



# WORKSHOP SUMMARIES

## Workshop Session 1

9:30am-10:30am

### **NJ Policy Updates: Clean Energy, Plastics, & Community**

**Room 115**

#### ***1 Urban/Community Forestry CEU***

Big policy shifts are on the horizon—from 100% clean energy by 2035 to NJPACT rules, 'Skip the Stuff,' packaging stewardship, and affordable housing. Learn what's on the table, how it impacts your community, and what you can do to influence the outcomes.

Ed Potosnak, Executive Director, NJLCV

Lois Kraus, Westfield Green Team Vice Chair, Beyond Plastics NJ Co-Founder

### **Community Driven Solutions for Energy Conservation**

**Room 108**

How can NJ residents and businesses take advantage of existing incentive programs to reduce energy use, lower costs, and support the state's clean energy goals? Overview of the Genesis Project, working to provide clean energy, and environmental justice to reduce carbon emissions.

Jeannemarie Ryder, Customer Outreach Specialist, PSE&G

Angela Bivens, Senior Energy Efficiency Program Manager, Atlantic City Electric

## **From Data to Decisions: Developing the Watershed Improvement Plan**

### **1 Urban/Community Forestry CEU**

### **Mast Chapel**

Time is running out. The first out of three steps of the Watershed Improvement Plan is due in January 2026. How is your municipality tracking for these MS4 Permit requirements? The session will cover reporting requirements, mapping tools, public participation, and best practices to ensure compliance with NJDEP regulations and support effective stormwater management planning. Public involvement is critical in all three steps: make sure that your voice is heard.

Michael L. Pisauo, Jr., Esq, Policy Director, The Watershed Institute

Dr. Stephen Souza, Clean Water Consulting, LLC

## **Working Together for Greater Environmental Impact**

### **Hageman Hall**

### **1 Urban/Community Forestry CEU**

Collaboration can significantly amplify environmental efforts. In this session, several NGOs will share how strategic partnerships have enabled them to achieve broader regional impact. *Green Faith Circle* of Southern NJ will discuss how they mobilized around a dozen faith communities to take action on environmental issues. The *Nature Conservancy* and *Raritan Headwaters Association* will highlight their efforts through the NJ Statewide Dam Removal Partnership, aimed at removing dams to restore river ecosystems. *Pinelands Preservation Alliance* will share how a campaign sparked a statewide partnership (*Access Nature*) to make natural areas more inclusive and accessible for people of all abilities.

Martin Levin: Program Coordinator, GreenFaith Circle of Southern NJ

Beth Styler Barry: Director of Freshwater Program, TNC

Robert Lucas: Restoration Coordinator, RHAS

Stephen Elliot: Director of Watershed Programs, PPA

Michelle DiBlasio: Freshwater Restoration Manager, TNC

## **Workshop Session 2**

## **10:45am-11:45am**

### **Working for Clean Drinking Water in NJ**

### **Room 108**

How clean is your drinking water? Hear about NJ's state standards for public water and well water systems. Develop an understanding of how drinking water treatment companies are addressing

stricter standards for lead, forever chemicals, microplastics, and more. Resources and knowledge provided on how to safeguard drinking water in your community.

Matthew Csik, Vice President, Water Quality and Compliance, NJ American Water Company  
Eric Vitale, Director of Water Quality and Compliance, Veolia Water

## **Acting Locally: Success Stories**

## **Room 115**

### **1 Urban/Community Forestry CEU**

Discover inspiring projects from across the state that are transforming communities and proving what's possible when residents, municipalities, and regional partners work together. Learn how Lambertville is boosting pollinators, wildlife, and native plants, and how Saddle Brook is protecting habitat through the Dark Sky initiative. Find out how your town can join these efforts—and what resources are available to help you get started.

Mary Anne Borge, Team Leader, Lambertville Goes Wild; Chair, Parks & Recreation  
Stephen Mariconda, MPH, Chair, Saddle Brook Green Team; Delegate: DarkSky NJ

## **Watershed Wisdom: Strategies for Sustainable Stormwater Systems -Mast Chapel**

Learn about best management practices (BMPs) and green infrastructure solutions to improve your stormwater system. Then explore strategies for building an equitable, dedicated revenue stream—such as a stormwater utility—to sustainably fund ongoing maintenance and improvements.

Dr. Christopher C. Obropta Ph.D., P.E, Director, Rutgers Water Resources Research Institute  
John Tully, Supervisor of Stormwater Utility, Supervisor of Engineering & Information Technology, Raritan Township  
Karen Gilbert, Business Administrator, Raritan Township

## **Workshop Session 3**

## **2:30pm-3:30pm**

## **Meet your New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection**

Meet and learn from various departments/programs in NJDEP. NJDEP staff will share their expertise, guidance, and updates on key environmental issues and regulations, permitting processes, and compliance requirements. The sessions will each provide an overview of the work

currently in the focus areas and there will be ample time to mingle into other sessions to connect with NJDEP staff.

Programs represented are:

- **Green Acres, Blue Acres, Public Lands Compliance**  
**Mast Chapel**
- **Environmental Justice, Municipal Stormwater Regulation Program**  
**Room 108**
- **CHANJ, Urban and Community Forestry**  
**Hageman Hall**

**Blue Acres**, state-funded buyout program that purchases properties in high-risk flood zones; Environmental Justice, fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people, regardless of race, color, national origin, or income, concerning the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws

**Green Acres**, meeting New Jersey's growing recreation and conservation needs in rural, suburban, and urban areas,

**Public Lands Compliance**, ensuring compliance for Green Acres-encumbered properties and other lands that are subject to permanent restrictions as a condition of NJDEP funding.

- Larry Fink, Team Leader, Green Acres State Land Acquisition Program
- Alvin Chin, Flood Hazard Mitigation Planner, Office of Climate Resilience-Blue Acres
- Nancy Lawrence, Section Lead, Office of Transactions and Public Land Administration Public Land Compliance (PLC) Section

**The Municipal Stormwater Regulation Program** issues NJPDES general permits authorizing stormwater discharges from Tier A municipalities, Public Complex, and Highway Agencies that discharge stormwater from municipal separate storm sewer systems (MS4s). The unit provides guidance for helping permittees develop Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plans, Public Outreach Material, Mapping, Stormwater Utilities, and other guidance material.

**Environmental Justice Office** aims to improve the quality of life in New Jersey's most vulnerable communities by educating and empowering communities who are often outside of government

decision-making processes and guiding DEP's programs and other state departments and agencies in implementing environmental justice.

- Kandyce Perry, Director, Office of Environmental Justice
- Gabryella Pulsinelli, Environmental Specialist, Bureau of NJPDES Stormwater Permitting

**CHANJ (Connecting Habitat Across New Jersey)**, an effort to make our landscape and roadways more permeable for terrestrial wildlife by identifying key areas and actions needed to achieve habitat connectivity across the state;

**Urban and Community Forestry** works to encourage, promote, and support the local stewardship and effective management of trees and forest ecosystems in New Jersey's communities through technical assistance and financial assistance.

- MacKenzie Hall, Biologist, NJDEP Fish & Wildlife's Endangered and Nongame Species Program
- Ryan Bellinger, Forester, The New Jersey Urban & Community Forestry Program