormwater runoff and naturally filter it back into the ground using native plants, grasses and shrubs to recharge the aquifer. They welcomed the plan with a unanimous YES! Over the next several months we worked with the Institute's Board of Directors on the placement of the rain garden and selecting

a colorful array of native plants to attract and provide habitat for bees, birds and pollinators. The rain garden was installed

last April along with educational signage. The rain garden bioretention system is 320 square feet and collects and filters 18,420 gallons of stormwater runoff per year from the Institute's 865-square-foot roof.

ANJEC hosted a dedication ceremony in May that included a blessing over the rain garden and Alice Paul's farmstead (a stopover on the Underground Railroad), led by Tyrese Gould

Jacinto, a leader of the Nanticoke Lenape Nation and the NJ Department of Environmental Protection's (DEP's) Environmental Advisory Council.

To learn more about the work and events at The Alice Paul Institute and Center for Gender Justice, visit www.alicepaul.org.

ANJEC celebrates Women's History Month

Women's History Month is observed each March to highlight the contributions of women to events in history and contemporary society. It corresponds with International Women's Day on March 8th. Although International Women's Day traces its beginnings back to 1911, it had been largely forgotten until a march was organized by women's rights activist Laura X in Berkeley, CA, on March 8, 1969.

In 1980, President Jimmy Carter issued the first presidential proclamation declaring the week of March 8th as Women's History Week. In 1987 Congress passed *Public Law 100-9* designating March as Women's History Month. During March and always, ANJEC is proud to continue standing strong and lifting our voices for women's equality, as we recognize the historical and modern-day changemakers and their contributions to society. 💧



ANJEC Director of Watershed Programs Stephen Elliott helps plant the new rain garden at the Alice Paul Institute. Credit ANJEC

Defending native species

Smart planting for a healthy environment

By **Michele Bakacs**, County Agent / Associate Professor,
Rutgers Cooperative Extension – Middlesex and Union Counties

Native plants have been gaining popularity in recent years, not only because they are beautiful, but also because people want to incorporate plants in their landscapes that have ecological significance. Many are looking to create properties that are sustainable and environmentally friendly – native plants are part of that equation.

Native plants are those that have evolved as part of a geographic region and support local food webs. New Jersey has over 2,000 native plant species, making it a biodiversity hot spot. We owe our multitude of indigenous plants to NJ's varied physiographic regions. Insects, birds, butterflies and other species depend on them for survival and have formed tight relationships with these plants. For example, the host plant for the caterpillar stage of the beautiful great spangled fritillary butterfly is the native violet. As its host plant, violets are the only plants the baby butterfly (caterpillar) of this species will eat.

The oak tree is one of the most important native species for supporting wildlife. This iconic tree supports over 500 species of butterfly and moth larvae. These caterpillars are packed with protein and transfer the most energy from plants to the rest of the food web, including over 95 percent of terrestrial birds.

Threats to our native plant communities

Our rich native plant heritage is threatened as New Jersey is rapidly losing its native plants, with roughly one-third of those plants designated as endangered or of special concern by the NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) Natural Heritage Program. Threats include habitat destruction, skyrocketing deer populations and invasive plants crowding out natives.

Many of the familiar plants we see in our forests, old fields and along roadways are not native to New Jersey. These "invasive plants" grow out of control because they have no diseases or predators keeping them in check. It's tempting to think that all green plants are good, but that would be a mistake for invasive plants. Unchecked invasive plants rapidly invade natural areas and outcompete diverse, native plant communities. When native plants are pushed out, food and habitat for wildlife such as pollinators, migrating songbirds and small mammals are severely limited.

A major cause of the invasive plant problem is the increase in white-tailed deer populations. Deer rarely eat invasive plants. Instead, they heavily



Native Coral Honeysuckle

browse native plants, giving invasives an added advantage.

Green invaders

Some invasive plants remain commonly available in the nursery trade and have spread from our yards and developed landscapes. Barberry (*Berberis thunbergii*), burning bush (*Euonymus alatus*) and many species of privet (*Ligustrum spp.*) are common landscape shrubs that have spread into understory forests, choking out native plants.

Popular ornamental vines (such as *Wisteria sinensis* and *Wisteria floribunda*) and English ivy (*Hedera helix*) smother natural features and overtake trees. Callery or Bradford pear (*Pyrus calleryana*) is an invasive tree, familiar

in the spring by its dense white flowers, that now dominates old fields and roadsides all over New Jersey, forming thickets that shade out native plants.

Victims of a changing climate

Climate change is predicted to make invasive plants even more of a problem as many can tolerate shorter, milder winters and longer summers. By 2050, up to 100 new invasive plants are likely to shift into Northeast states as the climate changes (Allen & Bradley, 2016). There is also concern about “sleepers” – nonnative species that already exist in a region and could become invasive as climate change makes conditions more favorable. An example is kudzu (*Pueraria montana*), also known as the “vine that ate the south.” Our warming winters may favor the spread of this species by seed in the future.

We can all do our part

Municipalities can work together to implement science-based deer management strategies. Controlling deer populations will naturally help native plant habitats to rebound. Other measures include:

- prioritizing management of invasive plants in the landscapes;
- inventorying existing invasives on a property and making a removal and replacement plan;
- showcasing the municipality’s invasive plant management efforts along roadways, in parks and public spaces, and explaining why it is critical to restore these spaces;
- training public works and parks staff on the need for ongoing management and maintenance of habitat enhancement



*Great spangled fritillary (Speyeria cybele)
butterfly atop a purple coneflower*

Photo courtesy of Adobe

Native garden

Photo by Michele Bakacs

projects – a few critical tasks will make projects successful.

Municipalities can also build climate-resilient plant communities with interpretive signage to familiarize the public with native plants. And they can work with homeowner associations and developers to change perceptions of native plants as being too messy or wild by building (and maintaining) thoughtful habitats that merge design with ecological function. Excellent resources

include Thomas Rainer and Claudia West's book *Planting in a Post-Wild World*, or the Mt. Cuba Center located close by in Delaware, a botanical garden committed to the conservation of native plants and their habitats.



Ask local nurseries and garden centers to carry native plants. Native plants work in many different spaces, so plant them around mailboxes, by downspouts, in perennial garden beds, on patios and in pots. Overwinter native seeds in pots and plant them in the spring. Share your extra plants with neighbors.

Right plant for the right place

When making native plant selections choose species that are appropriate for your local site, including light conditions and soil. Blackhaw viburnum (*Viburnum prunifolium*) is an underutilized native shrub that does well in full sun to part shade, is excellent for hedges and has large white blooms in the spring. If you like fall mums, instead consider planting late flowering goldenrods (*Solidago spp.*) and asters (*Symphyotrichum spp.*), which are keystone native plants critical to the food web and necessary for many wildlife species to complete their life cycle. There are also many native ground covers, including golden ragwort (*Packera aurea*), which

does well in the shade, is a perennial, semi-evergreen, and has yellow spring flowers. We can all do our part to create resilient native plant communities that are beautiful, support habitat and provide ecosystem

A resource for smarter landscapes

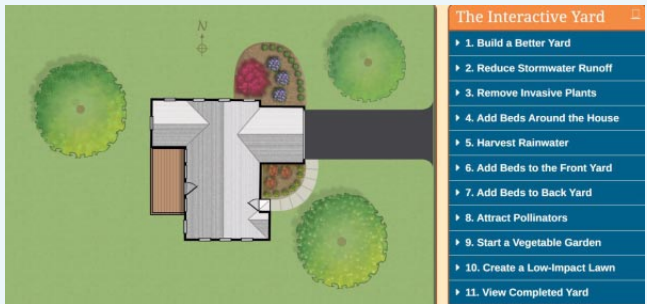
By Julie Groth, ANJEC Report Editor

How do you create a beautiful landscape that does no harm to the environment? How are fertilizers degrading our water quality? How do I select the right plants for the right places? Find the answers to these questions and so much more on the Jersey-Friendly Yards website, hosted by the Barnegat Bay Partnership with funding from the NJ Department of Environmental Protection.

This comprehensive online source of information about environmentally friendly landscaping throughout New Jersey brings together multiple resources to guide climate-conscious property owners. The site includes:

- an Interactive Yard tool to help gardeners learn basic concepts behind Jersey-friendliness;
- eight steps to transforming your property into a Jersey-Friendly landscape;
- how to make your yard a haven for pollinators;
- a certification program for residents, schools and towns within the Barnegat Bay watershed;
- an “Ask an Expert” feature with Rutgers Cooperative Extension county agents and Master Gardener volunteers answering questions submitted by users.

And that’s just the beginning of the information and resources you can find on the Jersey-Friendly Yards website at www.jerseyyards.org.



The Interactive Yard tool at www.jerseyyards.org/ helps property owners apply the basic concepts of the Jersey-Friendly Yard.

services. The Rutgers Cooperative Extension fact sheet 1353 Invasive Plants and Native Alternatives for Landscapes is available at <https://njaes.rutgers.edu/fs1353/>.

Defending native species

What towns are doing to promote native plants and discourage invasive species

By Michele Gaynor, ANJEC Resource Center

Like many other states, New Jersey has been dealing with the ongoing problem of invasive species, whether in our forests, along roadsides or on residential and municipal property. Invasive plant species are non-native to the natural ecosystem and can aggressively outcompete native plants for resources by altering soil chemistry, dominating available space, destroying habitat and absorbing sunlight by shading native species. Many lack natural predators.

While the State Legislature considers a new law to prohibit the sale, distribution, import, export or propagation of invasive plant species (page 24), and some towns have passed ordinances to address the issue (page 22), there are many other steps NJ communities are taking to encourage natives, weed out invasives and educate the public.

In 2023, Chatham Borough established their Native Garden Demonstration Project. Several municipal departments and entities collaborated on this effort, including the town's Environmental Commission (EC) and the Town & Country Garden Club of the



The Summit EC partnered with the Friends of the Summit Library to harvest native seeds from the town's Tiny Forest, established by the EC at the Summit Community Center.

Courtesy of Summit EC

Chathams (T&CGC). Chatham EC members have been assisting T&CGC in eradicating invasive plants at some of the local historic sites on a regular basis.

Parsippany installed a native pollinator garden two years ago on the side of the town library, which had been overrun by non-native bushes and weeds. In the fall, seeds from the pollinator plants were

collected and stored with other native seeds in the Parsippany Seed Library, which offers residents free seeds and resources for planting, growing and harvesting native plants. Among the many benefits to having a seed library are:

- reconnecting the community with native species of flowers and food;
 - keeping pollinators thriving;
 - providing education and instruction in sustainable gardening; and
 - keeping pollinated seed varieties in use.
- Municipal libraries have been a strong resource for collecting, storing and distributing native plant seeds around the country.

The Summit EC partnered with the Friends of the Summit Library to harvest native seeds from the town’s Tiny Forest that the EC established at the Summit Community Center. This 11,000-square-foot area features more than 650 plantings of 45 different native trees, bushes and understory plants. This budding forest will be a mature forest within two to three decades.

Caldwell Township created a native pollinator pathway. This pesticide-free walkway was established to provide food and habitat for pollinators. The pathway links many gardens throughout the town to create a corridor of native species habitats and food sources to support wildlife and provide enjoyment to residents.

The Great Swamp Watershed Association (GSWA) has a native species plant sale each spring. They are supported by community partners throughout the area who help organize and promote the event. Many

groups participate and residents can volunteer to host pickups for their local community.

To help eradicate invasives in a Union County Park last spring, a collaborative effort between the Board of County Commissioners and the Patriots’ Path Council, part of Boy Scouts of America, launch Operation WRIP (Watchung Reservation Invasive Plants). Over 100 people, including at least 50 Scouts, along with trail maintenance volunteers and county staff, took on the removal of invasive plants throughout the 2,143-acre park. The Scout volunteers ranged from six to 18 years of age. They focused on Japanese barberry and multiflora rose bushes. The Scouts will work again this spring to further eradicate invasives.

Resources

If you need help in identifying and removing invasives, the NJ Invasive Species Strike Team is the go-to resource for information, events and educational workshops. See <https://tinyurl.com/3zjtebe4>

For examples of invasive species ordinances, see page 22 and check out the sample ordinances from Point Pleasant and Howell on the ANJEC website, <https://anjec.org/sample-municipal-ordinances/>.

More information

- Backyard habitat: Attracting native pollinators – <https://tinyurl.com/y9ar4v3d>
- Native Plant Society of NJ – <https://npsnj.org/native-plants/all-about-natives/newsletters/>
- NJ Audubon: Gardening for wildlife – <https://njaudubon.org/gardening-for-wildlife/>
- Mendham Native Plant Guidelines – <https://tinyurl.com/mpzuvhpr>
- Summit Tiny Forest – <https://tinyurl.com/4xax87kb>
- Caldwell’s pollinator pathway presentation – <https://tinyurl.com/2v4w5n2n>
- For gardening tips or answers to your questions, please visit the Rutgers Master Gardeners website – <https://njaes.rutgers.edu/master-gardeners/>



This traffic island has become a monarch waystation at Westville and Brookside Avenues in Caldwell.
Courtesy of Caldwell EC

Defending native species

The Landscape Makeover Program: Restoring New Jersey's ecosystems

By **Stephen Elliott**, ANJEC Director of Watershed Programs

Urbanization and suburban sprawl have replaced vast areas of New Jersey's forests, wetlands and meadows with concrete, asphalt, manicured lawns and artificial turf. More recently, even farmland is being replaced by warehouses to accommodate imported goods – now at an increased cost due to tariffs. These changes have brought about numerous challenges, from habitat loss and ecosystem degradation to flooding, declining water quality and other costly climate-related disasters.

A solution to nonpoint source pollution

Launched in 2017, the Landscape Makeover Program (LMP) was developed by a coalition of nonprofits and academic institutions with one goal in mind – address nonpoint source pollution by remaking the landscape. We needed a low-cost, high-reward solution to keep sediment, contaminants and excess nutrients from degrading our local waterways. While the *Clean Water Act of 1972* made progress in mitigating industrial pollution, today's pollution sources are more dispersed, originating from roads, buildings, neighborhoods and farms. Unlike industrial pollution, which can be regulated at a single source, nonpoint source pollution



People of all ages help with the planting in Landscape Makeover projects. Courtesy of PPA

requires a broader, community-driven approach.

The solution? Building gardens – lots of them. Rain gardens and other green infrastructure practices capture rainwater where it falls, mimicking the sponge-like qualities of natural ecosystems such as forests and meadows. These gardens filter out contaminants, trap sediment and manage water volume that would otherwise overwhelm local waterways. Using native plants further supports local biodiversity, unlike non-native ornamentals like crepe myrtles and butterfly bushes that are only a food source for butterflies in China and Japan.

Simple landscaping changes at home and in communities can significantly improve water quality, reduce flooding and create habitat for native pollinators, birds and beneficial insects. It's time to break up with old landscaping norms and get back in touch with your lawn's wild side!

A rain garden under construction at the Alice Paul Institute at Paulsdale in Mount Laurel, NJ
Credit ANJEC

100+ gardens and counting

Since 2017, the LMP has facilitated the installation of over 100 gardens through municipal projects and homeowner incentives. Projects installed in 2024 alone cover approximately 6,000 square feet and will manage nearly 275,000 gallons of stormwater. (See photos from a sampling of projects on pages 20-21.)

Historically, standardized developments like Levittown, once the suburban ideal, emphasized manicured, turf-grass lawns. We have collectively wasted too much space in the name of tidiness and convenience. These spaces can and should serve ecological functions – it will just take a little reimagination.

Beyond rain gardens, the program and its partners implement tree plantings, rain barrel installations and bioswales. Trees store thousands of gallons of water while providing shade, improving air quality, enhancing biodiversity and cooling urban heat islands. In collaboration with municipalities, the Pinelands Preservation Alliance (the lead organization for LMP) recently partnered with Evesham Township to incentivize native tree plantings and rain barrel installations with funding from a Sustainable Jersey grant. Additionally, residents are encouraged to become stewards of public spaces by participating in tree plantings, invasive species removal and biodiversity inventories (bioblitzes).

This year, LMP partners will focus on cleaning up five lakes in the Highlands and Pinelands protection areas through a grant from the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection. These lakes are




turning green, sometimes spawning harmful algal blooms, due to runoff carrying fertilizer used to maintain lush green lawns. This sickly trend has been exacerbated by a warming climate. Rain gardens work to mitigate this problem by capturing stormwater, preventing excess nutrients from reaching waterways.

Growing partnerships for a sustainable future

With the escalating effects of climate change, the urgency to restore and protect New Jersey's environment has never been greater. The Landscape Makeover Program continues to expand, ensuring that every square foot of land is managed with sustainability in mind. By joining forces, organizations like ANJEC, the American Littoral Society, the Highlands Coalition, the League of Conservation Voters, the Pinelands Preservation Alliance, Rutgers Water Resources Program and the South Jersey Land and Water Trust can help communities take an active role in shaping a healthier, more sustainable New Jersey.

Local environments matter

For information on how to get involved, visit <https://pinelandsalliance.org/landscape-makeover-program/>. 

Landscape Makeover

Residential Pollinator Garden - Moorestown

Marlton Lakes Boat House

Hainesport Municipal Complex

Photos by Stephen Elliot and Randi Rothmel

Bobbys Run School - Lumberton

e Brainerd School, Mt. Holly

er Program



*- The Glen at Mason's Creek,
Hainesport*



*Rancocas Valley PREP - Eastampton
Alice Paul Institute - Mount Laurel*



Ordinances for climate friendly landscapes

By **Laura Bagwell**, Native Plant Society (NPS) of NJ Advocacy Committee Co-Chair



*Ruby
throated
hummingbird
on cardinal
flower*

Photo by
Lorraine Freaney

In NJ, we have experienced periods of too much rain and flooding, then drought and wildfires. At the same time, ecologically vibrant land is plowed under to become buildings and monocultures sprayed with pesticides. This has decimated insect populations as well as birds that rely upon insects for survival.

The North American bird population is down by 2.9 billion since 1970. Community leaders can look to planting native species, not only to become more resilient in the face of climate challenges, but also to provide essential habitat for pollinator insects. Native plants are those that occur naturally in a particular region and were present prior to European settlement. As the base of the food web, native plants provide the integrity, diversity and resiliency of an ecosystem.

Not the same for introduced, or non-native plants.

Entomologist Doug Tallamy notes, "We are used to thinking of plants as decorations, but if they are exotics such as ginkgo, crape myrtle or European privet – all unpalatable to insects – they do not pass along the sun's energy to birds and other wildlife. You might as well install a statue." A native oak feeds the caterpillars of over 500 different species of moths and butterflies. The caterpillars of those moths and butterflies are essential protein for birds. A family of chickadees, for example, need 6,000 caterpillars to raise just one brood of birds.

Noting the practical benefits of native plants, including enhanced

stormwater management and cleaner waterways, ordinances have started sprouting up around the State. Chatham requires



Hope Garden is a public pollinator garden led by Lauren Morse of Hudson NPSNJ. Photo by Lauren Morse

native species on public land. It prioritizes keystone species, while discouraging cultivars that alter a species' natural color or bloom shape, as this often reduces the plant's value to native birds and insects.

Eatontown requires native plants to be used by developers coming before the Planning Board. Morristown requires control of invasive plants. Many other communities are moving in this direction by passing ordinances, including Rahway, Denville, Montclair and Madison.

Spotlight on Jersey City

Jersey City drafted their native plant ordinance in collaboration with NPSNJ and Wild Ones, a nonprofit promoting native landscapes through education, advocacy and collaborative action. They selected elements of different ordinances to address specific issues their community faced.

"In the Winter of 2023 a well-established native pollinator garden located in a public park in Jersey City was mistakenly mowed down by a contractor," said Carol McNichol of Wild Ones NJ Gateway Chapter. "This spurred public outrage by the community...and was the motivation for the creation of the Jersey City Native Plant Ordinance."

The municipality's ordinance requires that any new plantings on municipal property be native species. It took about 10 months to pass. Although it does not include everything they wanted, the ordinance encourages straight species ("...not a cultivar or has not been bred to emphasize or minimize certain traits of the parent plant") and limits pesticide use. It establishes "No Mow Zones" and there are now penalties for mowing down pollinator and rain gardens. And it requires the city to provide education about native plants and their benefits through their websites.

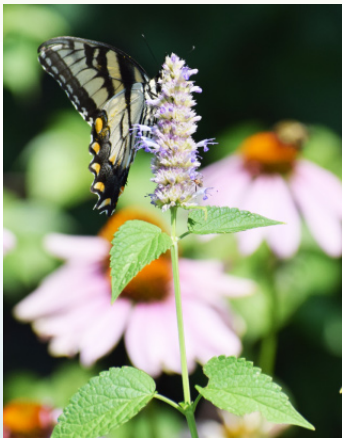
Growing butterflies

"Honestly, why not prioritize native plants? It's tough to argue against it, said Lorraine Freeney, Jersey City Environmental Commissioner and co-leader of the Native Plant Society (NPS) of NJ, Hudson Chapter. "The benefits are immediate and undeniable. They are resilient, hardy, often more drought-tolerant and disease-resistant than non-natives, they support wildlife in a way that non-natives simply can't compete with, and they help the local ecosystem in so many ways. And they are beautiful.

"At a time when it's easy to feel disheartened in the face of climate change and habitat loss, with the threats facing monarch butterflies and so many other insects and birds, here is a simple yet effective thing we can do," Freeney added.

"When deliberating whether to pursue a native plant ordinance in your area, seeing a monarch butterfly lay eggs on a swamp milkweed plant or a goldfinch feeding seeds to its young ones in fall is a very compelling argument."

So, are you ready to dig in and look into passing a native plant ordinance? Contact ANJEC or the NPS and we will work with you to help in any way we can. 🌱



Eastern tiger swallowtail butterfly on anise hyssop Photo by Lorraine Freeney

Resources

- Sample municipal native plant ordinances – email info@anjec.org or advocacy@NPSNJ.org
- Native Plant Society – <https://npsnj.org/native-plants/>
- NWF Native Plant Finder – <https://nativeplantfinder.nwf.org/Plants>
- Homegrown National Park – <https://tinyurl/y5yrw9y9>
- Wild Ones template – <https://wildones.org/resources/>
- Bird Loss study – <https://www.birds.cornell.edu/home/bring-birds-back>

By **N. Dini Checko**, ANJEC Project Director,
and **Julie Lange Groth**, ANJEC Report Editor

Ninth try is the charm for plastics bill

On February 10, the State's Senate Environment and Energy Committee approved a bill aimed at cutting the use of plastic packaging by 50 percent over the next decade in NJ. After stalling in previous hearings due to stiff opposition from the food and packaging industries, the *Packaging Product Stewardship Act* (S3398/A5009), introduced by Senator Bob Smith and Assemblywoman Alixon Collazos-Gill, passed in a 3-2 vote.

In addition to slashing package waste, the new law would also:

- prohibit the use of some of the most toxic chemicals known to science in packaging, including PFAS, lead, mercury and vinyl chloride;

- provide new revenue to local governments to improve local recycling and waste reduction programs; and
- prohibit chemical recycling from counting as real plastic recycling.

Following the vote, leading environmental groups held a news conference at the State House Annex in Trenton urging passage of the bill by the full Senate and Assembly, and signature by Governor Murphy.

"The *Packaging Product Stewardship Act* is a vital step toward reducing plastic waste and protecting public health," said ANJEC Executive Director Jennifer Coffey. "With a strong, comprehensive approach, this legislation holds companies account-



ANJEC Project Director N. Dini Checko, far left, was on hand when the Packaging Product Stewardship Act was passed by the Senate Environment and Energy Committee on February 10. Senator Bob Smith is seen behind the speaker at the podium in a plaid jacket on the State House steps.

Credit Taylor McFarland

able and tackles the growing plastic pollution crisis. No longer should taxpayers bear the burden of managing packaging waste – it's time for corporations to take responsibility. We urge its swift passage."

ANJEC Project Director N. Dini Checko added, "We are grateful to our dedicated members, the "eco-warriors," for their tireless advocacy against plastic pollution. This win is built on a decade of action and advocacy for a cleaner and healthier New Jersey."

Read the bill at <https://tinyurl.com/2rpxu5t8>. Find more information on chemical recycling at www.beyondplastics.org/publications/chemical-recycling. – Julie Lange Groth

Bill to control invasive species moves forward

In January, the *Invasive Species Management Act (S1029/A4137)* passed out of the Senate Environment and Energy Committee. Strong support for this bill is the result of a multi-year, multi-stakeholder effort to combat the spread of harmful invasive plant species through several key measures:

- prohibiting sale, distribution, import, export and propagation of certain invasive species;
- identifying an initial list of 30 prohibited invasive species, including Norway maple, tree of heaven, multiflora rose and running bamboo;
- establishing exceptions for cultivars of invasive species that are known to be sterile or otherwise non-invasive;
- creating the New Jersey Invasive Species Council, composed of 19 members appointed by the Governor, to advise the NJ Department of Environmental Protection and the NJ Department of Agriculture on invasive species management and recommend additional species;
- management of enforcement and penalties by the NJ Department of Agriculture.

Michael Van Clef, Stewardship Director for Friends of Hopewell Valley Open Space and Program Director of the NJ Invasive Species Strike Team, shared, "Our working group of stakeholders, representing conservation groups and nurseries, was heartened by the bill's recent passage through the Senate Environment and Energy Committee. This bill will help protect NJ's native ecosystems and will encourage municipalities and residents to consider avoiding these species when planting in their landscapes."

The next stop for this bill is review by the Assembly Commerce, Economic Development and Agriculture Committee before heading to the Governor's desk to be signed into law.

Please contact your legislator and ask them to vote YES on the *Invasive Species Management Act (S1029/A4137)*.

– N. Dini Checko

Climate Resilience Tip

Let trees do the talking

Your town's street trees are not only beautiful – they also work hard to cool urban heat islands, filter pollutants from the air and absorb climate-heating carbon dioxide. They also cool the neighborhoods, muffle street noise and support birds and other wildlife. Let people know by posting small signs near larger trees where there is heavy foot traffic.

Sample sign language: This red oak tree absorbs about 48 pounds of carbon dioxide* and up to 40,000 gallons of stormwater** every year.

* <https://tinyurl.com/bddve3mp>

** <https://tinyurl.com/324hjc28>



The language of hope: Reframing environmental narratives

By **Hana Katz**, Communications and Campaigns Manager

Instead of communicating doom and gloom, municipal leaders and environmental commissioners are uniquely positioned to move initiatives forward in challenging times by focusing on shared benefits, local successes and achievable goals. A more empowering, solution-oriented approach can help build momentum for a better future.

Presenting challenges as opportunities

Positive environmental messaging is more effective at inspiring action than fear-based narratives. Hope motivates people to act for the long term without getting burnt out on feelings of anxiety and despair. By presenting concerns as opportunities to enhance both resilience and quality of life, leaders can shift public perception and inspire collaboration. This is especially relevant in New Jersey, where municipalities face unique environmental challenges but have also pioneered innovative solutions. For instance, Hoboken's ResilienCity Park is a game-changing example of a dual-purpose stormwater management system and community recreation space.

When discussing environmental issues, it's important to pair challenges with actionable solutions. Instead of emphasizing the risks of flooding, leaders can spotlight how green infrastructure – like rain gardens, bioswales and permeable pavement – can mitigate those risks while

beautifying neighborhoods. Towns like Hoboken have demonstrated the success of such approaches, using green infrastructure to manage stormwater, improve water quality, and create spaces for social connection.

Positive reframing can also apply to climate initiatives. New Jersey's offshore wind energy projects, for example, aren't just about reducing emissions – they will help create jobs, drive economic growth and secure a clean energy future. By emphasizing these tangible benefits, leaders can make abstract concepts like climate action feel immediate and relevant to residents' lives.

Practical tips for municipal Leaders

- **Focus on shared benefits:** Link environmental projects to outcomes that resonate with your community, such as economic growth, public safety and improved quality of life. For example, instead of saying, "We need to address rising sea levels," say, "We have the opportunity to protect our coastline and boost tourism through smart coastal planning."
- **Celebrate local success stories:** Highlight achievements within your community or point out successful projects in neighboring towns. Stories like Woodbridge's solar-powered municipal buildings or Camden's urban tree-planting programs demonstrate that progress is possible and can inspire others to take similar steps.

- **Use language that inspires action:** Avoid overwhelming residents with terms like “crisis” or “irreversible.” Instead, frame messages in positive terms. For example, replace, “Our water supply is at risk,” with, “We can secure clean water for generations by investing in green infrastructure today.”
- **Share small wins:** Break large goals into manageable milestones. Celebrate successes like the completion of a local rain garden, the planting of trees in a park or the installation of solar panels on a municipal building. These achievements show that even small actions can make a big impact.

New Jersey’s municipalities have an important opportunity to lead through hopeful, solution-oriented messaging. By emphasizing shared benefits, local successes and actionable solutions, environmental leaders can inspire their communi-

Hoboken’s ResilienCity Park enhances quality of life by reclaiming contaminated land to provide recreational opportunities and mitigate flooding. Courtesy of City of Hoboken

ties to engage with challenges, not as insurmountable problems but as opportunities for meaningful progress. Research and real-world examples show that hope is not just an emotion but also a strategy that empowers people to envision-and achieve-a sustainable future. 🌊

Climate Resilience Tip

Use local maps to show flood risk

When discussing climate change threats, make it more real by making it local. Illustrate how sea level rise and more severe and frequent storms will impact local neighborhoods using maps from your town’s Environmental Resource Inventory (ERI). If you don’t have an ERI, the NJ Adapt flood mapping tool* allows you to produce local maps showing future flooding scenarios.

* www.njfloodmapper.org/



Remembering Anne Farlow Morris

1938-2024

Anne Morris, ANJEC's third Executive Director serving from 1984 to 1987, is fondly remembered by her ANJEC family.

She began her adventures with ANJEC in 1973 when she taught a course on the Environmental Resource Inventory as part of ANJEC's first training for municipal Environmental Commission members during our first executive director Candy Ashmun's tenure. At that time, ANJEC created a variety of publications and resources for commissions to use as they worked in their communities to protect natural resources. Anne co-authored one of those publications, *Getting it All Together*, a valuable resource about mapping and applying relevant environmental features to municipal maps.

While Executive Director, Anne and Martha Lieblich (ANJEC's Board President at the time) traveled to Trenton to protest the proposed tunnel under the Passaic River. Martha recalled that she and Anne weren't sure how to proceed except to talk to legislators about the consequences of such a project. Since the tunnel doesn't exist today, we thank them!

After leaving ANJEC, Anne worked at the Environmental Policy Institute, the Historic Annapolis Foundation and the Chesapeake Bay Foundation in various capacities. In 1994, she and her husband Bob retired to Etna, NH, where Anne joined the board of the Hanover Conservation Commission 🌊

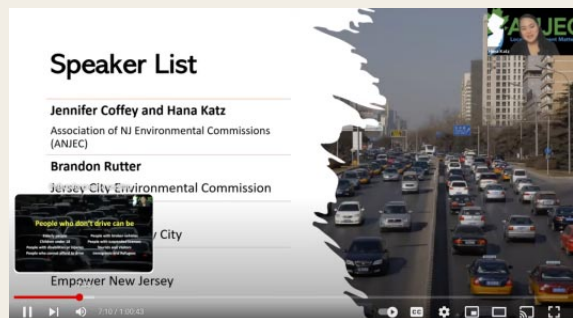
Visit the ANJEC YouTube channel

Now with over 150 training videos!

You can find recordings of our webinars, workshops and trainings from the past three years, including Environmental Congress presentations, on ANJEC's YouTube channel, ANJEC Views. This is your opportunity to:

- 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. 🌊



Tax-free IRA contributions protect NJ's environment

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

If you are 73 or older and have an Individual Retirement Account (IRA), you may be required to take annual Required Minimum Distributions (RMDs). While these distributions are taxable, there is a way to support ANJEC's vital environmental work while reducing your tax burden by making a Qualified Charitable Distribution (QCD).

A QCD allows individuals aged 70½ or older to donate up to \$100,000 per year directly from their IRA to a qualified nonprofit like ANJEC, completely tax-free. For those 73 years and older, these contributions count toward your RMD but are excluded from your taxable income, providing a unique way to give while benefiting financially.

How you benefit

- **Avoid taxes on RMDs:** When you transfer funds directly to ANJEC, the donated amount is not included in your taxable income, lowering your adjusted gross income.

- **Support the causes you care about:** Your donation helps sustain environmental education, land preservation, climate resilience and local advocacy across New Jersey.
- **Simplify your giving:** A QCD is an easy way to make a direct impact without itemizing deductions.

Make your impact today

To make a QCD:

1. **Contact your IRA custodian** to request a direct transfer to ANJEC. Our nonprofit tax code is EIN 23-7123285.
2. **Ensure the check is made payable to ANJEC** (not to yourself).
3. **Notify ANJEC your gift is on the way** so it can be properly recognized.

This simple giving strategy allows you to meet your RMD requirement while investing in a cleaner, healthier and more sustainable future for New Jersey. Consult your financial advisor to learn more about how your IRA donation can make a lasting difference. 💧



*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.

2025 Fundamentals for Effective Environmental Commissions Training

Join ANJEC for our in-person training for Environmental Commissions

Saturday, May 3rd
9:00 – 11:30 am

Topics Include:

- water quality resources
- native plants, invasive species
- hands-on site plan review
- introduction to the Fix in '26 program
- networking opportunity.

Breakfast and snacks provided.
Watch our website for the location,
registration and other details:
www.anjec.org/events-conferences.



A Fundamentals for Effective environmental Commissions training in Ridgefield in 2019

2025 ANJEC grants for open space stewardship projects

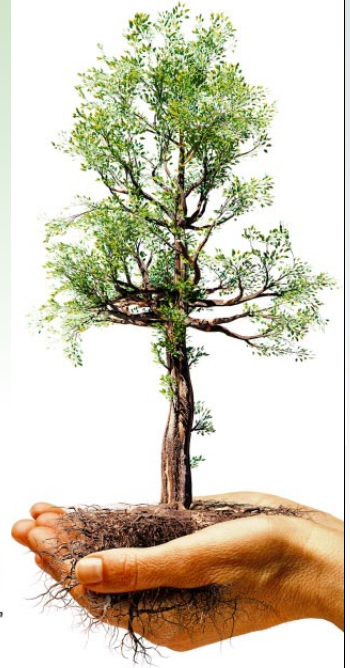
Environmental commissions are eligible to apply.

Applications due

Monday May 12, 2025

Visit <https://anjec.org/open-space-stewardship-grants/>
for application and more details.

Funding for this program is made possible with
generous contributions from ANJEC supporters to the
Candace McKee Ashmun Memorial Fund
and the following sponsors:



ANJEC depends on our business members to help pay for the cost of printing
the *ANJEC Report*. Please let them know that you saw their ad here.
Remember, however, that ANJEC does not necessarily endorse any of these firms.

NO JINGLES
OR MASCOTS
JUST GREAT INSURANCE

HAVE CONFIDENCE IN YOUR
COVERAGE WITH NJM.

NJM Insurance Group
is proud to support

ANJEC

NJM Insurance
Group

AUTO. PROPERTY. BUSINESS.

njm.com | 1-800-232-6600

ANJEC depends on our business members to help pay for the cost of printing the *ANJEC Report*. Please let them know that you saw their ad here. Remember, however, that ANJEC does not necessarily endorse any of these firms.

LOCAL EXPERTS. SCIENTIFIC SOLUTIONS.

Davey Resource Group is rooted in decades of experience in the natural world providing resourceful services and innovative solutions.

DAVEY
Resource Group



908-788-9676 | drgnj@davey.com



Kratzer Environmental Services

www.kratzerenv.com

Environmental Resource Inventories
Natural Resource Inventories
GIS Maps
Data Analysis & Management
Vernal Pool Surveys

19 Hill Road
Frenchtown, NJ 08825
908-996-2576

Deborah J. Kratzer
President
kratzerenv@gmail.com

The environmentally-conscious
choice for safe, responsible, and
efficient concrete washout!



Lower Total Cost Alternative
100% Compliant
EPA Recommended
Reclaimed Concrete is Recycled

roger@concretewashoutnjny.com
www.concretewashoutnjny.com

973-942-3131

GlennInsurance.com

Glenn
Insurance, Inc.

Absecon Office
Phone: 609.641.3000
Toll Free: 1.888.OK GLENN
Fax: 609.641.2355

Malaga Office
Phone: 856.692.4500
Toll Free: 1.888.OK GLENN
Fax: 856.692.7079

500 East Absecon Blvd. • Absecon, NJ 08201
333 Dutch Mill Rd. • Malaga, NJ 08328



Engineers
Scientists
Planners
Designers



www.vhb.com

Delivering innovative,
sustainable, and
future-ready solutions
to New Jersey

PRINCETON HYDRO

SCIENCE ENGINEERING DESIGN

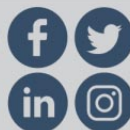
We provide integrated ecological and engineering consulting services throughout the Mid-Atlantic and New England regions with expertise in:

- Water Resources Engineering
- Stormwater & Green Infrastructure
- Natural Resources Management
- Regulatory Compliance/Permitting
- Pond & Lake Management
- Geoscience Engineering & Lab



908-237-5660

PrincetonHydro.com



ANJEC depends on our business members to help pay for the cost of printing the *ANJEC Report*. Please let them know that you saw their ad here. Remember, however, that ANJEC does not necessarily endorse any of these firms.



Here's where everyday energy efficiency meets long-term sustainability.

In the PSE&G Saverhood, we're helping customers across New Jersey make smarter energy choices and live more comfortably.

We're proud to support ANJEC's ongoing mission to serve environmental commissions, individuals, and state and local agencies in preserving natural resources and promoting sustainability. That's because we know a commitment to a shared cleaner and greener future always starts in our communities.

It's why we're looking ahead with major infrastructure modernization investments to make the cities and towns we share with you even better, healthier places to live and work. That's how neighbors can help neighbors, both now and well into the future.

To learn more, visit pseg.com/HomeEnergy



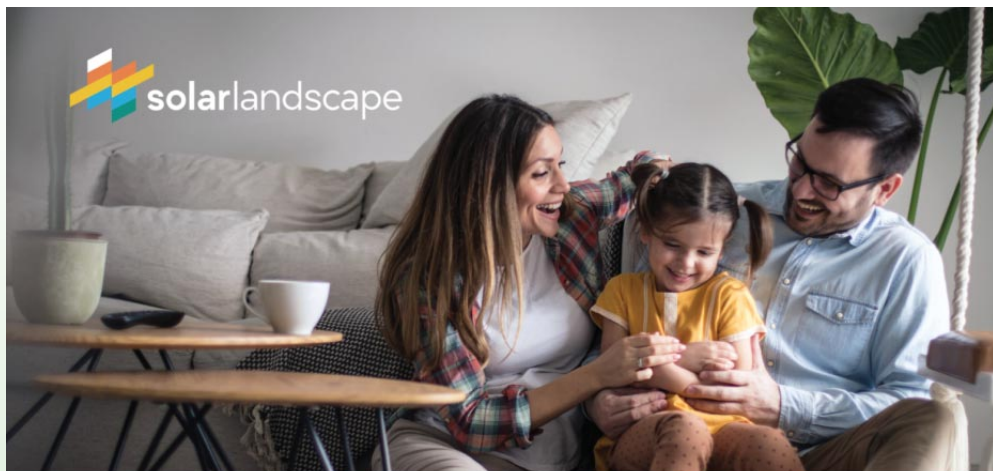
ANJEC depends on our business members to help pay for the cost of printing the *ANJEC Report*. Please let them know that you saw their ad here. Remember, however, that ANJEC does not necessarily endorse any of these firms.



We have **funding available**
for student-centered
environmental **projects** and
to **sponsor internships** at
Eco-organizations.



Visit green-matters.org for more information



**Energize your
community.**

With community solar, New Jersey homeowners and renters can lower their energy bills *without* installing panels. Sign up today and save at least 15% with invite code ANJEC

solarlandscape.com | 844.765.2769

ANJEC depends on our business members to help pay for the cost of printing the *ANJEC Report*. Please let them know that you saw their ad here. Remember, however, that ANJEC does not necessarily endorse any of these firms.



Delivering Clean Water Every Day

Since 1869, we've been providing superior water quality and reliable service to residents and businesses across New Jersey.

Veolia is investing in infrastructure, technology and strict safety standards – improvements that will serve our communities for generations to come.

Learn more at: veolianoorthamerica.com

ANJEC depends on our business members to help pay for the cost of printing the *ANJEC Report*. Please let them know that you saw their ad here. Remember, however, that ANJEC does not necessarily endorse any of these firms.



NEW JERSEY IS LIGHTING THE WAY TO A CLEAN ENERGY FUTURE

NEW CONSTRUCTION ENERGY EFFICIENCY INCENTIVES

**Reducing the impact of climate change while
lowering bills and saving energy**

FREE ENERGY AUDITS

**For educational, non-profit, and
government entities**

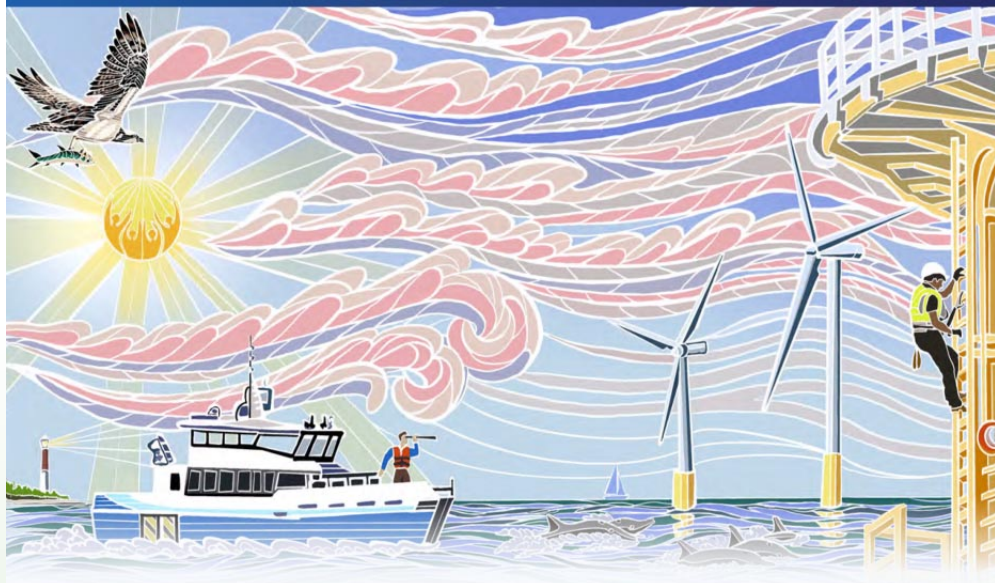
New Jersey's Clean Energy Program is a statewide program that offers incentives, programs, and services that benefit New Jersey residents, businesses, educational and non-profit entities, and government entities to help them save energy, money, and the environment.

**www.NJCleanEnergy.com
Email: Outreach@NJCleanEnergy.com
Call: (866) 657-6278**

ANJEC depends on our business members to help pay for the cost of printing the *ANJEC Report*. Please let them know that you saw their ad here. Remember, however, that ANJEC does not necessarily endorse any of these firms.



Charting the Course to Deliver **Economic Growth & Clean Energy** for New Jersey



Atlantic Shores Project 1 will contribute more than \$160 million to Atlantic City's economy, with \$30+ million funded already and \$130 million expected over the next four years.

Atlantic Shores Project 1 is the largest clean energy project in the State of New Jersey and the third largest awarded offshore wind project in the United States, **generating enough clean energy to power more than 700,000 homes.**



www.atlanticshoreswind.com
[@atlshoreswind](https://twitter.com/atlshoreswind)

ANJEC depends on our business members to help pay for the cost of printing the *ANJEC Report*. Please let them know that you saw their ad here. Remember, however, that ANJEC does not necessarily endorse any of these firms.



**atlantic city
electricSM**

AN EXELON COMPANY

Delivering a **Clean Energy** Future

We're committed to powering a cleaner and brighter future for our customers and communities and are working to bring the next generation of energy services to New Jersey, while helping the state achieve its environmental goals.

atlanticcityelectric.com



© Atlantic City Electric Company, 2022

ANJEC depends on our business members to help pay for the cost of printing the *ANJEC Report*. Please let them know that you saw their ad here. Remember, however, that ANJEC does not necessarily endorse any of these firms.



ENVIRONMENTAL
STEWARDSHIP

COMES NATURALLY

As stewards of the earth's most precious natural resource, we know the importance of protecting our environment. All living things need water to survive. By investing in water conservation education, innovative treatment and delivery technologies, and source water protection programs, we are working to make a difference for our communities and our world. Learn more at newjerseyamwater.com. Be sure to check out our tips on how to use water wisely, because every drop counts!



WE KEEP LIFE FLOWING™



See our special section on nature-friendly landscapes!