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Fighting for a cleaner and healthier New Jersey for all!

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OPINION

## Don't Let Fossil Fuel Thinking Prevail

By Joseph Attamante  
Editor's Note: Joe Attamante is a former teacher and veteran and a lifetime member of the Sierra Club. He lives in Morristown.



As I reflect on September's New York City Climate March and Rally, I am heartened that over 50,000 people from hundreds of organizations focused their commitment and energy to speak with one voice, telling President Biden, Congress, and the fossil fuel industry that business as usual will destroy our planet's balance and eventually extinguish much of life: plants, animals, and us. Most important, they called on everyone to protect and preserve the fragile balance of temperature, air, earth and water, the climate that sustains all that lives.

At the same time, I am dismayed and discouraged that many of our fellow citizens either don't know the effects of global warming or openly distrust science and don't want to know. Many who apparently do understand climate change ignore what their senses and eyes show them. A recent [Pew survey](#) indicated Americans remain sharply divided over addressing climate change.

Most shameful in my mind are the many elected officials who, for political advantage, openly [deny or minimize](#) the clear scientific evidence that our Earth is warming with dangerous rapidity.

The world has known of the cause-and-effect connection between CO<sub>2</sub> and warming of the atmosphere—that as



An estimated 50,000 to 75,000 protesters attended the March to End Fossil Fuels in New York City September 17, 2023. Photo: Frances Denny, The Luupe.

CO<sub>2</sub> increases, the atmosphere warms and a warmer atmosphere holds more moisture—through the 19th century work of Eunice Foote, John Tyndall, and most famously, Svante Arrhenius, who [worked out](#) how much of the sun's radiation would be retained by CO<sub>2</sub> and water vapor in the atmosphere.

These effects have been confirmed by a consensus of climate scientists who monitor and measure our atmosphere, oceans, and earth. For many years, these scientists have urgently [warned](#) that we have limited time to avoid irremediable catastrophes—increasingly severe storms, wildfires, massive flooding, heat waves, and drought. They con-

tinually warn us that the only way we can mitigate the most horrific scenario, planetary devastation and [possible collapse of civilization](#), is to rapidly reduce and finally eliminate the burning of fossil fuels.

Moreover, although our governing leaders enacted some legislation that will help, such as "[Build Back Better](#)" and the "Inflation Reduction Act," they then undermined that good by continuing to subsidize the fossil fuel industry and approving the massive [Willow](#) oil drilling project in Alaska and the [West Virginia Mountain Valley Pipeline](#), and these projects were approved de-

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## Celebrating Our 2023 Election Successes

The November 7, 2023, election results demonstrated a clear win for the environment, clean energy, and New Jersey families and workers.

The Election Day results show that 85% of the candidates endorsed for state and local elections by the New Jersey Chapter of the Sierra Club were elected or reelected to their positions. We endorsed 24 candidates for Senate and 23 candidates for Assembly.

"The clean energy transition won, clean air won, and energy independence won in New Jersey. NJ voters are very smart and continue to vote for environmental protections, and they deeply care about transitioning away from fossil fuels," said Anjuli Ramos-Busot, director of the NJ Chapter.

Candidates are endorsed based on how closely they align with Sierra Club values on climate, the environment, and environmental social justice issues. While we are very happy with the overall results of the election, we are disappointed that Christine Clarke (D-25) lost her race for state Senate.

Clarke is an environmental advocate who has dedicated her life's work to preserving and protecting our natural resources. We know this loss will not deter her from achieving her goals.

Locally, six of the nine county and municipal candidates we endorsed won their races. John Kashwick was reelected to his seat on Clinton Town Council, and Douglas Singletary and Paul Drake also preserved their seats as Somerset County Commissioners.

In Leonia, William Ziegler and Diane Scarangella won their elections for mayor and council (respectively) by a landslide, as did Assemblyman Dan Benson, who ran successfully for Mercer County executive director.

In the coming year we look forward to continuing to work with the Legisla-

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CONSERVATION CHAIR'S MESSAGE

## Climate Change Risk Reduction Will Cost Less in the Long Run

By Greg Gorman • [ggorman@embargmail.com](mailto:ggorman@embargmail.com)



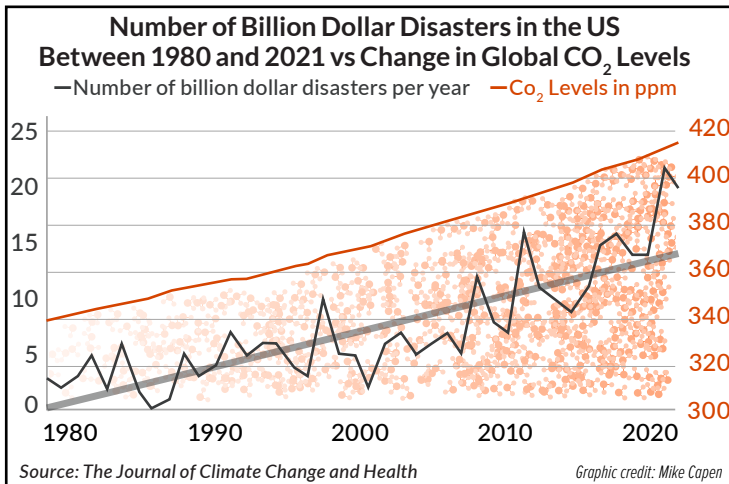
The World is experiencing higher temperatures, a greater frequency of heavy precipitation events, and rising sea levels because of climate change.

These conditions impact our economy, our environment, and our day-to-day lives. UN Secretary-General António Guterres' has said that "the climate emergency is a race we are losing, but it is a race we can win." There remain forces in our society that impede the quest for a clean energy economy that will avoid the extreme impacts of global warming.

In 2005, the National Institute of Building Sciences (NIBS) found that each dollar from grants aimed at improving disaster resilience yielded \$4

in savings. In 2019, after hurricanes Katrina, Sandy, and the increasing frequency of other disasters, NIBS [reported](#) that for every dollar spent on federal grants, society saves \$6. A [study](#) released last spring correlates escalating costs of billion-dollar disasters in the United States with rising temperatures and CO<sub>2</sub> levels. It says these necessitate a disaster risk reduction strategy to reduce carbon emissions and provide for resiliency.

The [first funding bill](#) passed by the Republican-controlled House of Representatives under House Speaker



Mike Johnson would slash programs aimed at helping state and local governments to adopt climate-friendly building codes and families to electrify their homes. This would not only increase recovery cost for climate-induced disasters, but also result in un-

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# NJ's Superfund Sites: Cleanups Give Hope!

By Patricia Hilliard • Executive Committee Member

New Jersey is the state with the most Superfund sites, roughly 150, 35 of which have been cleaned up. These toxic sites are due in part to New Jersey's history as the origin of the industrial revolution in the United States. Over the years, various types of mining, steel production, fabric dyeing, glass and plastics molding, pesticide production, and other types of manufacturing gave wealth and comfort to society while generating toxic waste.



Photos: Pat Hilliard

We had no sense of the degradation that would ultimately occur. However, industrialists did have a keen sense that profits would be greater if they kept costs down. Consequently, they were predisposed to dump waste and toxins into the rivers, marshes, or other ecosystems.

Many battles have been fought over who should pay for cleanups. Some corporations, often under pressure from courts and regulators, have paid some of the cost. In other instances, where businesses failed, taxpayers picked up the tab through federal government programs. While some work has been done to remediate and remove toxic dump sites, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has also monitored sites to prevent the spread of toxins or is continuing the cleanup.

After years of neglect and bickering, money to support Superfund site cleanups has come from President Joe Biden's Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (bipartisan), signed into law in November 2021.

In December 2021, the EPA announced seven Superfund sites in New



Jersey whose cleanups would be augmented using \$1 billion of these funds.

**Diamond Head Oil Refinery Div., Kearny**—Chemical contamination included chromium, dioxin, polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), and lead.

**Former Kil-Tone, Vineland**—Toxins included arsenic-based pesticides, arsenic, and lead.

**E.C. Electroplating, Garfield**—Chromium from the site contaminated groundwater extensively, up to the Passaic River.

**Kauffman & Minter, Springfield**—Contaminated groundwater threatened an aquifer used for drinking water.

**Roebling Steel, Florence**—Heavy

metals contaminated soil, marsh, and riverbanks.

**Unimatic Manufacturing, Fairfield**—Oil containing PCBs was used at the site.

**White Chemical, Newark**—Waste from the manufacture of acid chlorides and fire-retardant compounds was found throughout the site.

In February 2023, funds were earmarked for three more Superfund sites.

**Mansfield Trail Dump, Byram**—The site was used as a dump for septic and industrial waste, which impacted soil and groundwater in the nearby residential neighborhood.

**Matteo & Sons, West Deptford**—This site was operated as an unregistered landfill, junkyard, and metals recycling facility and is extensively contaminated.

**Cornell Dubilier Electronics, South Plainfield**—PCBs and chlorinated volatile organic compounds, primarily



trichloroethylene, contaminated soil, sediment, and groundwater at the site.

**Who has suffered more?**

Our society has benefited from the various products that were created by industry. However, it is necessary to make amends for the environmental damage and to the people who suffer most from Superfund hazards in their communities. According to EPA Administrator Michael Regan, about 60% of the sites nationwide are in historically underserved communities.

Sen. Cory Booker, D-NJ, has noted that these sites contain toxic substances that expose residents of these communities to elevated risk for cancers, birth defects, and other serious health problems. The health risks extend beyond site contamination. Every activist in the labor movement knows that toxic chemicals in the workplace poison all workers, regardless of race or ethnic background.

**What We Must Do**

As residents of New Jersey, we must keep focused on the damage done and the work needed to make our state safe and clean again. The EPA offers an [interactive map and lookup tool](#) so residents can see if Superfund sites are in their communities and find out what work is being done or has been done. Superfund sites that were cleaned were the result of residents putting pressure on the corporations and government. We still need to be vigilant and defend our right to a clean environment in coordination with our struggle against the accelerating climate crisis!

Superfund Map: <https://shorturl.at/GIW06>



## OPINION

# "MACH2" May Only Speed Up Climate Warming

By Kip Cherry • Executive Committee Member and Conservation Chair for Central Group

The Department of Energy's \$7 billion plan to create a system of "hydrogen hubs" across the United States is concerning because much of the hydrogen will be produced from non-renewable, emissions-producing sources. The Sierra Club supports hydrogen made only from renewable sources: wind, solar, and geothermal energy.

The proposed hub for serving New Jersey, Delaware, and Pennsylvania would be called Mid-Atlantic Clean Hydrogen Hub (MACH2).

The Biden Administration's stated goal is to use these hydrogen hubs to "accelerate the commercial scale deployment of low-cost, clean hydrogen," yet before clean hydrogen can happen, this plan calls for scaling up the production of hydrogen via emissions producing methods.

The creation of truly green hydrogen must be powered by renewable energy, and this can be accomplished only via the separation of hydrogen from water, a process called electrolysis. However, even after hydrogen is produced, it must be stored and transported carefully. At the same time, hydrogen containers and pipelines must be built to higher standards than for natural gas to withstand hydrogen's capability to escape and worsen [global warming](#).

We all need to be cognizant of the facts and how to better use federal funding to create truly green hydrogen. The funding for the hydrogen hubs project will come through the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act. The seven proposed "hubs" involve regions of historical energy production, such as Appalachia where stores of natural gas will be tapped to produce hydrogen.

This process converts water and methane into hydrogen and carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>). According to the plan, as much of the CO<sub>2</sub> as possible will be stored to prevent its release into the environment and global warming. This technology is not perfect, nor can we count on the energy industry's commitment to the expense of making this process as reliable as it could be.

Another concern is that scaling up fossil fuel infrastructure to produce non-green hydrogen could dwarf what little green hydrogen production there is. According to the Department of Energy, 98% of all hydrogen currently created in the United States uses fossil fuel as the base component.

It is also concerning that the hubs that are dependent upon natural gas are also planning to control CO<sub>2</sub> production using carbon capture (long-term storage), a highly problematic technology. It means that rather than per-

fecting alternatives to CO<sub>2</sub>, the United States would try to put the problem under the carpet.

Some proponents of the hydrogen hub plan have argued that these hydrogen hubs will help create a market for hydrogen, including green hydrogen, and therefore are worth the emissions tradeoff. The production of hydrogen using natural gas leads to the creation of greenhouse gas emissions. The production of hydrogen from nuclear energy (pink hydrogen), which is also in the hub plan, perpetuates the upstream emissions and health problems from uranium mining and downstream problems from nuclear waste.

Another argument is that green hydrogen, with this level of federal support, will one day become a fuel of choice; but this would require a huge and expensive infrastructure system with complicated pipeline and storage systems. We don't need to go that way, and in fact, we have already made the choice to go with renewable electricity as our basic form of energy, replacing fossil-fuel based-energy.

Still, hydrogen does show potential as a form of fuel storage. Unneeded renewable energy can be used to produce green hydrogen via electrolysis, and this hydrogen can be stored and tapped when grid demand peaks or for special uses, such as long-haul trucking and railroading. This is where using renewable energy to create green hydrogen makes the best sense.

There are other underexplored alternatives for energy production. Geothermal heating and cooling systems have been employed with great success by exploiting the differences in surface and below-ground temperatures.

Some see the hydrogen hubs as priming the pump for eventual green hydrogen production, while others see them as a windfall for the fossil fuel industry that will tether us to fossil fuels through costly investments in infrastructure and lead to an insubstantial increase in green hydrogen production. If we allow ourselves to become too dependent on hydrogen, we will not be able to cut greenhouse gases and will commit ourselves to the use of infrastructure that would not qualify as part of the renewable grid we hope to create.

A discussion of the seven proposed regional hydrogen hubs and their pros and cons can be found in the electronic section of this newsletter.



## Many Shades of Hydrogen

By Denise Brush • Chair, Offshore Wind Committee

Hydrogen energy has been in the news recently, and it is important to understand this new technology, how hydrogen fuel fits into the energy system, and why it is controversial.

Before you can use hydrogen as fuel, you must extract it from the molecules where it occurs, and then transport it to where you need it. This is like the oil or gas business; you need large industrial plants, pipelines, and trucks. Fossil fuel companies view hydrogen as their preferred form of clean energy: They want to repurpose their oil and gas

plants and pipelines to make hydrogen fuel instead, which is expensive but better for them than downsizing their operations as fossil fuels are phased out.

Hydrogen can be separated from other molecules by several different industrial processes. A color-based classification system has sprung up to



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# Are We Following AI Into a World Without Nature?

By Tony Hagen • [editor@newjersey.sierraclub.org](mailto:editor@newjersey.sierraclub.org)

Amazon opened a technologically up-to-date warehouse in Boston recently and invited the television media in for a look. The place was buzzing with robotized machines, even a couple that looked vaguely humanoid.

It became fodder for one of those breakfast shows with a panel of discussants. A woman who reported on the opening was agog with the efficiency of the whole operation. AI combined with robotization is certainly stretching the limits of human capability.

The inevitable question was raised: What will happen to human workers' jobs as machines like these gain more elbow room in the workplace? The reporter was so ready with her answer you got the impression the whole thing was scripted beforehand.

The essence of it was robots take care of the more mundane tasks and free up humans for higher-level activity, "which makes them more human." The other half of the response was that Amazon has only hired more workers as it has grown.

Of course, Amazon, being an innovator, has transformed the marketplace and it is unclear whether it has created more jobs than it has taken from its competitors. Amazon's contribution to the world, in fact, must be judged from many angles.

I wonder if our schools are really turning out the caliber of students who will be equipped to survive in the high-tech workplace. Many companies already know that if they want qualified workers, they will have to train them themselves.

Some people may have noticed that AI is already competing with human

teachers. Duolingo has achieved enormous success with AI-powered language learning programs and is branching out into math. Google has just launched an AI application that can converse with students and build up their language skills that way.

Such developments keep people very excited about technology while also challenging them to keep up. These distractions, in turn, don't leave people much time or energy to think of the larger picture, and their employers don't necessarily want them to.

If that TV reporter had been a little more cynical in her assessment of AI and workplace robotization, businesses like Amazon would think twice before inviting her to any more ribbon cutting events. It's an example of how reporters are controlled by the business establishment.

The bigger picture is that climate change and environmental degradation are bigger even than Amazon, and, like the breakfast media show, climate change and environmental degradation also are feeding on Amazon. All these robots are sending more plastic and packaging waste and emissions into the environment at a faster rate. That combined with incessant competition is dehumanizing and lowering the quality of life for untold millions.

Were he alive, Henry David Thoreau might say, "My shack in the woods beside the clear spring is still better than the entire Amazon shopping catalog." Who dares to agree?



# Manage Your Club Membership Online!

By Joe Testa • NJ Chapter IT Chair

Did you know that you can manage your Club membership online? The "My Account" web portal at [myaccount.sierraclub.org](https://myaccount.sierraclub.org) enables you to view or update your membership information without the need to contact the Club offices.

When you log in to My Account, you will see your member ID and the last date that your membership is active. The "Manage Your Account" section lets you customize your membership experience as follows:

- Update your contact information (address, phone number);
- Specify your preferences for receiving different types of Club communications (by postal mail, email, and phone);
- See your recent membership renewals and donations, and renew your membership;
- Read the digital edition of *Sierra* magazine and manage how you receive your copy (print, electronic, or not at all); and more.

There is also a handy link to search for nearby Sierra Club outings and events.

Coming soon will be a new reason to use the My Account portal: The Club

is testing a new-and-improved online election tool for members to vote online in their Chapter and Group leadership elections. While the NJ Chapter is not yet using this new tool—a trial run was conducted in 2023 by a handful of chapters—it's likely that all chapters will be using the tool in the next few years. Having your My Account access set up will make it easy for you to vote in future elections.

To set up your My Account access, go to [myaccount.sierraclub.org](https://myaccount.sierraclub.org) and click on "Create your account." Fill in the form on the next page with your information. It is important that you use the email address that the Sierra Club has on file for you, because this is how the system will confirm that you are a valid member. When you submit the form, you'll receive an email at that address with instructions for setting up a password to log into your account. If you have multiple email addresses and don't remember which one you used for Sierra Club, call Member Care at (415) 977 5653 to verify which address the Club has on file for you.



**Include the Sierra Club in your holiday donations budget. Your dollars help to protect and preserve the natural world and your quality of life in New Jersey.**

# The Chapter Warmly Welcomes More Volunteers!

By Richard Isaac • [Richard.Isaac@sierraclub.org](mailto:Richard.Isaac@sierraclub.org)

## Heather Semler, Video Producer

Heather Semler is an experienced video producer with a number of well-known brands, so she was able to draw in a lot of eyes. She and her teams did this through short social content that was tied to somewhat longer content. I have seen her work, and it is incredible. Fortunately, Heather is passionate about fighting climate change and wants to use engaging video to educate and motivate large audiences. We are lucky to now have Heather on board so that folks in our state can see, learn, and be motivated about the importance of offshore wind and other environmental issues.



## Michael Reis, Esq., Legal Researcher and Legislative Committee Member

Michael is new to the New Jersey area and reached out to us after seeing a legal researcher opportunity listed on our Chapter website. He decided it would be a good way for him to engage with the Sierra Club community. A lifetime Sierra Club member, Michael graduated law school in 2021 with a concentration in environmental law. He passed the bar in Kentucky and is obtaining his license to practice in New Jersey. Before moving to the Garden State, he had been in Europe



getting an LLM in international environmental law and working for the United Nations Environment Program. In addition to being a lawyer, Michael is also an attorney, currently based in Jersey City. As Michael has a great passion for the environment and law, having him on our Chapter's Legislative Committee certainly is promising.

## Paul Midey, Esq., Legal Researcher and Transportation Committee Member

Paul holds a bachelor's degree in political science and a juris doctor from Syracuse University. He served six years as counsel in the New York State Senate, working as senior counsel in the Office of Majority Counsel and Program for one of those years. In the New York State Senate, Paul negotiated the passage and implementation of major legislative policy initiatives, including the extension and reform of the Brownfield Cleanup Program, the \$2.5 billion Clean Water Infrastructure Act, and the \$830 million Metropolitan Transportation Authority NYC Subway Action Plan. Paul served as assistant counsel for transportation, serving as lead counsel for all transportation agencies in the state of New York. He is particularly knowledgeable about transportation issues and has already provided valuable guidance about the controversial congestion pricing program New York City is now considering. It'll be extremely helpful having him serve on our Chapter's Transportation Committee.



## FOSSIL FUEL THINKING continued from page 1

spite knowing they would ensure decades more CO<sub>2</sub> emissions pollution of air, land, and water and destruction of natural habitat.

Most threatening to present and future environmental legislation, the Supreme Court also undermines progress. In June 2022, it [curbed](#) the Environmental Protection Agency's power to regulate industrial smokestack emissions, contrary to the clear mandate to do so under the 1970 Clean Air Act.

Many people mistakenly believe that planting trees, seedlings, and saplings somehow makes up for continuing to log and destroy the Amazon and the northern boreal forest, and that it's OK to convert our mature forest trees on public lands into lumber. Simply planting trees does not justify or make up for massive logging. Fully grown trees sequester more carbon than many newly planted ones, so it's essential to preserve mature forests.

The bottom line is that while our elected and unelected officials say they are doing everything they can to avoid the worst outcome, their actions do not match their rhetoric.

And speaking of public betrayal, it should not go unnoted that most broadcast TV, as well as C-Span, knew a massive climate march was to take place on 9/17, but nonetheless chose not to stream or broadcast live coverage of the event. Anyone who feels the wind, rain, and heat and breathes the air already



Photo: Frances Denny, The Luupe.

knows that the world is warming, and that extreme weather is becoming the norm. What do we do to avoid the worst outcomes?

I submit that hope lies with those who marched and stood with each other in the streets that day; they marched for all of us. It is incumbent on all of us to write and call local, state, and national officials and rally and speak to all those we entrust to act in our best interests. If those we elect do not move swiftly to transition from fossil fuels, we must call them out—make them uncomfortable until they do act—and vote out those who only mouth platitudes to placate us.

### Resources

Pew Survey: <https://shorturl.at/tJMSX>

Build Back Better: <https://shorturl.at/nNOT1>

Inflation Reduction Act: <https://shorturl.at/FTX12>

Willow: <https://shorturl.at/dno14>

# How to Subscribe to Community Solar

By Abbas Salim • Solar Program Coordinator, Azas786@yahoo.com

In 2019, the NJ Clean Energy Program, managed by the NJ Board of Public Utilities (BPU), initiated the 3-year, pilot Community Solar Energy Program to make clean solar energy available to all who cannot otherwise take advantage of solar energy due to various reasons. These reasons may include affordability; homes not suitable for solar panel installations; or residing in townhomes, condominiums, and apartments with no rooftops of their own. Commercial businesses with limited resources also are eligible to participate in the program.

In the first round, BPU approved 150 projects totaling 243 megawatts (MW) throughout the state. As of September 30, 44 projects had been completed, representing 63 MW, and there were 82 more projects (145 MW) in the pipeline with completion anticipated in early November 2023, according to the BPU.

Thus, community solar is becoming available to many residents of New Jersey. The program reserves 51% of the project capacity for low and moderate income (LMI) families and the rest is available for all other users.

Residents can take advantage of solar energy by subscribing to projects that are available in their areas. The community solar project delivers the solar energy equivalent of one's

monthly average electrical energy consumption. The solar energy from the project is channeled into the grid on behalf of the subscriber—not directly to the home—The subscriber receives solar credits, which results in savings on the electricity bill. Thus, the electricity drawn from the regular utility company is replaced by the clean energy from the community solar project. Community solar subscribers can save as much as 20% on their electric bill and help reduce energy generated using fossil fuels.

The community solar program is a huge enabler for those who are concerned about climate change and global warming and want to reduce their carbon footprint for a healthy environment. The BPU has been steadily making progress to make the subscription process very user friendly.

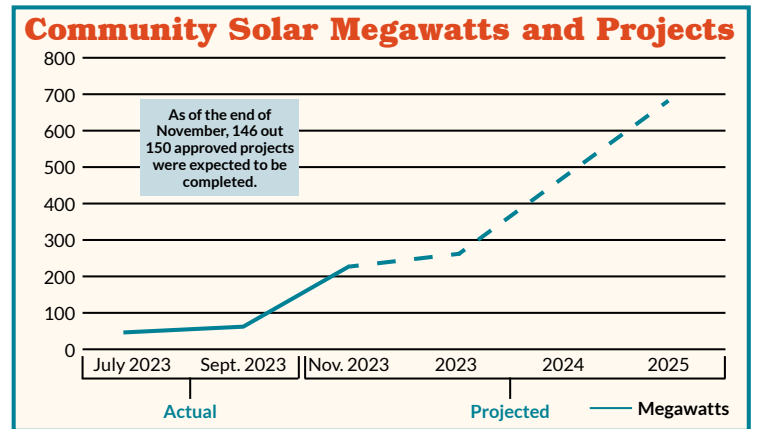
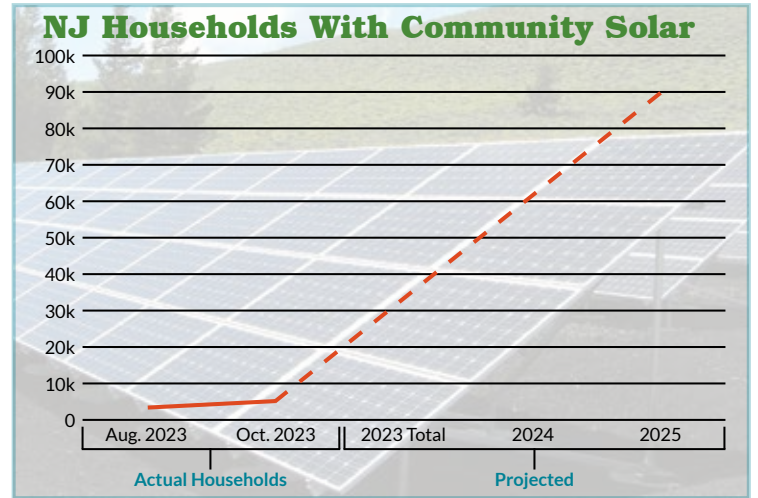
One can locate a community solar project if available in the desired ZIP code by visiting [www.sustainablejersey.com](http://www.sustainablejersey.com) and clicking on the “Project Finder” link. This is followed by entering the ZIP code. All community solar projects that are available in that ZIP code area will pop up with all the information on them, including the terms of the agreement, expected discount, and the necessary subscription link to enable subscription.

This website also answers many frequently asked questions. The bottom line is that the subscription to a community solar project is free with zero up-front investment, no long-term contract to sign, no solar panels to install, and the freedom to unsubscribe on short notice.

The BPU has now made the pilot program a permanent program and expects to make an additional 450 MW available in the next two years, enabling many more NJ residents (LMI residents in particular) to benefit from solar energy and save money on their electric bill at the same time.

For questions and/or additional information,

please contact the author of this article by email at [Azas786@yahoo.com](mailto:Azas786@yahoo.com)



Top chart: The dotted portion of the line represents projected capacity for NJ households. The solid portion represents signups so far. Bottom: The state Board of Public Utilities plans to approve 690 MW by the end of 2025. Graphics: Karen Crosby

## Electrify Your Home and Vehicles With the IRA

By Steve and Pat Miller • Building Electrification Team Leaders



In the last issue of *The Jersey Sierran*, we wrote how we added the building electrification (BE) Q&A “Ask Sean Show” to our monthly BE webinars. We also explained homeowner incentives that are becoming available for electrification through the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA).

The timing was fortuitous. Many of the IRA incentives for BE, electric vehicles (EVs), and solar are already in effect. Webinar viewers who became aware of them were eager to take advantage.

Our “Ask Sean Show” was a 3-month spin-off of a California-based show created by BE expert Sean Armstrong and other California activists. The NJ version of this show featured an attractive continuous-action entertainment format with multiple speakers. They responded to a surprising variety of audience Q&A topics related to upgrading homes through weatherization and electrification.

The three NJ episodes ran in July, August, and September during a summer hiatus of the show in California, and we supplied NJ-based speakers as well as data.

Half of each hour-long program used one or two NJ homeowners who shared their home heating and cooling specs, photos of appliances (e.g., furnaces, air conditioners, etc.), utility bills, and wish lists for case study evaluation and recommendations.

After reviewing these, Sean would make recommendations for products that would meet the homeowners’ needs. He also introduced innovative products that might be valuable for

anyone embarking on a BE project. The other portion of the show was audience Q&A, mostly about home issues.

The series kicked off in July with a case study of our daughter’s South Brunswick home, for which Steve is overseeing the weatherization and electrification work.

In August we had two case studies—one from Cape May and the other from the far north of New Jersey in Hunterdon County. Both involved ground-source (geothermal) heat pump systems, a technology apparently rare in sunny California.

The September case study home was in Cherry Hill.

Each of the four case discussions involved very different homes with their own issues. And NJ homes (as well as the NJ climate) are quite different from those in California.

The three “Ask Sean Show” episodes were very popular with our webinar viewers. Average attendance for these three episodes was 64 versus 42 for our other monthly BE webinars this year, a 50% improvement. We attribute that to both the entertainment factor provided by Sean as host, along with his encyclopedic knowledge of BE products by manufacturer and model.

Sean’s company, Redwood Energy publishes research booklets. In his webinars, Sean relies heavily on data and photos from his 95-page [pocket guide](#) to all-electric retrofits. His NJ shows were not just educational but also entertaining and much appreciated and enjoyed by our audience. You may view any of the webinars (recordings, slides, and Q&A) at <https://bit.ly/45bUPSK>.

In October we returned to our previous BE webinar format and adopted Sean’s case study template. Volunteer owners described their recently upgraded home in Bergen County. Their

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## Urban Agriculture and Its Benefits

By Renée Pollard • Executive Committee Member and Chair of the Environmental and Social Justice Committee

Creating green spaces in urban and overburdened communities can sometimes be challenging, but it is vital to creating an environment that improves overall health and quality of life.

This is a priority in New Jersey, the most densely populated state in the country. This past year, New Jersey has experienced some of its poorest air quality on record. This must change. We must find solutions to minimize air pollution’s impact on the most vulnerable populations who experience it the most.

Disadvantaged black and brown communities have known for years their neighborhoods lack resources. They are almost [three times more likely](#) than white communities to live in “nature deprived” areas—without parks, walking paths, or green spaces.

The heightened awareness of the value of green spaces, urban farming, community gardens, and exposure to parks is gaining traction with policymakers due to increases in pollution, flooding, and disease—all exacerbated by climate change.

We as advocates, legislators, and environmental justice leaders must collaborate in practical ways with these disadvantaged communities to develop policies, strategies, and plans, and carry them forward to implementation. It is easier to just lay out plans for

any project without community input, but this is not the ideal practice to follow. It is better to engage with these communities from the beginning, because each community is unique and knows its needs best.



There are a few communities in the state that have community gardens and urban farming and can be considered models for best practices. One of these is in Newark, where Tobias A. Fox founded Newark Science and Sustainability (Newark SAS) 10 years ago.

Newark SAS is a community-driven, 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that creates educational programs, agricultural training, and

community green development initiatives to ensure eco-conscious communities and healthy food access locally and globally.

Fox is also managing director of [Newark SAS](#), which practices “inter-generational sustainability”: satisfying the needs of the current population without sacrificing the welfare of future generations.

Another example can be found in Camden, where the [Center for Environmental Transformation \(CFET\)](#) manages approximately half an acre

*continued on page 7*



Photo: Jonathan Kemper

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# Fall Hiking in Lake Placid

By Gary Frederick • Conservation Chair, Raritan Valley Group

Lake Placid, a charming village of 2,200 people in upstate New York, is perhaps best known for hosting two Winter Olympics, in 1932 and 1980. It will be forever remembered as the site of the “Miracle on Ice,” when an unknown group of American college kids and amateurs beat a seasoned Soviet Union hockey team to eventually win a gold medal.

Lake Placid is also the destination for hundreds of miles of beautiful hiking trails within the Adirondack Mountains. Take those trails, weave them within forests of blazing fall colors, and you’ve got a magical hiking experience with



Photo: Gary Frederick

some of the best views and vantage points on the East Coast. That’s what our group of dedicated hikers decided to do one October week when the fall foliage was at peak viewing.

Although our destination was Lake Placid, we drove first from New Jersey to Kaaterskill Falls in the northern Catskills in New York. That slight detour took us on a hike through golden woods and a mountain of both stone and wood stairs to view the 260-foot falls. Although the trail to the falls and back is only 1.5 miles, we opted to do the longer Escarpment Trail first, hiking through muddy portions in some sections (I do not recommend hiking in the mud) and scrambling over boulders in other areas. All told, we trekked about 4 miles round trip before we ventured to the falls. There were more than 300 steps down to the base of the falls, but the strenuous walk to the base was well worth it, even if coming back up was an exercise in cardio conditioning that tested even the best of us.

After an overnight stay near the falls, we drove to Lake Placid the next morning. That’s where the magic of

the changing foliage really took hold. Brilliant reds, golden yellows, and citrus orange hues blanketed the mountains surrounding the town. Each explosion of color took our breath away and reminded us of the majesty of nature and its calming effect on minds more accustomed to traffic, noise, and pollution.



Of all the hikes we took, the most memorable was the one up Mount Jo to its summit at 2,832 feet. On land owned by the Adirondack Mountain Club,

this 2.4-mile loop is relatively short but is moderately challenging because of its steep elevation. The climb was well worth it, though, as the summit view was like a vibrant pastel painting. Before us were brilliant foliage, a topaz sky, and Heart Lake shimmering in the valley below. We stayed for a long time on the mountaintop, marveling over the view, taking pictures, and pondering how incredible it was to be there.

As we hiked down from Mount Jo along a more gently sloped trail, we ran into a group of fourth graders who were on their way to the summit. They were excited to be on the hike, this being their first trip up. Some of those kids were quite chatty and clearly happy to be on the trail. I thought how lucky they were to be living amid such beautiful scenery, able to take hikes as part of their classes and enjoy the nature they were blessed with. After talking with them and their chaperones for a few minutes, we continued down the trail. But the experience of the summit and the wide-eyed wonder of those kids reinforced how lucky we were to be hiking on the trails around Lake Placid.

# More Schools Show Interest in E-School Buses

Interest in purchasing electric school buses (ESBs) was much higher this year at the NJ School Boards Association workshop, held in Atlantic City, October 23 and 24.

Bill Beren, NJ Chapter Transportation Committee chair and ExCom member; Kip Cherry, ExCom member and conservation chair for the Central Group; and Tony Hagen, Jersey Sierran editor, attended the conference to help stimulate interest and promote funding opportunities for ESB purchases.

“There was considerable interest at the conference in ESBs, much more than the previous year,” Cherry said. “This time people were more apt to stop and talk, and virtually all had some sense that electric school buses are coming.”

Although ESBs are a big-ticket item, New Jersey schools have ordered roughly 200, assisted by state funding, and the Environmental Protection Agency is accepting applications through the end of January 2024 for funding through the \$5 billion Clean School Bus Program. Now is the time for schools to apply to be selected in 2024.

There are roughly 15,000 diesel

school buses on New Jersey’s roads.

“We need to replace 1000 per year in order to replace all 15,000 in the fleet over a 15-year period,” Cherry said.

“The Fair Lawn district told us that when they didn’t get a grant, they were forced to buy two diesels,” Cherry said. “We need to make sure districts ready to buy have the grant funding they need.”



NJ Chapter reps Bill Beren and Kip Cherry discuss electric school buses with Anthony Iachetti, superintendent of the Elmwood Park school district. Photo: Tony Hagen.

## DIRECTOR’S MESSAGE

# Ørsted Is Not the Last Word on Offshore Wind

By Anjuli Ramos-Busot, Director, NJ Chapter of the Sierra Club

On October 31 (Happy Halloween!), Ørsted announced that it would officially cease the development of the offshore wind turbine projects Ocean Wind I and II in New Jersey. The turbines would have been of significant value in helping New Jersey meet its emissions reduction goals to slow climate warming. Gov. Phil Murphy has called into question the company’s “credibility and competence.”

This news is extremely disappointing after numerous statements from the company that the projects would continue as planned, despite delays seen in recent months. Unfortunately, this came down to inflation, unstable market conditions, and bad timing.

The current challenges around offshore wind project prices are a temporary reflection of power purchase agreements that were signed before the pandemic, when high supply chain costs and interest rates were unforeseen. The cost of iron and steel rose 14.9% between 2020 (when Ørsted issued their bid) and early 2022. Prices have fallen since then but in early November were still 81% above the 2020 low, according to the US Producer Price Index.

These cost burdens cannot be put on the New Jersey ratepayer, and we must continue to work toward cost-effective solutions to kickstart this new industry and fully take advantage of federal funding available for clean energy projects.

Taxpayers did not end up paying for Ocean Wind 1 and 2. Tax credit legislation signed in July permitted federal credits to benefit Ocean Wind 1 *if and only if* Ørsted builds the project. Ørsted did not receive anything. Instead, Ørsted will have to refund New Jersey over \$300 million.

The NJ Chapter of the Sierra Club will continue to push for solutions and the responsible development of off-

shore wind in our state, as it is one of our strongest climate solutions and has the potential to generate thousands of clean jobs and power our communities. Recently, our Chapter signed a joint statement with 40-plus environmental organizations who remain steadfast in support of offshore wind.



Let’s be clear: Clean energy advocates are *not defeated* by this outcome, as it has little to do with opposition groups in New Jersey or the fossil fuel industry. This setback is mostly financial. New Jersey needs this green industry, and we cannot let this disappointing economic delay deter our collective movement for a better and safer New Jersey for all of us and future generations.

New Jersey’s opportunity to take advantage of this powerful renewable energy source does not stop here. The beginning of an industry will inevitably face hurdles especially in an environment of inflation and supply chain bottlenecks, but New Jersey will move forward.

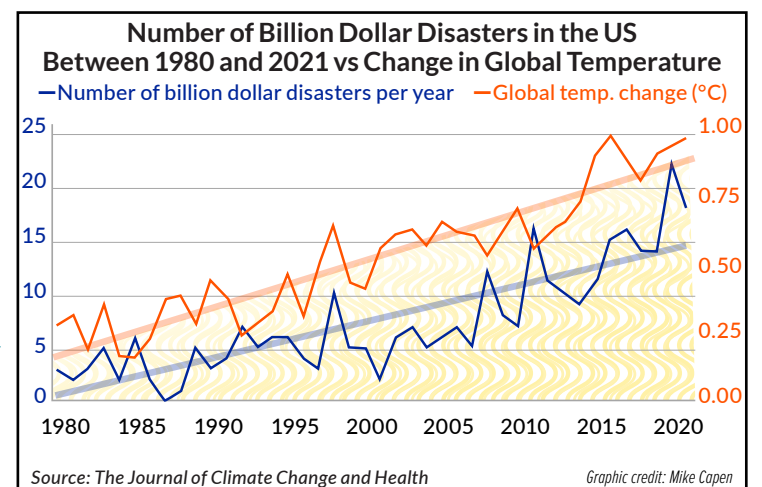
Responsibly developed offshore wind can be developed—our neighbors have done it with Vineyard Wind, in Massachusetts, and South Fork, off Long Island. We are eager for an expedited third round of solicitations for wind development applications and see Ørsted as just a setback in our timeline, not an end to our goals of cleaner air, family-sustaining jobs, and a transition away from fossil fuels.

This fight is not over, and we need to build our movement even stronger to ensure that the clean energy transition moves forward. We will fight and continue to fight to make sure we will have a safer climate future.

## CLIMATE CHANGE continued from page 1

acceptable harm to clean energy and energy efficiency initiatives that lower energy costs.

Climate emergency threatens New Jersey in many ways. [Sea levels are increasing](#) at a greater rate in New Jersey than other parts of the world. This imperils coastal infrastructure associated with the fishing industry (such as docks, roads, and processing plants) due to flooding risks. New Jersey has more [Superfund sites](#) facing climate threats—wildfires, floods, hurricanes, and sea level rise—than any other state. The power grid experiences weather-induced outages, and mass highways and mass transit corridors shut down due to flooding. High temperatures damage roadways and rail tracks and reduce the efficiency of power lines. In addition to crop damage due to drought and storms, climate impacts will increase irrigation costs, encourage root diseases, reduce yields for traditional crops, and promote invasives and weed growth. Commercial fishing patterns are already changing as ocean waters are warming and schools of fish move further



north. Climate change also impinges on our health due to excessive heat-related disorders, the spread of tropical disease, and water contamination. It is no wonder that Gov. Phil Murphy’s administration is placing an emphasis on climate action.

It is ironic, however, to see oil interests actively choose to delay and even stop offshore wind development, claiming they are protecting whales in New Jersey, while they [sue](#) President Biden’s decision to scale back an oil and gas auction to reduce conflicts with the Rice’s whale habitat in the Gulf of Mexico. There is [no evidence](#) that offshore wind development is responsible for whale deaths along the NJ coast. Our NJ Chapter and other NJ environmental groups [support NJ offshore wind development](#).

# Greenery Has to Breathe, Too!

By Joanne Pannone • Chair, Central Jersey Group

Are your plant's stomata—pores—clogged from chemicals and particulates? The stomata are the respiratory system of plants, and when they become congested, the plants choke and photosynthesis cannot occur.

If a plant can't breathe, it will suffer from stunted growth and leaf loss, and it becomes a target for disease and insect damage.

This happens not only to your African violet, but also to forests, food crops, and all other plant life.

Green plants use sunlight, water, and carbon dioxide to create oxygen and energy in the form of sugar. The oxygen is released into the atmosphere, giving life to other living organisms.

Smoke pollution can come from wildfires, tail pipes, and industrial activity, which release chemicals such as nitrogen dioxide, sulfur dioxide, and ammonia. These and ozone particulate matter are the biggest pollutants affecting plants.

You'll know when your plant is damaged by sulfur dioxide. Loss of color occurs as ozone gases block the plant's rate of photosynthesis, destroying cells and killing the plant.

Visible airborne dust from smoke, cement, or coal forms a thin coating on the leaves and on the soil. This becomes absorbed through the plant's root system. This is one reason our government needs to enforce the Clean Air Act.

Don't forget, acid rain soaking into the ground will make seed germination impossible and reduce yields.

Cigarettes contain more than 4,000 different chemicals including arsenic, used as rat poison; butane, used as lighter fluid; and formaldehyde, for embalming. Over time, these also contaminate the soil and air surrounding plants, eventually starving them because they cannot absorb enough sunlight or nutrients.

Mother Nature is not entirely blame-



Photo: Joanne Pannone

less. Volcanic ash, saltwater intrusion, extreme heat, and extreme flooding also contribute to the struggles of plants.

To reduce plant loss, we must reduce greenhouse gases. Individuals can help by idling their fossil fuel cars no more than 30 seconds, using public transportation, driving less, getting rid of gas stoves and heaters, and going all electric. This will help us to combat climate change.

Wildlife suffers from air pollution in the same way that plants do, although the countryside has more trees to capture carbon.

Peat moss bogs are carbon sinks, trapping carbon in the ground. But these are strip mined like coal. For gardeners

there is a renewable, sustainable resource: coconut coir (fiber).

As members of the Sierra Club, we should strive to preserve and protect the Earth. Improving the health of the environment will save lives and our natural environment. We need to tackle all pollution sources, and we cannot wait for our government. Let's all invest in clean energy. It's our mess, we need to clean it up.

**“Wildlife suffers from air pollution in the same way that plants do, although the countryside has more trees to capture carbon.”**

## URBAN AGRICULTURE

continued from page 4

of gardens across three sites. The soil used for growing crops has been tested by a soil scientist to ensure it is free of heavy metals. Where levels have been unacceptably high, CFET members have built raised beds and filled them with clean soil.

Yet another urban farming success is [North Camden Community Gardens \(NCCG\)](#), an organization that supports its community not only by beautifying the neighborhood but also by introducing all ages to urban greening and agriculture. The program focuses on A-Z gardening: vermiculture (worm farming), tree and plant care, seed harvesting and germinating, how to maintain a greenhouse, and more.

These are just a few examples of urban farming in the state of New Jersey. Even though communities may face some challenges, with the right resources, tools, and support they can create favorable outcomes for a healthier and sustainable future. We must band together to make our environment the best it can be. With collec-

tive and conscious effort it can become reality!

One valuable resource for those who wish to get started is the [Conservationist of Color Playbook](#), by John S. Watson Jr., co-executive director of the New Jersey Conservation Foundation. This online resource describes tools and strategies for restoring greenery to long-deprived urban neighborhoods. It also provides chapters on air pollution, stormwater management and green infrastructure for cleaner air and water, and birding. In short, it has something of value for everyone.

### Resources

[Conservationist of Color Playbook:](#)

[www.njconservation.org/cocp/](http://www.njconservation.org/cocp/)

Urban deserts: <https://www.american-progress.org/article/the-nature-gap/>

Newark SAS: [Newark SAS](#)

Center for Environmental Transformation: <https://www.cfet.org/urban-farm/>

[North Camden Community Gardens:](#) <https://www.nccgardens.org/>

## MANY SHADES continued from page 2

identify hydrogen by production method (e.g., grey, pink, blue, or green).

Grey hydrogen is created using a process called steam-methane reforming that separates hydrogen atoms from carbon atoms in methane. “In steam-methane reforming, high-temperature steam under pressure reacts with methane in the presence of a catalyst to produce hydrogen, carbon monoxide, and a relatively small amount of carbon dioxide,” according to the US Energy Information Administration (EIA).

The methane used is typically natural gas, so producing grey hydrogen requires continuing to extract and transport natural gas, unless producers find a way to use biogas, such as methane produced in landfills. Often, customers receive grey hydrogen mixed with natural gas and promoted as a “lower carbon” type of gas for home heating and cooking. Grey hydrogen currently “accounts for nearly all commercially produced hydrogen in the United States,” the EIA says.

Blue hydrogen production also uses steam-methane reforming but adds carbon capture and storage to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Pink hydrogen uses nuclear energy and a process known as electrolysis to extract hydrogen from water. Pink hydrogen is considered cleaner than grey hydrogen because electrolysis involves fewer direct greenhouse gas emissions.

There are other shades of hydrogen fuel, but from an environmental point of view the best type is green hydrogen, which uses electrolysis powered by renewable electricity like wind and solar. Recently it was revealed that the Atlantic Shores wind project, to be located offshore from Atlantic City, will include a pilot project with South Jersey Industries (SJI) to create green hydrogen. This hydrogen will be delivered to customers in a natural gas blend.

The current configuration of the hydrogen fuel industry provides support for oil and gas industries, and some government leaders see it as benefi-

cial, yet in the environmental community there is discomfort with the many compromises involved in hydrogen production, such as greenhouse gas emissions and continued, heavy reliance on natural gas.

In October, the Biden Administration announced a \$7 billion program to kickstart a “clean hydrogen” energy economy by creating seven “[hydrogen hubs](#).” This would allow the types of hydrogen production listed above.

West Virginia, Ohio, and Pennsylvania, for example would use the region's natural gas to support hydrogen production with carbon capture—blue hydrogen. A “Mid-Atlantic Clean Hydrogen Hub” (MACH2)—Pennsylvania, Delaware, and New Jersey—would use nuclear energy to create pink hydrogen.

MACH2 would repurpose much of the existing energy infrastructure of the region, including pipelines and the Salem nuclear plant. The plan is enthusiastically embraced by new Board of Public Utilities President Christine Guhl-Sadovy.

Former Senate President Sweeney, who has supported the jobs that offshore wind energy will create, also favors MACH2: “President Biden's announcement of a \$750 million grant for our region's hydrogen hub cements South Jersey more than ever as the epicenter for alternative energy,” he said.

The Delaware Riverkeeper Network has stated it is opposed to the MACH2, saying it perpetuates and enlarges current fossil fuel extraction, especially fracking, and diverts critical funding from renewable energy efforts. “The MACH2 hub is supposed to use nuclear, fracked gas, and wind and/or solar. The use of nuclear energy at MACH2 is expected to come from PSEG's nuclear power plants in Salem County, NJ. But these are already nearing the end of their targeted life; the Salem Nuclear Generating Station inflicts significant environmental harm as it is, and extending operations of these facilities is unacceptable,” the group said.

## TRENTON REPORT

# Bear Hunts Are Extended

The NJ Division of Fish and Wildlife has approved the continuation of bear hunts through 2028, despite huge opposition from residents of New Jersey.

The NJ Chapter and other environmental advocates have all asked NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) Commissioner Shawn LaTourette to reject the Comprehensive Black Bear Management Policy and have testified against it.

The Sierra Club urged the DEP to move forward with effective non-lethal bear management strategies.

The NJ chapter has previously emphasized that non-lethal management tactics, such as advising people to keep their trash well secured, would help reduce aggressive bear encounters and allow residents to live more peaceably with these denizens of the woods.

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# Climate Change and Human Behavior

By John Miraglia • Membership Chair, Raritan Valley Group

We're all familiar with the harsh impact of climate change on weather, wilderness, wildlife, the economy, technology, and human migration, but what is often overlooked is its impact on individual human behavior and mental processes: Who is most affected by increased temperatures, and what are those impacts?

Scientists from several disciplines have investigated these topics and found evidence that global warming is affecting human behavior. An August 2023 *New York Times* [article](#) titled "Heat Sings the Mind, Not Just the Body" cited the following findings: Every 1°C increase in temperature correlates with a 0.7% increase in suicides and a 4% to 6% increase in violent behavior, including homicides.

While increasing temperatures affect all of us either directly or indirectly, certain groups are most at risk: the poor, the elderly, and those with specific psychological disorders. For example,

scientists have noted increasing temperatures are associated with an almost 5% increase in the risk of death for those suffering from psychosis, dementia, or substance abuse. People with no insurance or who are homeless are affected even more.

There are health concerns for humans who are exposed to wildfire smoke, which was produced abundantly by this year's fires in Canada. Older adults with Alzheimer's disease or its downstream effect, dementia, are at greater risk as neuro-inflammation builds up the plaques associated with these health conditions. In August, *Neurosciencenews.com* reported [findings](#) that rodents exposed to wood smoke experienced brain inflammation affecting learning and memory.

It is known that high temperatures affect brain functions. A 2018 [article](#) in the *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health* reviewed the effect on our brains of increasing

temperatures. Sweating requires the body to pump more blood to our skin. This may cause decreased blood flow to other organs, including the brain. In turn, our body's ability to regulate its temperature and to take steps to reduce the impact of heat, such as drinking water, can be negatively affected.

Sleep deprivation and disturbances due to heat waves are related to difficulties in paying attention, stronger emotional reactions, and aggravation of psychological disorders. In addition, [mental health medications raise body temperature](#) and may make patients more vulnerable to heat. Such drugs include anti-psychotics and antidepressants.

*Psychotherapy* (talk therapy) may also be compromised by climate change. Traditionally, this type of therapy addresses the patient's thought processes. But climate change is real and, therefore, anxiety associated with it is difficult to control. Similarly, therapists [may also feel the same anxiety](#)

as their patients, altering the classic therapist "detachment" in patient relationships.

On an individual level, increasing people's awareness of the potential impacts of rising temperatures is an important first step in reducing the impact of climate change. Those with family or friends in the groups most impacted can prepare to intervene when heat waves or wildfires are anticipated. Further, mental health professionals need to be aware of these impacts and more research into this topic needs to be conducted.

## Resources

NY Times Article: <https://shorturl.at/anpP4>, Neuroscience News: <https://shorturl.at/cdR34>

IJERPH Study: <https://shorturl.at/bjrSY>



# Study May Enhance Protections for River Watershed

By Tara Mezzanotte • Lower Delaware Wild and Scenic Rivers Partnership



Many are unaware that the Garden State is home to four National Wild and Scenic Rivers, safeguarded by Congress under the jurisdiction of the National Park Service (NPS).

The [Middle Delaware](#), which flows through the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area, is managed by the NPS as part of the National Recreation Area. The other three are [Partnership Wild and Scenic Rivers](#) that wind through privately-owned, municipal, and state lands. These three are the [Great Egg Harbor](#), the [Lower Delaware](#), and the [Musconetcong](#).

Remarkably, until 2022 less than 0.5% of the nation's rivers had the protections and benefits afforded by the unique Wild and Scenic designation. The Partnership Wild and Scenic River model was created so rivers situated on non-

federal lands could have the same benefits and protections, with the proviso that local communities, in partnership with the NPS, develop and administer the waterway management plan.

These benefits create the potential for increased property values, enhanced competitiveness in grant applications and other processes, eligibility for NPS technical and financial support, community pride, and national recognition.

Located between the Delaware Water Gap and Washington Crossing communities, the Lower Delaware segment received Wild and Scenic protection in 2000. Landowner rights are protected. Eminent domain is not permitted. There are no changes to existing zoning, hunting, and fishing laws.

Partnership rivers receive Congressional appropriations every year to support locally led, public-private river councils, which work to protect and restore their waterways and spur community involvement.

To expand these benefits to more waterways, the Lower Delaware Wild and Scenic River Management Council and our NPS partner are studying Delaware River tributaries in northern New Jersey and identifying those eligible and suitable to share the Wild and Scenic partner designation.

In October, the NJ Chapter of the Sierra Club adopted a resolution endorsing this study.

This action also aligns with the Sierra Club's ambitious 30 x 30 Conservation Agenda to protect 30% of US land and waters by 2030 to mitigate climate change, protect habitat, and allow space for communities to thrive.

The NJ Chapter of the Sierra Club lent its support after the Paulins Kill Watershed community introduced the tributary expansion study project to the Skylands Group. The Paulins Kill Watershed Initiative is a program of the Foodshed Alliance, a northern New Jersey, grassroots nonprofit devoted

to promoting sustainable farming and locally grown, fresh, healthy food. Healthy food and sustainable farming rely on a clean, healthy watershed.

We appreciate the NJ Chapter of the Sierra Club for recognizing the Partnership Wild and Scenic River model as an innovative and inclusive approach that goes beyond traditional conservation methods to achieve preservation and conservation goals. This model has proved to be a durable and collaborative means to effectively bestow protections and benefits upon many miles of New Jersey's precious private inland waters. The integration of eligible tributaries into existing partnership river designations is a responsible way to extend the benefits upstream and enhance the exceptional and unique values of our rivers.

Partnership Program: <https://shorturl.at/ijADE>

For more information and updates on the project visit: [lowerdelawarewildandscenic.org](http://lowerdelawarewildandscenic.org)

# Our Clear and Urgent Task Is to Protect the Earth

By George Moffatt

Earth's temperature is definitely increasing. Honest! The [sixth assessment](#) by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Control (IPCC) warns—again—that our emissions of heat-trapping gases have warmed Earth's climate by nearly 2°F since 1900, and Earth's average temperature will continue to rise without drastic reductions in carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) emissions.

How so? When the Sun's short wavelengths of visible light reach Earth, they are absorbed by most objects they strike. These objects, in turn, reflect the energy back into space as long wavelengths, or infrared radiation. However, the pollutants we've been spewing into our atmosphere for decades—primarily CO<sub>2</sub>, but also nitrous oxide (N<sub>2</sub>O) and methane (CH<sub>4</sub>)—block the long wavelengths from leaving our lower atmosphere.

This is similar to how greenhouse glass allows short wavelengths of visible light to enter but prevents reflected long wavelengths of infrared radiation from exiting, thus heating the greenhouse. Unlike a greenhouse, Earth lacks roof vents to expel any excess heat. To

underscore our plight, last July was the hottest month on record.

Another global concern is that of Earth's 332.5 million cubic miles of water, only 21,830 cubic miles is drinkable. This may be enough for our current population of about 8.1 billion people. But what happens if, as the United Nations [predicts](#), we hit 8.5 billion in 2030, 9.7 billion in 2050, or 10.4 billion by 2100?

As our population grows, Earth's temperature will rise, based on our fossil fuel dependence. At the moment, global warming is winning. And while the thousands of IPCC volunteer scientists and other experts have warned us of growing regional and worldwide climate problems, we still aren't listening.

Major wildfires are increasing worldwide due to temperature rise and more severe droughts. For example, seven Western states and Mexico have faced major water shortages because of reduced flow in the [Colorado River](#) caused by rising temperatures. For similar reasons, the Gulf of Mexico's saline waters are [moving up](#) the Mighty Mississipp-

pi's delta because of the river's much lower, rain-starved flow. And years of drought and climate change have caused major recession at Lake Mead, revealing a few embarrassing secrets of Las Vegas' wilder days.

Even hurricanes may be affected. In late October, tropical storm Otis developed into a Category 5 "nightmare" hurricane in just 12 hours, before reaching Acapulco with sustained 165-mph winds. Global warming! Scientists are wading through the data to understand how to predict monster storms like this.

If rain interrupts a drought, it often can't rescue failing crops. The excessively high temperatures that cause the droughts also quickly evaporate any surface water.

Another worldwide problem created by droughts is wildfires. There are more than ever before and they are more destructive each year.

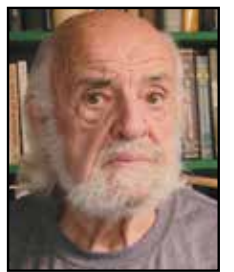
Last summer, a parched Canada reported [45,703,742 acres](#) had burned, nine times its average annual fires of 5.2 million acres. Roughly 6,500 individual blazes released spectacular

flames and foreboding reddish smoke that drifted from the US Midwest to the Atlantic Coast and as far south as Miami.

The Canadian blazes took the lives of two residents and four fire fighters, and an August wildfire on the Hawaiian island of Maui took the lives of roughly 100 people, with some [still missing as of late October](#), making it the deadliest US wildfire in over a century.

Smoke is an accompanying problem of wildfires. This includes polluting particulate matter, carbon monoxide, nitrogen oxide, volatile organic compounds, polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons, lead, and methane.

The Sierra Club recognizes these growing catastrophes: Every day brings more news about sea-level rise and climate-fueled disasters. Our task is clear and urgent: We must fight for each other—and the only planet we call home," the Club has stated.





# Atlantic Shores Now Leads the Charge

By Kip Cherry

Given Ørsted's late-October decision to scuttle its Ocean Wind 1 and 2 off-shore wind projects (2,248 MW) along the New Jersey coast, citing business conditions and permitting uncertainty, it is important to look at other wind development projects. The Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) continues to accept applications for wind farms, and we understand that they received four new proposals in August.

In November, the federal government approved the 2,076 MW Empire Wind 1 and 2 wind farm projects, which would have 147 wind turbines combined.

Atlantic Shores Offshore Wind has affirmed that they continue to move forward with plans for 1,510 MW near Atlantic City. Their wind farm would cover almost a 500-square-mile area. As part of this, Atlantic Shores would sell renewable energy credits, based on clean energy generated by the wind turbines, to New Jersey industry.

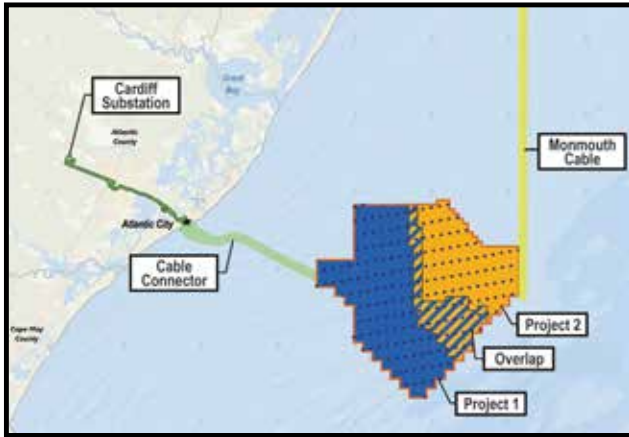
The Atlantic Shores offshore wind project involves varying numbers of turbines to be installed in each phase of construction, but a maximum of 200 is planned. The project at its closest point would be 8.7 miles from the NJ Shore.

The first phase (105-136 wind turbines) has a final investment decision target of 2024, which Atlantic Shores has stated could be delivering power by 2028.

Atlantic Shores is somewhat different from Ørsted. They are a fossil fuel-based outfit and are a 50-50 joint venture partnership between Shell New Energies US and EDF-RE Offshore Development, (a subsidiary of EDF Renewables North America).

Ørsted, by contrast, was once a coal-based energy company, and began what it says has been a complete transformation to clean energy 10 years ago.

As part of its NJ offshore wind project, Atlantic Shores has entered into an agreement with South Jersey Industries (SJI) for a pilot plant to produce 10 MW of green hydrogen, produced by electrolysis (separating hydrogen from water) using excess wind turbine power. SJI would [commercialize](#) that



Planned location of the 2,248-megawatt Atlantic Shores offshore wind turbine farm. Source: Bureau of Ocean Energy Management. Graphic: Karen Crosby

hydrogen by combining it with natural gas (blending) and using its gas infrastructure for delivery.

This partnership was announced on December 15, 2020, and was billed as a way to lower carbon intensity. Atlantic Shores has yet to install a wind turbine, so this project has a long way to go and raises both hopes and concerns for the Sierra Club.

Green hydrogen is not green unless it is created entirely from renewable energy via electrolysis. It cannot be created from natural gas (blue hydrogen), and the process also cannot be fueled by natural gas.

SJI may reduce carbon content by injecting green hydrogen into its delivery systems, but the natural gas component is still a concern. Research suggests that no more than 20% of a hydrogen-natural gas blend can be hydrogen. It is not sound environmental practice to use green hydrogen as an excuse to perpetuate or increase the use of fossil fuels.

Second, SJI is also [rapidly expanding](#) into the use of dairy farm manure to produce natural gas, another dubious practice often billed as "green" that is fraught with environmental dangers.

Atlantic Shores is also leasing 35 acres at the New Jersey Wind Port in Lower Alloways Creek, off the Delaware, Salem County, where turbine components will be assembled prior to installation offshore. This will include the nacelle, which is the main housing of the generator, gearbox and other components needed to convert wind energy into electricity. Ørsted had an agreement to be the port's first tenant, and Atlantic Shores now has the opportunity to take over that position.

## ELECTRIFY YOUR HOME continued from page 4

trials and tribulations dealing with service providers stimulated lively audience participation, and we followed that up with a short overview of IRA consumer incentives.

We encourage Sierra Club members and leaders to register at <https://bit.ly/3tmyd1g> for future BE webinars, now held generally on the third Thursday of each month.

We think (and hope) we are starting to see a tipping point in favor of clean energy in NJ and elsewhere. There are several bills queued up in the legislature that support this transition. The bills had been on hold pending the election outcome. We now hope to join with other environmentalists in moving the legislation forward.

Meanwhile, we joined 75,000 others in New York City in September in the March to End Fossil Fuels. We have been invited to give presentations on homeowner/renter benefits of the IRA to different groups half a dozen times.

We recently became involved with an NJ AARP group working to develop or adopt tools to help consumers connect with knowledgeable heating, ventilation, and air-conditioning (HVAC) contractors or consultants to plan and implement electrification and efficiency improvements to their homes and take advantage of the IRA.

We have learned through our webinars that there is still a dearth of HVAC professionals who are knowledgeable and enthusiastic about electrification. There is a large population of consumers in need of professionals with up-to-date knowledge. The IRA addresses training and education programs. Our goal is to pull all levers to speed BE and clean energy.

Sean's Pocket Guide to All-Electric Retrofits: <https://www.redwoodenergy.net/research/a-pocket-guide-to-all-electric-retrofits-of-single-family-homes>

# Recycling in Essex County: What Happens?

By Danielle Rapsas • NJ Chapter 2023 Intern and Member of Gateway ExComm

Have you ever wondered what happens to your recycling after it is placed into the recycling bin and put on the curb? Materials can be recycled into new bags, decks, benches, pouches, bottles, fleece, containers, and many other products. But how do the recyclable materials on your curb become new and recycled products?



Photo: Bill Beren

## The Recycling Process

In Essex County, where I live, all 22 municipalities have their own recycling programs, their own recycling coordinators, and their own contracts with haulers and material recovery facilities. Towns can hire private haulers or have their employees collect recyclables.

All towns in Essex have drop-off locations for recyclables, but hours and materials vary significantly. Municipalities can opt for single- or dual-stream recycling.

But what happens to the recyclables?

The respective hauler brings the materials to a materials recovery facility. Plastics, papers, and metals are then sorted and baled. After this process, materials are sent or sold to various markets. The prices of these materials change often, like stock values.

There are many markets that material recovery facilities sell to, so there is not a simple answer to the question, "Where do my recycled materials go?" For example, Bloomfield sends electronics to eRevival; textiles to H&M Leasing; corrugated and mixed paper to Integrity Recycling; commingled to Sims; and leaves, stumps, and grass to Nature's Choice.

## Benefits of Recycling

From speaking with recycling coordinators, I learned that recycling is more cost-efficient than landfilling or incinerating. The tipping fee to bring solid waste to the Covanta incinerator in Newark, where all waste from Essex County is sent, is \$74.30 per ton. The disposal cost for solid waste at the Atlantic County Utilities Authority is \$82.87 per ton.

Recycling costs vary from contract to contract, but there is often some revenue or savings. Here is an example:

- In July 2022, after processing costs, Montclair netted \$5 per ton of mixed paper recycled and had to pay \$35.00 for each ton of commingled recyclable material.
- The municipality received \$1,098 for 220 tons of mixed paper and paid \$4,532 for 129 tons of commingled recycled.
- If this tonnage had been incinerated, the municipality would have been

charged \$25,938 instead of the net \$3,434 charged for recycling (\$4,532-\$1,098).

Therefore, recycling not only is beneficial for the environment, but also earns money for municipalities.

## Needed Improvements

Although the materials you put on the curb are recycled, there is still room for improvement in Essex County's programs. Stakeholders and recycling coordinators believe more education, source reduction, and materials reuse can help.

In New Jersey, the [Recycling Tonnage Grant Program](#), established in 1981, subsidizes the costs of recycling by awarding each municipality money based on tonnage recycled.

Money to support this program comes from a \$3-per-ton tax on all solid waste that is not recycled, as established by the Recycling Enhancement Act of 2008. To comply with this act, each town is required to submit a tonnage report. Some of this funding is also allocated for education and public information.

Ultimately, municipalities are falling short on recycling education.

With proper allocations of funding and promotions about local recycling programs, improvements can be made. These changes can be as simple as implementing recycling education; sending recycling tips and reminders through Recycle Coach and Remyndr, respectively; communicating where drop-off locations are; or posting announcements throughout towns and on social media platforms.

The bottom line is your recycling truly is recycled, via a multistep process, but improvements are needed for more efficient and successful recycling. More education is essential.

It is also very important to understand your own municipal recycling program, as there is much variation between programs. What is accepted in one township may not be accepted in another.

Danielle Rapsas is a student at Barnard College.

NJ Recycling Background: [www.nj.gov/dep/dshw/resource/Tonnage/guide.pdf](http://www.nj.gov/dep/dshw/resource/Tonnage/guide.pdf)

## Warehouse Watch

We need your help. The Sierra Club of New Jersey is creating a database of warehouse development throughout the state. As you know, there is a lot going on in our counties and we depend on volunteers like you to help us stay abreast of it all. So, if you read of a new warehouse proposal or the status of an existing one, please let us know. If you can, please attach the article or reference, as well. Send your observation to either Stan Greberis ([sgreberis@newjersey.sierraclub.org](mailto:sgreberis@newjersey.sierraclub.org)) or Gary Frederick ([garyfrederick@newjersey.sierraclub.org](mailto:garyfrederick@newjersey.sierraclub.org)).

The information you provide will help us create legislation and strategies for smart, efficient warehouse growth while opposing projects being built on wetlands, open space, within congested communities or heavily trafficked roads. Thank you!

# Looking Back on Four Years With the NJ Chapter

By Judy Minot • Outgoing Executive Committee Member  
Editor's Note: Judy Minot has moved to Dublin, Ireland.

I started volunteering with the NJ Chapter of the Sierra Club in late 2019. Since then, I was appointed, then elected to the Executive Committee, and I have served as chapter secretary, communications co-chair, fundraising co-chair and chapter vice chair. Unfortunately, my husband and I have moved abroad, so I'm wrapping up my work for the NJ Chapter. Looking back, I'm proud of all that we have accomplished in the Club in just the past four years.

Most of my work with the NJ Chapter has been focused on communication-related issues. When I started volunteering, I had no environmental experience. I had been a video producer and writer, and later an ad agency executive. I did know that good communication is fundamental to building a strong, effective organization. In the Sierra Club, volunteers and members need to know what the Chapter is doing and why, and legislators and the public need to understand the issues and why they should get involved. So, when I first contacted Chapter Chair Rich Isaac, I offered my skills as a communicator. I was soon drafted to take part in many activities that made use of my abilities.

I am particularly proud to have been part of the hiring committee that selected our new director, Anjuli Ramos-Busot. Anjuli has injected a lot of energy into the Chapter. She immediately engaged more closely with volunteers, legislators, and other environmental partners, and she is helping us be better advocates and leaders for the environment and green energy. She is also a passionate spokesperson for environmental social justice issues.

In the past four years, I've seen volunteers become much more engaged in our work. The NJ Chapter has set up new committees around offshore wind, building electrification, and warehouse development. We've strengthened existing committees, including those for environmental and social justice, transportation, and product sustainability. We've created or reorganized volunteer groups that work behind the scenes on communications, fundraising, state legislation, and personnel.

Our Chapter has also improved communications to our members and the public. We've beefed up our website, our social media presence, and this newsletter. *Sierran* Editor Tony Hagen is dedicated to creating an accurate and

thought-provoking vehicle for Sierra Club members to know and understand the activities of the Chapter.

We revamped the Chapter website to help bring our successes to the fore and make things easier to find. Jackie Greger, our media and outreach coordinator, creates a monthly e-newsletter that's packed with timely reports on legislation, campaigns, and other issues. She has helped make our social media presence more consistent and relevant and, with Alicia Remus, improved our media outreach to Spanish-language publications.

The Chapter has also stepped up fundraising efforts to support our increased activity. With help from the national Sierra Club, we're working to engage the Chapter leadership in getting our message to donors and potential donors. We have sought to make existing donors more aware of and engaged in the work we do. Our new fundraising chair, Jim Andreano, will be directing this important work.

I'm always amazed by the level of dedication, experience, and enthusiasm of the staff and volunteers who work with our Chapter. The NJ Sierra Club continues to work to promote good legislation, formulate policy, and fight for our climate and environment, while ensuring that environmental action doesn't have discriminatory impacts. We are working more effectively than ever with state legislators and agencies (such as the NJ Department of Environmental Protection and NJ Transit), our environmental partners, and the national Sierra Club.

Our Chapter needs people like you, whatever your talents may be. When I first contacted the NJ Chapter, I had never worked for an environmental organization. I simply offered the abilities and experience that I had. Whatever your current level of involvement, please consider what more you might do. There are many opportunities, from leading hikes to working on membership, supporting local action, or working on one of the many volunteer committees listed on our website. I've found working with the NJ Chapter of the Sierra Club to be extremely rewarding and I'm sure you will, too.



## TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE REPORT

# One Step Forward, Two Steps Backward for Electric Vehicles in NJ?

By Bill Beren • Chair, Transportation Committee

Let's start with the positives.

As of June 2023, there were 128,374 electric battery or plug-in hybrids registered in New Jersey, an increase of 33,806 from December 2022, a 33% increase in just six months.

Also, New Jersey was on track to adopt the California Advanced Clean Cars II standard before the end of 2023. Public comments were strongly in favor of this standard, which sets goals for dealers to sell an increasing percentage of electric passenger vehicles, culminating in 100% electric by 2035.

While there is pushback by Republicans in the state Legislature and by the Auto Dealers Association, we are hopeful that the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) will formally adopt the standard. This follows the adoption earlier this year of the California standard for medium and heavy-duty vehicles (trucks and buses) known as the Advanced Clean Truck rule, which sets similar standards for those classes of vehicles.

However, sometimes it seems like we are spinning our wheels and not getting the traction with electric vehicles that we need. Here are four examples:

- In my previous column, I reported that a year after the Legislature approved the Electric School Bus Program, in August 2022, it finally got around to appropriating the first \$15 million in August, 2023—a year later. However, due to a drafting error in the funding bill, Gov. Murphy is returning the bill to the Legislature for correction, and we now expect the funds to be available to the DEP this coming January.

The good news is that the DEP has established the ground rules for the grant program, allowing for implementation as soon as the money is appropriated.

- Another long-awaited moment is the adoption by the Board of Public Utilities (BPU) of ground rules to govern when and where the state's four electric utilities can invest in "make ready" projects to support electric charging stations. This is especially critical for large fleet owners, such as school districts in areas with poor

air quality that are purchasing electric school buses, or major transportation hubs such as ports, airports, highway rest stops, and warehouses.

The rules are meant to allow the utilities to include the cost of bringing high voltage power to these sites in what they charge ratepayers, so that school districts, colleges, and other facilities don't have to pay large upfront fees to the utilities to cover that cost. The proposed rulemaking has been pending for almost two years, and the BPU still cannot say when they will be able to formally adopt the rules.

- To add to these tales of woe, the state's allocation of funds to the BPU to cover electric light duty vehicle subsidies (passenger cars) is once again inadequate. These incentives include a rebate up to \$4,000 per vehicle and \$1,500 for charging stations, subject to availability. The amounts allocated are still not enough to cover the increased number of vehicles being purchased.

JCP&L announced that they have exceeded their allowance for charging stations in September, three months into the current fiscal year, and the BPU is forecasting that funds for new car rebates will be spent before the end of the year.

This indicates that demand for electric vehicles is strong in New Jersey, which is ranked fifth among states in the absolute number of registered EVs. Interestingly, the four states ahead of us are California, Florida, Texas, and Washington.

- Finally, you may have read or heard news reports that the market for EVs is slowing down, and that one of the reasons that sales are being depressed is increasing "range anxiety" and the perception that the number and location of charging stations is inadequate to serve long distance travel.

The good news is that New Jersey has a \$104 million grant from the federal government to install charging stations along major highways. However, the state's timeline predicts that contracts won't be awarded until the end of 2024 and construction of these charging stations won't begin until the winter of 2025.

# NJ Transit Showcases Electric Buses in Camden

By Bill Beren • Chair, Transportation Committee

On November 6, NJ Transit (NJT) hosted visitors at their Newton Bus Garage in Camden to explain how their first eight electric buses are performing. On that date, there were six buses in active service in Camden. Elsewhere in New Jersey, one is being tested on the Springfield Avenue corridor (Bus Route 25) in Newark out of NJT's Ironbound Garage, and one is in the final stages of acceptance before it is put into service.

The visitors were members of ChargeVC, a not-for-profit trade and re-



Joe Murtaugh, Director of Alternate Fuels and New Technology at NJ Transit, demonstrates the charging plug for the agency's electric buses. Photos: Bill Beren

search organization that promotes electric vehicle use.

The Newton Garage is the first of NJT's 18 garages to have electric buses on regular duty. There is charging capacity for 16 buses in the garage, so the next electric buses NJT purchases will likely also be based in Camden. Plans for expanding their electric bus fleet would place the next group of buses at the Hilton Garage in Maplewood. NJT is also building new electric

bus-ready garages in Ridgely Park and Union City.

The agency is under mandate to make 10% of their new bus purchases electric by next year and 50% by 2026, gradually working up to buying only electric buses by 2032. However, NJT has so far resisted quantifying those percentages, and the agency will continue to be buying diesel buses until 2032, meaning that diesel buses will still be on the road well after 2032.

While the agency says they have the funds to procure electric buses, they have not yet identified near or long-term funding to upgrade their depots with charging stations needed for electric buses, except for Ridgely Park and Union City. That leaves it unclear whether they will have the infrastructure in place to meet their procurement goals.

The agency is still working with its bus and charging system suppliers to



One of the seven electric buses currently in service, each of which is uniquely decorated.

work out kinks and problems with the system, so they do not yet have enough data to estimate the reliability and operating cost savings with the electric buses.

So far, the new buses are popular with the drivers and attract the attention of pedestrians along the routes, who engage with the drivers about the buses. The agency has decorated each bus with its own exterior designs. An example of one is shown in the photo.

## ELECTION SUCCESS

continued from page 1

ture and Gov. Murphy to achieve critical clean energy initiatives to combat climate change and provide well-paying, green jobs that sustain families and ensure energy security and independence for New Jersey.

The NJ Chapter thanks our volunteers and supporters who made their way out to the voting booths and elect-

ed our environmental champions.

The chapter is proud of the environmental champions who were reelected and is eager to continue working with them. "We especially look forward to working with now-new Senators Raj Mukerji (D-32) and James McKeon (D-27) on protecting our environment," Ramos-Busot said.

## ExCom Meeting Highlights

**November:** The ExCom approved by consensus a resolution to support Green Acres conservation funding for the Pine Brook wetlands of Marlboro Township, a critical watershed that supports rich ecosystems and wildlife. The ExCom appointed Joe Testa to serve as Chapter vice chair, replacing Judy Minot, who has moved to Ireland. Tony Hagen was appointed to fill the remaining year of her term on the ExCom. Dennis Colligan was appointed Chapter webmaster, replacing Loraine Terrell. Seth Kantor was appointed co-chair of the Communications Committee. Collin Crecco, Esq., and Alejandro Meseguer were appointed to the Offshore Wind Committee. Steve and Pat Miller were appointed co-chairs of the Building Electrification Committee. Appointed as regular members of the Building Electrification Committee were Mike Winka, Ernest Dorflinger, Bob Erickson, Bill Amann, Scott Nelson, and Betsy Longendorfer.

**October:** Jim Andreano was appointed Chapter secretary and fundraising coordinator. Michael Reis was appointed a member of the Legislative Committee. Paul Midey was appointed a member of the Transportation Committee. The ExCom approved a resolution in support of a study evaluating tributaries of the Lower Delaware for inclusion in the Partnership Wild and Scenic River designation. "Partnership" rivers are managed in partnership with local authorities and the National Park Service.

**September:** The ExCom did not meet in September.



Learn more about your environment... take a Sierra Club educational hike!

**Chapter Outings Chair:** Leona Fluck  
[leona@pineypaddlers.com](mailto:leona@pineypaddlers.com), (609) 259-3734

**Skylands:** Dave Alcock, [dwhob@hotmail.com](mailto:dwhob@hotmail.com)

**Hunterdon Warren:** Ron Gelok III  
[Gelokron@gmail.com](mailto:Gelokron@gmail.com)

**North Jersey:** Co-Chairs: *Open Position!*  
and Mary Walsh,

[north.outings.chair@newjersey.sierraclub.org](mailto:north.outings.chair@newjersey.sierraclub.org)

**Gateway:** Co-Chairs: Steven Yafet, [syafet@gmail.com](mailto:syafet@gmail.com)  
and Ron Pate, [Ronpate31@verizon.net](mailto:Ronpate31@verizon.net)

**Hudson Co.:** Steve Krinsky, [stevekrinsky@comcast.net](mailto:stevekrinsky@comcast.net)

**Loantaka:** Kevin O'Brien, [kbkob@aol.com](mailto:kbkob@aol.com)

**Central Jersey:** Leona and George Fluck

[Leona@pineypaddlers.com](mailto:Leona@pineypaddlers.com)

**Raritan Valley:** John Miraglia, [johnworks3@aol.com](mailto:johnworks3@aol.com)  
S. Pasricha, [spjersey@gmail.com](mailto:spjersey@gmail.com);

Bernadette Maher

**Jersey Shore:** *Open Position!*

**Ocean County:** *Open Position!*

**West Jersey:** *Open Position!*

**South Jersey:** Tom Boghosian,

[tfboghosian44@gmail.com](mailto:tfboghosian44@gmail.com)

**Singles Section:** *Open Position!*

**LGBTQ+ Section:** Wanda Ashbrook,

[pridegrlnj@gmail.com](mailto:pridegrlnj@gmail.com)

**Inspiring Connections Outdoors:** Oscar Nazar

[chair.njico.sierraclub@gmail.com](mailto:chair.njico.sierraclub@gmail.com)

**River Touring:** Fred Tocce, (908) 453-2205 (H)

RD-1, Box 277, Washington 07882

**Outing Leaders and Group Outings Coordinators:**

Please send write-ups for January to March 2024 to your group outings coordinator (or, if you don't associate yourself with a single group, directly to [leona@pineypaddlers.com](mailto:leona@pineypaddlers.com)) before November 1, 2023. Outings for early April 2024 can be included.

**NOTES ON OUTINGS:** Outings are generally open to Club members, guests, and anyone interested. Unless otherwise specified, the events are free. All participants in Sierra Club outings must sign liability waivers. Please check with the leader before bringing small children on an outing. A parent or other responsible adult must accompany persons under 18. Participants may bring pets on outings only if the event description specifically says pets are allowed.

Sierra Club outings are arranged and conducted by volunteer leaders who are responsible for the safety, welfare, and enjoyment of all participants. Leaders determine qualifications to participate, adequacy of equipment, routes to be followed, and special precautions to be taken. Please arrive adequately prepared and equipped. If you have any allergies, please remember to bring your medication. The leader has the final word in the conduct of the trip. Your cooperation will help ensure a safe and pleasant outing.

Please arrive early at the meeting place so the outing can start on time. For day hikes, lunch, water (at least a liter), extra clothing, rain gear, and emergency equipment should be carried in a small daypack. For all except easy hikes, sturdy over-the-ankle shoes or boots should be worn. For most trips, you are expected to have your own equipment. In some cases, it may be rented from outdoor/camping suppliers—call or message the trip leader for more information. If the weather is questionable on the date of the outing, you may assume that it will take place, unless the hike description indicates otherwise.

Unless registration is required, or if you have a question, it is not necessary to contact the leader before the trip. However, as these outings are planned many months in advance, we do advise that you contact the trip leader one to two days before the outing to make sure it is not canceled.

If you are a Sierra Club member interested in becoming an outing leader or have suggestions for new outings, contact your group outings chair or the Chapter outings chair for assistance and further information. The Chapter group or section leading each outing is given at the end of the write-up, as follows:

Atlantic Chapter, ACOC; Central Jersey, C; Gateway, G; Jersey Shore, JS; Hunterdon Warren (HW); LGBTQ+ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender, Queer, Plus); Loantaka, L; NJ Chapter, NJ; North Jersey, N; Raritan Valley, RV; Ocean, O; River Touring, RT; Singles Section SS; Skylands, Sk; South Jersey, SJ; West Jersey, W.

There are facilities. We will hike 4 to 5 miles at a moderate pace. Wear hiking boots, bring traction devices and poles if snow or ice. No dogs please. Bring water and snacks. Contact the leader to register. Ron Pate, [Ronpate31@verizon.net](mailto:Ronpate31@verizon.net) or 973-965-7578 (G)

**Jan 13 (Sat): Silver Mine Lake Hike,** Harriman State Park, Tomkins Cove, NY (Orange Co.) 10 a.m., 6 miles in Hilly Terrain; Features: The Appalachian Trail, a lean-to trail shelter, the defunct Silver Mine Ski Hill, Silver Mine Lake. Facilities: heated restroom building. Requirements: hiking boots, non-cotton hiking socks, and a backpack with water and lunch. No Pets. RSVP required at [www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/calendar](http://www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/calendar). Directions will be sent via email to those who RSVP. Leaders: Jimi Oleksiak, [the\\_hikist@mac.com](mailto:the_hikist@mac.com), and Jerry Ruocco (SS)

**Jan 14 (Sun): Lake Lenape Park West—Winter Birding Walk** (Atlantic Co.) 10 a.m., 3 miles, easy pace along the lake shore to the blue trail that overlooks the lake. The trails are wide, hard-packed, and well blazed. Lake Lenape Park is a great destination for beginner and advanced naturalists alike. In the winter, raptors, mammals, and waterfowl are conspicuous. During the winter, between Christmas and late January, Lake Lenape hosts a population of roosting Bald Eagles. Meet at the Lake Lenape Boathouse, Old Harding Highway, Mays Landing. There are heated facilities. Bring binoculars, water, and snacks. Please, no pets on this birding walk. Dress warmly; it can be windy along the lake shore. Inclement weather/icy conditions cancel. Preregistration is required. Co-leaders: Tom Boghosian, [tfboghosian44@gmail.com](mailto:tfboghosian44@gmail.com), and Leona F, [Leona@pineypaddlers.com](mailto:Leona@pineypaddlers.com) (SJ)

**Jan 21 (Sun): NJ State Museum** (Mercer Co.) 10 a.m. Let's enjoy an "indoor outing" to the NJ State Museum. Caroline Burton will be the next artist featured in the exhibition series on the main floor gallery. Burton moves fluidly between painting, drawing, printmaking, and sculpture, often combining techniques in a practice that invites unconventional materials. This NJ Artist series exhibition will feature some of Burton's most recent work. Also, "History Beneath Our Feet: Archaeology of a Capital City," focusing on the long history of human activity in Trenton as told through the lens of archaeology, will also be on view in the museum. Parking is free in front of the museum, 205 W State St, Trenton. Please register to confirm participation. Leona and George F, [leona@pineypaddlers.com](mailto:leona@pineypaddlers.com) (C)

**Jan 28 (Sun): "Photo Safari" and Walk at Sandy Hook** (Monmouth Co.) 10:30 a.m. Situated in Sandy Hook Bay, the tip of Skeleton Hill Island has the unique advantage of being the winter host of many restful and weary harbor seals. There is no guarantee that we will see the seals, but they usually arrive sometime in December from their breeding grounds up in Northern New England and Southern Canada. They forage at night and during the day mostly sleep and take it easy. Bring binoculars, dress warmly in layers and bring a hot beverage and snacks; plan for 2 hours outdoors to observe seals at low tide and waterfowl that overwinter in New Jersey. Meet at Gateway National Recreation Area, 128 South Hartshorne Dr, Highlands, 07732. Facilities are available. Inclement weather cancels. Preregistration is required. [www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/raritan-valley](http://www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/raritan-valley) Co-leaders: John Miraglia, [johnworks3@aol.com](mailto:johnworks3@aol.com) and Leona F, [leona@pineypaddlers.com](mailto:leona@pineypaddlers.com) (RV)

## FEBRUARY

**Feb 2 (Fri): Groundhog Day Hike at Jakes Branch County Park** (Ocean Co.) Meet at 10 a.m., 3-4 miles, easy pace. Jakes Branch has a nature center with interesting hands-on exhibits and an observation deck that offers a 360° view of the Pinelands. Meet at Jakes Branch Park, 1100 Double Trouble Rd, Beechwood. There are heated facilities. Option for late lunch at Shady Rest Restaurant. Leashed dogs are welcome. Inclement weather/icy conditions cancel. Co-leaders George & Leona F, [leona@pineypaddlers.com](mailto:leona@pineypaddlers.com) and Margaret Mary Piccolo, [gogreenp1@yahoo.com](mailto:gogreenp1@yahoo.com) (O)

**Feb 10 (Sat): High Point Cross Country Ski,** Wantage, NJ (Sussex Co.) 10 a.m. We expect to take 4-5 hours for fun in the snow. <http://www.xcskihighpoint.com/> Features: Groomed ski trails and fantastic views all around. Facilities: ski lodge with a fireplace; a snack counter with light refreshments, hot soup and drinks, and indoor restrooms. At High Point you can rent skis, boots, and poles or bring your own. You must buy a trail pass to ski: \$25. Requirements: XC skis and boots and a daypack with water. No pets. Bring lunch. RSVP required at [www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/calendar](http://www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/calendar) Directions will be sent via email to those who RSVP. Leaders: Jimi Oleksiak, [the\\_hikist@mac.com](mailto:the_hikist@mac.com), and Jerry Ruocco (SS)

**Feb 14 (Wed): Valentine's Day Hike at Smithville Park** (Burlington Co.) 10 a.m., 3-4 miles, easy pace at Historic Smithville Park in Vincentown, NJ. The Park features a diverse collection of habitats and terrain and offers Rancocas Creek vistas. There are woods trails and elevations. Hiking boots and poles are recommended. Meet at the Smith's Woods access parking lot, East Railroad Ave. Facilities available. Leashed dogs are welcome. Option for late lunch at Vincentown Diner. Inclement weather/icy conditions cancel. Preregistration is required. George & Leona F, [leona@pineypaddlers.com](mailto:leona@pineypaddlers.com) (W)

**Feb 18 (Sun): Hike the Franklin Parker Preserve** (Burlington Co.) 10 a.m., 4-5 miles, easy pace on the Yellow Trail. The acquisition of the Franklin Parker Preserve in 2003 by the NJ Conservation Foundation was momentous. This 9400-acre preserve is a keystone piece of land, linking Brendan Byrne, Wharton, and Penn State forests and creating a more contiguous Pinelands National Reserve. Meet at Speedwell entrance off Rt 563, Woodland Twp. Portable toilet at parking lot. Leashed dogs are welcome. Bring water, snacks, and lunch. Inclement weather/icy conditions cancel. Preregistration is required. Co-leaders: Tom Boghosian, [tfboghosian44@gmail.com](mailto:tfboghosian44@gmail.com), and Leona F, [Leona@pineypaddlers.com](mailto:Leona@pineypaddlers.com) (SJ)

## MARCH

**Mar 2 (Sat): South Mountain Reservation Hike** (Essex Co.) 10 a.m., moderate pace. We will hike 6-7 miles; moderate difficulty, hilly trail on mostly dirt trails. We will meet at the Turtleback Loop Trail parking area off 374 Walker Road, West Orange. There are facilities. Wear hiking boots, bring water and lunch. Rain cancels. No dogs please. Contact the leader to register. Ron Pate, [Ronpate31@verizon.net](mailto:Ronpate31@verizon.net), or 973-965-7578 (G)

**Mar 3 (Sun): World Wildlife Day—Hike at Woodford Cedar Run Wildlife Refuge** (Burlington Co.) 10 a.m., 3-4 miles, easy pace. We'll begin our visit at the Nature Center and "slither on in" to the Reptile Room. Cedar Run Wildlife Refuge consists of 171 acres of protected "Green Acres" Pinelands habitat. Cedar Run features about 3 miles of trails for a leisurely stroll around the lake or the option for a longer walk into the forest. The Wildlife Housing Area is the highlight of any visit with nearly 60 resident owls, eagles, vultures, raccoons, turtles and more! Admission: adults (13+) \$10, Children (4-12) \$5. Address: 4 Sawmill Rd, Medford. There are facilities. Bring water and snacks. Pets are not permitted. Option for late lunch at a local restaurant. Preregistration is required. George & Leona F, [leona@pineypaddlers.com](mailto:leona@pineypaddlers.com) (W)

**Mar 9 (Sat): Sterling Forest Hike,** Tuxedo Park, NY (Orange Co.) 10 a.m. Hike 6 miles in 4 hours. Hilly Terrain. Moderate to Strenuous difficulty. Features: Sterling Lake, Fire Tower, Lookouts, Historical Sites. Facilities: There is a visitor center with indoor bathrooms as well as a portable toilet in the parking lot. Requirements: Hiking boots, a backpack with water and lunch. RSVP required at [www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/calendar](http://www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/calendar) Directions will be sent via email to those who RSVP. Leaders: Jimi Oleksiak, [the\\_hikist@mac.com](mailto:the_hikist@mac.com), and Jerry Ruocco (SS)

**Mar 15 (Fri): National Peanut Lovers Day Hike at Davidson's Mill Pond Park** (Middlesex Co.) 10 a.m., 3-4 miles, easy pace. We begin our hike on the Yellow Trail, a grassy/rocky section through the woods that includes narrow boardwalks over swampy areas. The forested Blue Trail has ele-

>continued on page 12

## JANUARY

**Jan 1 (Mon): First Day Hikes in New Jersey's State Parks and Forests.** Celebrate the New Year with one of the "First Day Hikes" that the Park Service holds across the state. <https://www.state-parks.org/special-programs/first-day-hikes/> These free guided hikes in state parks, forests, and historic sites are part of America's State Parks First Day Hikes program. There are many to choose from, so contact leaders for information after the hikes are posted by the NJ Department of Environmental Protection. Leona and George F., [Leona@pineypaddlers.com](mailto:Leona@pineypaddlers.com)

**Jan 6 (Sat): Eagle Rock Reservation Hike** (Essex Co.) We will meet before 10 a.m. at the Essex County 9/11 Memorial, main entrance, Prospect Avenue and Eagle Rock Avenue, West Orange.

## OUTINGS continued from page 11

ventions, exposed roots to step over, and large stones for steps in some sections. Hiking poles and good footwear recommended. Bring water, snacks, and lunch. Leashed dogs are welcome. Portable toilet at parking lot. Rain cancels. Preregistration is required. [www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/raritan-valley](http://www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/raritan-valley) Co-leaders: SP, [spjersey@gmail.com](mailto:spjersey@gmail.com), and Leona F, [leona@pineypaddlers.com](mailto:leona@pineypaddlers.com) (RV)

**Mar 17 (Sun): "Wear Green" Hike at Estell Manor (Atlantic Co.)** 10 a.m. About 2 miles, option for an additional 3+ miles. We'll follow the Purple Heart Trail south to the Glassworks and the scenic overlook on Stephens Creek for a break. Meet at the Warren E. Fox Nature Center on 109 Boulevard Rt 50, Mays Landing and see the displays before we hike. Facilities are available. Bring water, snacks, and lunch on the hike. Leashed dogs are welcome! Inclement weather cancels. Preregistration is required. Co-leaders: Tom Boghosian, [tfboghosian44@gmail.com](mailto:tfboghosian44@gmail.com), and Leona F, [leona@pineypaddlers.com](mailto:leona@pineypaddlers.com) (SJ)

**Mar 24 (Sun): Cloverdale Farm County Park Nature Walk (Ocean Co.)** 10 a.m., 2 miles, easy pace. The Ocean County Natural Lands Trust Fund Program acquired Cloverdale Farm in 2004. Within the boundaries of this 90-acre park, we find the diversity of the Pine Barrens wetlands, uplands, and the beauty of 20 acres of cranberry bogs all year long. We'll tour the Interpretive Center and walk the self-guided nature trail. Meeting at 34 Cloverdale Rd, Barnegat. There are facilities. Bring water, snacks, and lunch. Preregistration is required. Co-leaders George & Leona F, [leona@pineypaddlers.com](mailto:leona@pineypaddlers.com), and Margaret Mary Piccolo, [gogreenp1@yahoo.com](mailto:gogreenp1@yahoo.com) (O)

**Apr 1 (Mon): Hike at Mercer County Park (Mercer Co.)** 10 a.m., 3-4 miles, easy pace. "Dyngus Day" hike along Mercer Lake to check out the park's new Ropes and Zipline Course. Walk to the John Rogers House, built in 1761, which is now an open-air, reconstructed ruin adapted for interpretation. From there to the West Picnic area (facilities) for a break, then along the lake and some wooded trails before returning to Grandparents Grove for lunch. Meet us at Grandparents Grove, which is next to the Boathouse Marina, 334 S. Post Rd. There are facilities. Bring water, snacks, and lunch. Leashed dogs are welcome, Heavy rain cancels. Preregistration is required. Leona and George F., [leona@pineypaddlers.com](mailto:leona@pineypaddlers.com) (C)



There are 12 regional groups in the NJ Chapter of the Sierra Club. All groups have open officer positions for volunteers and welcome new members. Interested persons should reach out to the contacts listed below. Participation in the Sierra Club is a meaningful and rewarding way to give back to your community and help create a sustainable and healthier environment for all.

Groups are listed in rough geographical sequence: North to South

### SKYLANDS GROUP

(Sussex and Northern Warren counties)

**Webpage:** [www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/skyland](http://www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/skyland)

**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/SkylandsNJSC](https://www.facebook.com/SkylandsNJSC)

**Email:** [chachabacon@yahoo.com](mailto:chachabacon@yahoo.com); phone: 973-886-7950

**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE and other OFFICERS** (ExCom members are elected to serve 2-year terms; term-expiry date in parentheses)

<b>Chair</b> (12/31/24)	Greg Gorman	<a href="mailto:chachabacon@yahoo.com">chachabacon@yahoo.com</a>
<b>Vice Chair</b> (12/31/23)	Susan Williams	<a href="mailto:SkylandsGroup@gmail.com">SkylandsGroup@gmail.com</a>
<b>Secretary</b> (12/31/24)	Norene Haberski	<a href="mailto:norenehaberski2@gmail.com">norenehaberski2@gmail.com</a>
<b>Treasurer</b> (12/31/24)	Norene Haberski	<a href="mailto:norenehaberski2@gmail.com">norenehaberski2@gmail.com</a>
<b>ExCom at large</b> (12/31/23)	Dave Alcock	<a href="mailto:dwhoob@hotmail.com">dwhoob@hotmail.com</a>
	(12/31/24) Nicole Guerrieri	<a href="mailto:SierraClubNicole@gmail.com">SierraClubNicole@gmail.com</a>
	(12/31/23) Allison Orsi	<a href="mailto:aeorsi@hotmail.com">aeorsi@hotmail.com</a>
	(12/31/24) Jill Aquino	<a href="mailto:jda1timeforchange@gmail.com">jda1timeforchange@gmail.com</a>
	(12/31/23) Chris Dunbar	<a href="mailto:chrisdunbar458@gmail.com">chrisdunbar458@gmail.com</a>
	(12/31/23) Joanne Morgan	<a href="mailto:jojommorgan@yahoo.com">jojommorgan@yahoo.com</a>
<b>Conservation Chair</b>	Greg Gorman	<a href="mailto:chachabacon@yahoo.com">chachabacon@yahoo.com</a>
<b>Outings Chair</b>	Dave Alcock	<a href="mailto:dwhoob@hotmail.com">dwhoob@hotmail.com</a>
<b>Outreach Chair</b>	Joanne Morgan	<a href="mailto:jojommorgan@yahoo.com">jojommorgan@yahoo.com</a>
<b>Environmental Justice</b>	Susan Williams	<a href="mailto:SkylandsGroup@gmail.com">SkylandsGroup@gmail.com</a>
<b>Political Co-Chairs</b>	Nicole Guerrieri	<a href="mailto:SierraClubNicole@gmail.com">SierraClubNicole@gmail.com</a>
	Susan Williams	<a href="mailto:SkylandsGroup@gmail.com">SkylandsGroup@gmail.com</a>
<b>Publicity Chair</b>	Joanne Morgan	<a href="mailto:jojommorgan@yahoo.com">jojommorgan@yahoo.com</a>
<b>Recycling/Zero Waste</b>	Jill Aquino	<a href="mailto:jda1timeforchange@gmail.com">jda1timeforchange@gmail.com</a>
<b>Chair Webmaster</b>	Nicole Guerrieri	<a href="mailto:SierraClubNicole@gmail.com">SierraClubNicole@gmail.com</a>

**GENERAL MEETINGS** (Conducted via Zoom)

The Skylands Group of the NJ Chapter of the Sierra Club serves Sussex and Northern Warren counties. We offer a variety of opportunities for the public to learn about and connect with the natural environment. We present informative films and speakers; exploration of the great outdoors on hikes, edible-plant tours, and picnics; public outreach via town tabling; and visits to schools. Our hope is to foster love and deep respect for our great outdoors.

The Skylands Group works with grassroots organizations to protect open spaces and water quality, promote clean energy, and oppose privatization of public trust resources.

**CURRENT CAMPAIGNS:** The Skylands Group advocates the protection of the Sparta Mountain Wildlife Management Area from logging done under the guise of creating "healthy forests" and opposes the proposed Tennessee Gas Pipeline compressor station in Wantage.

The Skylands Group supports the Green New Deal, Sunrise Movement, and transition toward a clean energy economy.

The Skylands Group also opposes the Munsonhurst Planned Residential District development, which will adversely affect the ecology of a Natural Heritage Priority Site.

## HUNTERDON WARREN GROUP

(Hunterdon and Southern Warren counties)

**Webpage:** [www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/hunterdonwarren](http://www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/hunterdonwarren)

**Meetup:** [www.meetup.com/NJSierraClub/](https://www.meetup.com/NJSierraClub/)

**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/groups/sierraclub.hunterdonwarren/](https://www.facebook.com/groups/sierraclub.hunterdonwarren/)

**YouTube:** [www.youtube.com/@sierraclubhunterdonwarren9255/videos](https://www.youtube.com/@sierraclubhunterdonwarren9255/videos)

### OFFICERS

<b>Chair</b>	Open Position!	
<b>Vice Chair</b>	Celeste Martin *	<a href="mailto:celeste.martin@sluhn.org">celeste.martin@sluhn.org</a>
<b>Conservation Chair</b>	Open Position!	
<b>Political Co-Chairs</b>	Karen Becker *	<a href="mailto:karbecker@gmail.com">karbecker@gmail.com</a>
	Amy Weeder *	<a href="mailto:aweeder@comcast.net">aweeder@comcast.net</a>

### Outings

<b>Treasurer, Secretary</b>	Open Position!	
<b>Warren County</b>		
<b>Warehouse Issues</b>	Pat Banes *	<a href="mailto:patrick_banes@comcast.net">patrick_banes@comcast.net</a>
<b>Webmaster/Listmaster</b>	John Kashwick*	<a href="mailto:jkashwick@gmail.com">jkashwick@gmail.com</a>
<b>ExCom at Large</b>	Jonathan D. Wall*	<a href="mailto:docjdwall@gmail.com">docjdwall@gmail.com</a>

\* Group Executive Committee Member

**GENERAL MEETINGS:** Meetings may be virtual or hybrid (in-person and virtual). Please check [www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/hunterdonwarren](http://www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/hunterdonwarren) for updates or to register for events. Registered participants will receive Zoom meeting information.

Feb 7 (Wed): 7 p.m. **Brownstone Quarrying Industry of Stockton and Along the Delaware River to Raven Rock** - The quarrying of Triassic-aged brown sandstones along the Delaware River began in the colonial period, but during and after the construction of the canals in the 1830's the industry boomed. The construction of the Belvidere and Delaware line of the Pennsylvania Railroad contributed to further growth of the quarry industry, particularly in Stockton/Prallsville (NJ) and the surrounding area of Raven Rock, Lumberville and Centerville (Pa). The Stockton area quarries provided foundation stone for the State House and for the Pennsylvania Railroad viaduct in New Brunswick.

Our presenter, professional geologist J. Mark Zdepski, will deliver his presentation with a blend of history, geology and information on industrial processing. He will also share historical photographs depicting actual conditions of the quarryman's working sites and mining techniques. Mr. Zdepski's grandfather worked in the Raven Rock quarry until it closed. Hybrid event: In person at the North County Branch Library, 65 Halstead St., Clinton, NJ or join us on Zoom by registering at: <https://tinyurl.com/yc79b9n3>. (Zoom link provided upon registration)

### CURRENT ISSUES

**Warehouse Projects:** There are several massive warehouse projects proposed for Hunterdon and Warren counties. Please consider representing our group at local, county and state meetings which may permit these projects. Contact: Patrick Banes at [patrick\\_banes@comcast.net](mailto:patrick_banes@comcast.net)

**Night Skies:** The Hunterdon Warren Group and the Light Pollution and Dark Skies Committee (LPDSC) are encouraging municipalities to curb light pollution by adopting stricter ordinances to reduce excessive light pollution. Help us partner with environmental commissions and land use boards to encourage municipalities to enact energy and tax saving initiatives. Contact: Jonathan Wall at [jonwall@jonwall.com](mailto:jonwall@jonwall.com)

### NORTH JERSEY GROUP

(Bergen and Passaic counties)

**Webpage:** [www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/north-jersey](http://www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/north-jersey)

**Meetup:** [www.meetup.com/NJSierraClub/](https://www.meetup.com/NJSierraClub/)

**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/northjersseysierraclub](https://www.facebook.com/northjersseysierraclub)

**Twitter:** @sierraclub\_nj

**Instagram:** [sierraclubnorth\\_nj](https://www.instagram.com/sierraclubnorth_nj)

### OFFICERS

<b>Co-Chair</b>	Diane Scarangella*	<a href="mailto:diascat@hotmail.com">diascat@hotmail.com</a>
<b>Co-Chair</b>	Open Position!	
<b>Treasurer</b>	Bob Weiss*	<a href="mailto:bobweiss1967@gmail.com">bobweiss1967@gmail.com</a>
<b>Secretary</b>	Ron De Vos	<a href="mailto:rondevos58@outlook.com">rondevos58@outlook.com</a>
<b>Political Action Committee</b>		
<b>Chair</b>	Ron De Vos	<a href="mailto:rondevos58@outlook.com">rondevos58@outlook.com</a>
<b>Co-Chair</b>	Open Position! Contact Ron	
<b>Outings Committee</b>		
<b>Co-Chair</b>	Rebecca Wilkin	<a href="mailto:rebeccawilkin@gmail.com">rebeccawilkin@gmail.com</a>
<b>Co-Chair</b>	Open Position!	
<b>Conservation Committee</b>		
<b>Chair</b>	Open Position! Contact Diane at <a href="mailto:diascat@hotmail.com">diascat@hotmail.com</a>	
<b>Member</b>	Judy Green*	<a href="mailto:jugreen547@gmail.com">jugreen547@gmail.com</a>
<b>Climate Change Committee</b>		
<b>Chair</b>	Jeff Rapaport*	<a href="mailto:jefrap@optonline.net">jefrap@optonline.net</a>
<b>Co-Chair</b>	Judy Green*	<a href="mailto:jugreen547@gmail.com">jugreen547@gmail.com</a>
<b>Marketing/Social Media</b>		
<b>Co-Chair</b>	Marie Mannino	<a href="mailto:mmannino@yahoo.com">mmannino@yahoo.com</a>
<b>Co-Chair</b>	Open Position! Contact Marie	
<b>Youth Outreach/Outings</b>		
<b>Co-Chair</b>	Rebecca Wilkin	<a href="mailto:rebeccawilkin@gmail.com">rebeccawilkin@gmail.com</a>
<b>Co-Chair</b>	Open Position! Contact Rebecca	
<b>Diversity, Inclusion, Environmental Justice</b>		
<b>Co-Chair</b>	Bushra Asfare*	<a href="mailto:bushra_c.e@hotmail.com">bushra_c.e@hotmail.com</a>
<b>Co-Chair</b>	Open Position! Contact Bushra	
<b>Consulting Engineer</b>	Bushra Asfare	<a href="mailto:bushra_c.e@hotmail.com">bushra_c.e@hotmail.com</a>

### Event Planning and

**Membership Committee** Chair/Co-Chair Positions Open!

\*Elected North Jersey Group Executive Committee Member.

### UPCOMING ACTIONS/EVENTS

We are seeking volunteer hike leaders! If you are interested in co-leading one of our all-inclusive hikes and/or LGBTQIA+ hikes, please let us know! We need you! Contact Diane Scarangella at [diascat@hotmail.com](mailto:diascat@hotmail.com) or Wanda Ashbrook at [pridegrlnj@aim.com](mailto:pridegrlnj@aim.com) for more information!

## BLOG

In early 2023, Betsy L and Judy Green initiated a free substack blog called Climate Friendly Lifestyle ([climatefriendlylifestyle.substack.com](http://climatefriendlylifestyle.substack.com)) to spread the word. In presenting a talk the prior fall we discovered the thirst many people have for knowledge about what they can do to help stave off climate catastrophe. And so, the blog's main mission is to let people know what practical actions to take, what "the fixes" are in many areas to counter climate change. In one article Judy explains greenhouse gases, the global warming mechanism and why electrification is so important. Betsy has written a number of articles on how to electrify easily and inexpensively (including solar panels) using the Inflation Reduction Act; how to choose and set up for owning an EV; how to choose and use an induction cooktop, and electric gardening equipment. She's also illuminated the workings of the electrical grid. In other articles, Judy unpacks the climate-related plastics crisis and outlines the practical steps we can take as individuals to end the destructive use of plastics; explains the importance of diet change—less meat, more vegetable protein—for both climate health (major reductions in GHG emissions) and personal health/longevity; and how to lower greenhouse gas emissions through clothing and fabric choices. Like other blogs, Climate Friendly Lifestyle is an ongoing process. We welcome comments and suggestions!

## YOUTH Outreach

**Composting and Food Sustainability:** Anyone interested in composting/food sustainability is welcome to join our Zoom meetings! We are currently contacting school district administrators and researching grants/funding for composting initiatives in schools. Please reach out to [rebeccawilkin@gmail.com](mailto:rebeccawilkin@gmail.com) if you'd like to join.

**Slack Group for members of the Youth Outreach Committee:** Join our youth Slack Group to find out more about environmental opportunities for students or if you have any questions. You can join it at [bit.ly/3BHU8Uc](https://bit.ly/3BHU8Uc) or contact [rebeccawilkin@gmail.com](mailto:rebeccawilkin@gmail.com) if you'd like to join.

**Upcoming Meeting for High School Students,** environmental leaders, and new volunteers. Dates/times to be determined. Contact Erica Cowper at [ecowper22@gmail.com](mailto:ecowper22@gmail.com) to join.

**Preserving Open Spaces in Bergen and Passaic Counties:** Contact [Diascat@hotmail.com](mailto:Diascat@hotmail.com) for more information about what you can do to preserve and/or restore open spaces and woodlands in Bergen/Passaic Counties. **Demand** the replanting of the 100+ trees in Overpeck Park Area IV and the creation of unpaved walking paths, and **Oppose** the creation of great lawns, paved walking paths, bike paths, and roadways in our natural habitats.

**Protect the Climate:** Contact Jeff at [jeffrap@optonline.net](mailto:jeffrap@optonline.net) and keep your eye out for actions related to

- The Tennessee Gas pipeline upgrades in Sussex and Western Passaic County.
- The NJ Transit Gas backup plant in Kearney.
- The Passaic County Sewerage Commission's Back up Gas plant in Newark.
- Williams Transco Regional Energy Access Expansion project.
- The transportation of Liquefied Natural Gas through NJ from Pa. – Gibbstown Terminal.

## NORTH JERSEY SIERRA GROUP INITIATIVES

The North Jersey Group is committed to coalition building. Our collaborative initiatives include

- Supporting renewable energy strategies and affordable housing;
- Opposing gas-fueled plants, the construction of pipelines and transport terminals, and use of tankers and trains to transport dirty fuels;
- Opposing commercialization and development of parkland and open spaces;
- Advocating for removal, not capping, of contaminated soil on public land and restoration of that land to its natural state;
- Advocating for polluted waterways cleanup and nonpolluting transport on NJ/NYC waterways;
- Supporting access to affordable healthcare;
- Increasing group diversity;
- Supporting environmental justice communities;
- Advocating for sound forest stewardship, maintenance of old growth forests, preservation of endangered species.

We continue to focus on fighting climate change; creating more opportunities for people of all ages and abilities to enjoy and appreciate nature; and collaborating with coalitions, such as Empower NJ, Don't Gas the Meadowlands, and other NJ groups to advocate for renewable energy, a moratorium on fossil fuel usage, preservation of waterways, and protection of our parklands.

## GATEWAY GROUP

(Hillside, Elizabeth, and Essex County, except for Livingston, Millburn, and Roseland)

**Webpage:** [www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/Gateway/](http://www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/Gateway/) (Also accessible from the NJ Chapter webpage: [sierraclub.org/new-jersey/gateway](http://sierraclub.org/new-jersey/gateway))

Members can join the Gateway Group on **Facebook** at [www.facebook.com/pages/Gateway-Group-NJ-Sierra-Club/128998363842782](https://www.facebook.com/pages/Gateway-Group-NJ-Sierra-Club/128998363842782)

Please contact any of the leaders below if you are interested in joining our campaigns to protect the environment. There are several group officer positions open.

### OFFICERS

<b>Chair</b>	Bill Beren*	973-746-9661	Beren1@verizon.net
<b>Conservation Chair</b>	Caroline Kane*	646-961-9003	ckane678@verizon.net
<b>Treasurer</b>	Open Position!		
<b>Program Co-Chairs</b>	Suzanne Trimel*	973-509-8335	suzanne.trimel@gmail.com
	Steven Yafet	908-354-2537	syafet@gmail.com
<b>Publicity Chair</b>	Open Position!		
<b>Political Chair &amp; Recycling Coordinator</b>	Danielle Rapsas*		danielle.rapsas@sierraclub.org
<b>Fundraising Chair</b>	Open Position!		
<b>Membership Chair</b>	Steven Yafet*	(see above)	
<b>Passaic River Issues</b>	Steven Yafet*	(see above)	
<b>Outings Chair</b>	Ron Pate		ronpate31@verizon.net
<b>Webmaster</b>	Christy Morganstein	732-718-4343	christy@medartsweb.com

\*Group Executive Committee

The following Gateway Group positions are open for volunteers: vice-chair, secretary, Newark and Elizabeth issues. If you are interested, contact Bill Beren at 973-746-9661.

Please contact our program co-chairs if you have ideas or suggestions for a meeting-topic, program, or conservation project.

We invite YOU to join in our activism and ask your support as we strive to address the many issues facing our urban and suburban communities. Note the several vacant positions listed above.

### EVENTS

Outings will be posted on the calendar on our Group's home page.

**CONSERVATION NEWS:** Last month we wrote about the work Danielle has been doing to document the current state of recycling in Essex County. Her report is available and a link to the report on our website will be publicized. In other conservation news, Montclair residents are fighting to save a grove of 100 year old oak trees at the northern end of the Board of Education's athletic facility, Woodman Field. The district wants to realign the existing baseball field and to install artificial turf to improve safety of the ball players. The community hired an arborist to assess the health of the existing trees and have proposed an alternative alignment of the field that will allow most of the tree grove to remain.

## HUDSON COUNTY GROUP

**Webpage:** [www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/udson-county](http://www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/udson-county)

**Email:** [HUDSONSIERRACLUB@gmail.com](mailto:HUDSONSIERRACLUB@gmail.com)

**Facebook:** @HCSierraClub

**Instagram:** @HCSierraClub

**Twitter:** @HCSierraClub

### OFFICERS

<b>Chair</b>	Patricia Hilliard*
<b>Secretary</b>	Rachel Ciekurs*
<b>Conservation Chair</b>	Open Position!
<b>Political Chair</b>	Ricardo Pereira*
<b>Delegate to Chapter</b>	Ricardo Pereira*
<b>Membership</b>	Meera Jaffrey*
<b>Publicity</b>	Spencer Rubino Finn*
<b>Outings / Events</b>	Steve Krinsky*
<b>At-Large</b>	Nancy Booth*
(*ExCom)	

**Meeting Schedule:** The Hudson Group will continue to meet remotely for now. Meetings are held four times a year. Members are welcome and encouraged to join the meetings. Contact us at [HUDSONSIERRACLUB@gmail.com](mailto:HUDSONSIERRACLUB@gmail.com) for details.

**Upcoming Events:** We are planning activities: nature walks, shoreline cleanups and public forums. We will also be doing political outreach. Check our online calendar, watch your email or find us on social media!

**Current Campaigns:** Please join in. We can use help with any of these:

**Environmental Justice:** Clean air for Hudson County! Low-income communities and black and brown communities suffer the most from environmental destruction: elevated levels of cancer, asthma and other respiratory disease from air pollution. Join us to oppose the widening of the NJ Turnpike Extension which will add more traffic and bad air to the community.

**Liberty State Park:** We support rallies called by the Friends of Liberty State Park. As part of our environmental justice campaign, we support the work on the interior of the park which will create 180 acres of wildlife habitat and 50 acres of active recreation for the community.

**Skyway Park on the Hackensack River and Essex-Hudson Greenway:** The Hudson County Group of the NJ Chapter of the Sierra Club is working to support and expand green spaces in Hudson County. We want to connect existing parks and trails, as part of the Crossroads Campaign to connect greenways across Hudson County. Join up and learn how you can help.

**Political Action:** In preparation for upcoming elections in New Jersey, we plan to meet with sympathetic public officials. We support the Protecting Against Climate Threats Act (PACT), the Essex Hudson Greenway and the Clean Energy Equity Act. We support the efforts of the Don't Gas the Meadowlands coalition in support of renewable energy for NJ Transit. Let us know if you would like to join our campaigns.

## LOANTAKA GROUP

(Morris and Union counties (except for Elizabeth and Hillside), plus Livingston, Millburn, and Roseland, approximately)

**Contact:** Allen Swanson, chair [afswanson@newjersey.sierraclub.org](mailto:afswanson@newjersey.sierraclub.org)  
908-721-7014

**Webpage:** [www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/loantaka](http://www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/loantaka)

**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/LoantakaGroupNJSC](https://www.facebook.com/LoantakaGroupNJSC)

The Loantaka Group is planning for the upcoming winter climate action activities, including education, advocacy, and elections. Recently, Loantaka leadership has participated in several waste handling and treatment issues, recycling, incineration, and sustainability programs.

The group has also been active in correcting some of the disinformation regarding renewable energy sources such as offshore wind.

The one thing we are lacking right now are volunteers who can assume leadership roles in the areas of legislation, political action, publicity, and media. To help out or obtain more information about how to become involved in your community contact Allen Swanson, our chair.

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## CENTRAL JERSEY GROUP

(Mercer County and neighboring towns in adjoining counties)

**Webpage:** [www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/central-jersey](http://www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/central-jersey) Or find us from the NJ Chapter's website.

### OFFICERS

<b>Group Chair</b>	Joanne Pannone	Jpatmeadowbrook@gmail.com
<b>Group Vice Chair</b>	Xiaoping Du	Du@yahoo.com
<b>Secretary</b>	Leona Fluck	Leona@Pineypaddlers.com
<b>Treasurer</b>	Arlene Ceterskiva	Va2c2015@gmail.com
<b>Outings</b>	George and Leona Fluck	Leona@Pineypaddlers.com
<b>Programs</b>	Joanne Pannone	Jpatmeadowbrook@gmail.com
<b>Conservation Chair</b>	Kip Cherry	Kipatthesierraclub@gmail.com
<b>Recycling and Zero Waste Coordinator</b>	Sylvia Kay	Sylviakay222@gmail.com
<b>Trails</b>	Dave Mattek	MattekDC@aol.com
<b>Webmaster</b>	Benjamin Steinberg	
<b>Group Executive Committee Members</b>	Joanne Pannone, Kip Cherry, Sylvia Kay	

We need volunteers to help us stop warehouses and inappropriate developments and keep preserved land from privatization. Our members have been speaking at township meetings for:

Colts Neck Manner  
Mercer Corp. Park  
Baldpate Hotel/Restaurant

We are working with the Transportation Committee to get electric school buses for New Jersey.

Our recycling and zero waste coordinator has given presentations on plastics and proposed legislation/bills on single use packaging and extended producer responsibility (EPR). More than 25 states have some form of an EPR bill for single-use packaging. We need to reduce the growing amount of municipal solid waste management from local governments and make the producers responsible to remove the packaging toxins and hazardous materials from our environment. People are now accustomed to living without the plastic bags at the store and we notice less-littered roadways, waterways, and beaches.

Our trails coordinator has been working with municipalities to obtain access through obtaining more open space, specifically in Mercer County.

We need to preserve more open space to provide clean air and clean water and habitat for people and wildlife to survive and thrive.

We support the Green Amendment.

We are working with the Lower Delaware Wild and Scenic Rivers Committee to protect Fiddlers Creek as part of the Partnership Wild and Scenic Delaware River.

We have resumed our Zoom meetings.

Our outings are listed on the Sierra Club's NJ Chapter website calendar, where you can sign up!

We are continuing monthly Zoom meetings. Everyone is invited. We welcome new members.

## RARITAN VALLEY GROUP

(Middlesex and Somerset counties and surrounding areas)

**Webpage:** [www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/raritan-valley](http://www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/raritan-valley)  
**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/RaritanGroupNJSC](https://www.facebook.com/RaritanGroupNJSC)  
**Twitter:** [www.twitter.com/RaritanSierra](https://www.twitter.com/RaritanSierra)

### OFFICERS

<b>Group Chair</b>	S. Pasricha	spjersey@gmail.com
<b>Conservation Chair</b>	Gary Frederick	609-203-3382 garyfrederick@newjersey.sierraclub.org
<b>Membership Chair</b>	John Miraglia	johnworks3@aol.com
<b>Political Co-Chairs</b>	Bernadette Maher,	<i>Open Positions!</i>
<b>Publicity Chair</b>		<i>Open Position!</i>
<b>Treasurer</b>	S. Pasricha	
<b>Co-Webmasters</b>	Dennis Colligan,	<i>Open Positions!</i>
<b>Outings/Events Co-Chairs</b>	John Miraglia, S. Pasricha, Bernadette Maher	
<b>Student Liaison</b>	Akhila Mahidara	
<b>Group Executive Committee Members</b>	Gary Frederick*, S. Pasricha*, Teresa Callahan**, Kevin Corcoran**, and Bernadette Maher*	

\*Jan 2023-Dec 2024

\*\*Jan 2022-Dec 2023

Monthly membership meetings are typically held on the fourth Wednesday in New Brunswick. We discuss environmental issues (impacting Middlesex and Somerset), upcoming events, and volunteer efforts. See our calendar on the webpage for meetings, outings, and events.

### The issues of interest to our communities include:

1. Opposition to new fossil fuel infrastructure;
2. Conservation, preservation, and protection of the Raritan River Basin area; and,
3. Passage and enforcement of environmentally friendly ordinances.

### NEWS FROM THE RARITAN VALLEY AREA

• FERC has approved the Regional Energy Access Expansion Project (REAE) to expand

compressor stations at Old Bridge (CS 207) in Middlesex County and at Neshanic Station, Branchburg (CS 505) in Somerset County. Liquid natural gas storage is also proposed at Neshanic Station. The Club and other environmental groups have filed an appeal.

• The NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) responded to the public comments given at Raritan Valley Community College regarding the REAE air permit. <https://bit.ly/3XwXLFg>

• **Northeast Supply Enhancement (NESE):** Williams applied to FERC for a two-year extension for NESE. Williams has not moved forward in obtaining required state permit approvals. They are concerned that the current political climate in New York and New Jersey is not in favor of fossil fuel dependency. [https://elibrary.ferc.gov/eLibrary/filelist?accession\\_number=20230626-5129](https://elibrary.ferc.gov/eLibrary/filelist?accession_number=20230626-5129)

• **Keasbey, Woodbridge Township:** Competitive Power Ventures has withdrawn their application for a second fracked gas power plant. Woodbridge officials were in favor of building the polluting plant in Keasbey. They have claimed that the state's recently enacted laws to protect environmental justice communities do not apply. View the NJ state EJ map: <https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/548632a2351b41b8a0443cfc3a9f4ef6>

• **South Plainfield:** The EPA is reviewing the 70 acre Woodbrook Road superfund dump site cleanup located in the Peter J. Barnes Wildlife Preserve. The projected costs have gone up from \$24.4 million to \$45.3 million. <https://semspub.epa.gov/work/02/652545.pdf>

• **Branchburg:** Warehouse construction is proposed along Route 202. Additionally in the area, there are plans to build a QuickCheck gas station on top of an underground aquifer.

• **Franklin Township:** To curb warehouse sprawl, the planning board has denied an application to build warehousing near a residential senior community. The township has also passed an ordinance that does not allow new warehousing within 500 feet of residential areas.

• **The Raritan River** is increasingly flooding due to the climate crisis and fatal storms such as Tropical Storm Ida. Check your flood risk: <https://dep.nj.gov/inland-flood-protection-rule/flood-tool/>

We encourage you to get involved by attending your town's planning and zoning board meetings. If you are aware of development proposals in your neighborhood that may have a negative environmental impact, please contact us and join our meetings.

## JERSEY SHORE GROUP

(Monmouth County, approximately)

**Webpage:** [www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/Jersey-Shore/](http://www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/Jersey-Shore/)  
**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/JerseyShoreNJSC/](https://www.facebook.com/JerseyShoreNJSC/)  
**Instagram:** [www.instagram.com/sierraclub\\_jerseyshore/?hl=en](https://www.instagram.com/sierraclub_jerseyshore/?hl=en)

### OFFICERS

<b>Group Chair</b>	Dennis Anderson	732-970-4327	dennisaza@aol.com	6 Maple Ave, Matawan NJ 07747
<b>Group Co-Chair</b>	Stan Greberis		sgreberis@newjersey.sierraclub.org	
<b>Conservation Chair</b>	Stan Greberis		sgreberis@newjersey.sierraclub.org	
<b>Education Chair</b>	George Moffat		gmoffattgt@aol.com	
<b>Letter-Writing Committee</b>	Steve Miller	732-671-5917	SteveMiller@Comcast.net	
	Stan Greberis		sgreberis@newjersey.sierraclub.org	
<b>Outings Chair</b>			<i>Open Position!</i>	
<b>Political Co-Chairs</b>	Robin and Harold Zullo		drzullo@optonline.net	
<b>Program Chair</b>	Lara Zullo		lara@newjersey.sierraclub.org	
<b>Social Media Manager</b>	Yvette Viasus		Yvetteviasus.Yv@gmail.com	
<b>Treasurer</b>	Jim Baye		jimbaye@optonline.net	
<b>Website Communications Manager</b>	Chris Foley		ccffoley359@gmail.com	

### MEMBER MEETINGS

We present Zoom webinars, usually on the fourth Monday of every month at 7 p.m.

### Upcoming Speakers at Brookdale College

**Title:** It Takes a Village: Saving Jersey's Coastal Wildlife through Community Engagement  
**Date:** Monday, January 22, 6:30 pm at Brookdale Community College

**Speaker:** Jenna Reynolds, Director of Save Coastal Wildlife  
**Description:** Jenna Reynolds founded Save Coastal Wildlife, a non-profit wildlife preservation organization with many community science research and restoration projects and educational outreach programs along the Jersey Shore. She will be speaking about these volunteer and citizen scientist activities that Save Coastal Wildlife Non-profit carries out throughout the year, which include horseshoe crab monitoring, seal monitoring, and fish surveys.

**Title:** Bats in the Garden State  
**Date:** Monday, February 26, 6:30 pm at Brookdale Community College  
**Speaker:** Mackenzie Hall, biologist with New Jersey DEP Fish and Wildlife's Endangered and Nongame Species Program  
**Description:** Bats are a fascinating, adaptable, and widespread group of animals, not to mention one of the most beneficial to people. New Jersey is home to nine different species of bats, and whether you live on a farm, in the forest, along the shore or in a city, bats are most certainly close by. Come learn about the secretive lives of bats through the seasons, as well as modern threats to bat populations and various research and conservation approaches taking place in New Jersey to give bats a boost.

**Title:** Protecting NJ Wildlife: The Example of Red Knots and Ecosystem Protection on Delaware Bay  
**Date:** Monday, March 25, 6:30 pm at Brookdale Community College  
**Speaker:** Dr. Lawrence Niles, Biologist/Owner at Wildlife Restoration Partnerships.

After working in GA as a regional game biologist, Dr. Niles worked for the New Jersey Division of Fish and Wildlife, first as a biologist then as chief of the Endangered and Nongame Species Program. He led the Bald Eagle Recovery Project, Delaware Bay Shorebird Project and took part in projects on many of NJ's rare species.

In 2006, Dr. Niles started his company to pursue independent research and management projects. His focus is on shorebird ecology and conservation and habitat conservation through planning and restoration. Nearly all of Wildlife Restoration Partnerships projects are funded by federal and state wildlife agencies and foundations and are carried out in partnership with many groups, including American Littoral Society, Conserve Wildlife Foundation of NJ, NJ Audubon Society and Defenders of Wildlife. Dr. Niles is a member of the National Shorebird Council, the Executive Board of the Western Hemisphere Shorebird Reserve Network, and the Adaptive Resource Management Committee of the Atlantic States Marine Fish Commission.

**Date:** Monday, April 22, 6:30 pm at Brookdale Community College

**TBA:** To be announced later this month.

The speaker is a professor who teaches night classes and will confirm when he receives his spring semester schedule.

#### Logistics

The doors open at about 6:30 p.m., announcements begin at 6:40 p.m., and speakers begin at about 6:45 p.m.. FREE pizza buffet for lecture attendees begins at 6:30 p.m. in Warner Student Life Center Twin Lights Rooms I and II, and the presentation begins at 6:45 p.m.

**Directions:** Brookdale Community College is on Route 530 (765 Newman Springs Road), Lincroft, NJ. Enter the campus at the Rt. 530 Roundabout, drive to the far end of the campus and turn right onto Campus Road. Drive to the dead end/ parking lot. The BCC/Sierra speakers program is in the Warner Student Life Center—on your far left, on the lower ground floor, in Twin Lights Rooms 1 and 2. Campus map is at <https://www.brookdalecc.edu/about/maps-and-directions/> We hope to see you there!

## OCEAN COUNTY GROUP

**Webpage:** Meetup.com/Sierra-Club-Ocean-Group

#### OFFICERS

<b>Chair and Treasurer</b>	Laura Stone	LauraS36@yahoo.com
<b>Political Chair</b>	Margaret Mary Piccolo	gogreenp1@yahoo.com
<b>Membership Chairs</b>	Ray and Cathy Kozakerich	raykozak@comcast.net

<b>Group ExCom Members</b>	William Rodgers	
	Joyce Isaza	realtymstr@aol.com

**Activities director, fundraising, publicity, and webmaster** are all open positions!

**ACTIVITIES AND ISSUES:** Our group is focused on many critical issues. Locally and statewide we are fighting a myriad of overdevelopment problems. Along with our allies, we are working hard to save Barnegat Bay and The Pinelands, two natural gems in Ocean County.

The group is looking to build up its membership and welcomes new volunteers and people simply interested in getting outdoors. Interested persons should contact Ray and Cathy Kozakerich at [raykozak@comcast.net](mailto:raykozak@comcast.net)

Ocean County Group works closely with the Barnegat Bay Partnership and meetings are held in their building in Toms River.

## WEST JERSEY GROUP

(Camden, Gloucester, and Burlington counties, approximately)

**Webpage:** [www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/west-jersey](http://www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/west-jersey)

**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/WestJerseyGroupNJSC](https://www.facebook.com/WestJerseyGroupNJSC)

Follow us on **Twitter** @WJsierraclub and **Instagram** @wjsierraclub

Log on and Like Us!

#### OFFICERS

<b>Group Chair</b>	Gina Carola	856-848-8831	ginaceee@verizon.net
<b>Vice-Chair</b>	Denise Brush		denise.brush111@gmail.com
<b>Secretary</b>	Open Position!		
<b>Treasurer</b>	Trish Clements		patri3210@gmail.com
<b>Publicity Chair</b>	Anne Caridi		annecaridi@yahoo.com
<b>Political Chair</b>	Linda Rubiano		Linda_Maritza@yahoo.com
<b>Greenways Coords.</b>	Frank and Ellen Zinni		efzin4@aol.com
<b>Conservation Chair</b>	Stacey Ayala		thunderwolfgalaxy@yahoo.com
<b>Pinelands Rep</b>	Eleanor Kelly		ekelly0917@gmail.com
<b>Membership Chair</b>	Mike Brown	856-547-9221	eyebrown@verizon.net
<b>Media &amp; Communications</b>	Tony Hagen		editor@newjersey.sierraclub.org

**Open Positions! Call Gina to volunteer: 856-848-8831**

Smart growth chair, programs chair, social media coordinators, outings chair, Off-shore Wind Committee

**West Jersey Group Meetings:** Currently, there are no general meetings planned due to difficulty in securing a venue. Please check our Facebook page for announcements.

If you would like to receive an email invitation when we do have meetings and are not already on our email reminder list, please send an email to Anne Caridi, annecaridi@yahoo.com, or Gina Carola, ginaceee@verizon.net or visit our Facebook page for information. <http://www.facebook.com/WestJerseyGroupNJSC/>

Contact Gina to get involved in any of our many initiatives on climate change.

## SOUTH JERSEY GROUP

(Atlantic, Cape May, Cumberland and Salem counties, approximately)

**Webpage:** [www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/south-jersey](http://www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/south-jersey)

#### OFFICERS

<b>Group, Outings Chair</b>	Tom Boghosian	609-335-6907	tfboghosian44@gmail.com
<b>Vice-Chair</b>	Open Position!		
<b>Conservation Chair</b>	Open Position!		
<b>Political Chair, Calendars</b>	Dick Colby	609-965-4453	dick.colby@stockton.edu
<b>Membership Chair</b>	Open Position!		
<b>Secretary/Treasurer</b>	Julie Akers	609-432-3280	julieakers56@gmail.com
<b>At Large</b>	Allie Horn		

Tom Boghosian is an avid kayaker (certified as a Maine Guide!), both oceangoing and in fresh waters, possibly willing to lead trips. Dick Colby is also an Atlantic County Parks Commissioner; contact him if you might be interested in attending monthly meetings of the Commission, which are open to the public. Julie Akers also works with Atlantic County Friends of the Parks, and is President of the Great Egg Harbor Watershed Association.

**Current Issues:** (1) Ocean City (Cape May Co.) has been fighting both the siting of adjacent offshore wind turbines and the burying of power cables to bring the electricity onshore. An attempt to rally support (for wind energy) from the 65 Club members and supporters living in Ocean City has been unsuccessful! (2) We've been blue-blazing the southern portion of what will be a continuous footpath between the southern and northern tips of New Jersey, called the New Jersey Long Trail. Many others (and other groups) are contributing. Detailed maps and descriptions are now on the chapter website. Dick has also produced a brochure describing 15 historic walks in Egg Harbor City. Copies (electronic or paper) are available on request. (3) We continue to hope for Community Solar opportunities for each municipality in South Jersey.

## SINGLES SECTION

(A chapter-wide special interest section offering hikes/cleanups, social gatherings, meetings, etc.)

**Webpage:** [www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/sierra-singles](http://www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/sierra-singles)

#### OFFICERS

<b>Interim Co-Chairs</b>	Ron Pate	ronpate31@verizon.net
	Jimi Oleksiak	The_Hikist@Mac.com

#### Executive Committee

**Members** Jimi Oleksiak, Ron Pate

**The Singles Section has a need for volunteers.** Contact the officers if you would like to volunteer for any of the following: outings chair, conservation chair, treasurer, social chair, vice social chair, programs, publicity, membership, nominations.

We're a friendly, active group of individuals who enjoy hiking, biking, canoeing/kayaking, as well as a variety of social and cultural activities throughout the year. This section was created to offer a variety of singles-oriented activities to NJ Sierra Club members. See the Outings section in this issue for a list of upcoming hikes.

**COMMUNICATIONS:** The best way to be notified of upcoming singles events is to join our free listserv. Anyone may subscribe by going to: <https://lists.sierraclub.org/archives/NJ-SINGLES-NEWS.html> and clicking on "Join or leave the list." You may subscribe and unsubscribe at will. Events are also listed on the online calendar on the Chapter's website: [sierraclub.org/new-jersey](http://sierraclub.org/new-jersey). You can also "like" us on Facebook: "Singles Group New Jersey Sierra Club." Activities will also be posted on Meetup.

## LGBTQIA+ (LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL, QUEER, TRANSGENDER+) SECTION

Our mission is to support Sierra Club goals and to promote environmental activism and social equity. We are an inclusive section of the Sierra Club – all members of the LGBTQIA+ community are invited to join us in any or all of the following events!

For more information or to help out, contact Diane at [Diascat@hotmail.com](mailto:Diascat@hotmail.com)

**Webpage:** [www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/LGBT/](http://www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/LGBT/)

**Meetup:** [www.meetup.com/njsierraclub](http://www.meetup.com/njsierraclub)

**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/njsierralgbt](https://www.facebook.com/njsierralgbt)

#### OFFICERS

<b>Chair</b>	Diane Scarangella	diascat@hotmail.com
<b>Secretary</b>	Open Position!	
<b>Treasurer</b>	Jonathan Wall	docjdwall@gmail.com
<b>Webmaster/Listmaster</b>	John Kashwick	John.Kashwick@newjersey.sierraclub.org
<b>Outings Chair</b>	Wanda Ashbrook	pridegrlnj@aim.com

We are seeking volunteer hike leaders and have open officer positions! WE NEED YOU!

If you are interested in helping us plan and organize events and actions for the LGBTQIA+ community please VOLUNTEER to join our leadership team.

If you are someone who loves to hike and be outdoors, we need volunteers who are from the LGBTQIA+ community or are allies to co-lead our LGBTQIA+ and/or all-inclusive hikes. Please let us know! WE NEED YOU, too! Contact Diane Scarangella at [diascat@hotmail.com](mailto:diascat@hotmail.com) or Wanda Ashbrook at [pridegrlnj@aim.com](mailto:pridegrlnj@aim.com) for more information!

## SENIOR SECTION / FIFTY-PLUS SECTION

The Senior Section is a chapter-wide special interest section for members over 50 years of age. The mission of this section is to support the Sierra Club's goals through letter writing, phone calls, and other activities. We work through a listserve, by which members learn about current environmental issues, how these issues can be supported, and places and events of interest to visit in New Jersey and surrounding states. In

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the future we hope to appoint members who will be responsible for leading and carrying out efforts related to those issues.

More about the Senior Section/Fifty-Plus Section is available online at <https://www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/senior-section>. Visit our webpage to find out about activities and events, including hikes, cleanups, social gatherings, and other activities for members over 50.

**Section Chair** Paul Ehrlich p.w.ehrlich@gmail.com

**Senior Section** *Open Positions*

**Vice-Chair** *Open Positions*

Seeking a volunteer to assist the section chair in the management of the Senior Section. Promote interactions with grassroots communities and individuals, as well as other environmental groups, using the latest science, data, and research, including cumulative impacts. Represent the Senior Section at meetings of the Conservation Committee of the New Jersey Chapter. Attend and speak at relevant seminars, webinars, and conferences. Advise and assist seniors on projects/problems related to the environment.

**Conservation Coordinator**

Seeking a volunteer to assist New Jersey seniors and others with projects and problems related to the environment. Interact with government officials and corporate executives to explain our position on various issues. Attend relevant seminars, webinars, and conferences and explain items of importance to New Jersey Chapter members. Sierra Club membership is required for this position

If you are interested in one of these positions, send an email to Paul Ehrlich at p.w.ehrlich@gmail.com and include your resume. If you are interested in working on other goals, send an email with both a resume and justification for the proposed activity.

**ICO: INSPIRING CONNECTIONS OUTDOORS**

*(A special interest activity with the motto: "No child left inside!")*

**OFFICERS**

**Chair** Oscar Nazar [chair.njico.sierraclub@gmail.com](mailto:chair.njico.sierraclub@gmail.com)

**Other Officers** Amanda Gaglio, Mike Depardieu

**New Jersey Inspiring Connections Outdoors:** (NJ ICO) provides safe and fun wilderness trips for children and teenagers with limited access to the outdoors. Volunteer leaders collaborate with community partners to facilitate, lead, and promote events that will educate and foster a love of nature and the outdoors for youth in New Jersey who may not otherwise have the opportunity or the means. The program works to reduce barriers by providing gear, transportation, trip fees, and leaders to create opportunities to explore, enjoy, and advocate for nature. The chair welcomes inquiries from leaders of schools and other community organizations.

The chair is currently seeking volunteers looking to get involved as outings leaders to help facilitate and organize outings with our Youth Partner Organizations.

The group is also looking to fill its treasurer position. Any member with prior experience or interest is welcome to reach out to the group chair for more information.

**Upcoming Chapter Meetings**

All members are welcome to attend these monthly policy deliberations, held by Zoom video conferencing on second Saturdays. Zoom can be accessed from a computer, smartphone, or telephone. The Conservation Committee meets from 10 a.m. to noon and the Executive Committee meets from 1 to 3 p.m. For meeting link, contact [secretary@newjersey.sierraclub.org](mailto:secretary@newjersey.sierraclub.org)

**Upcoming Meetings: (no meeting in Dec.) Jan. 13, Feb. 10**



**Executive Committee Members**  
Tony Hagen, Stan Greberis, Kip Cherry, Rich Isaac, Paul Sanderson, Karen Becker, Renée Pollard, Joe Testa, Pat Hilliard

**Chapter Chair and Group Effectiveness Chair**  
Rich Isaac (973) 716-0297  
[richard.isaac@sierraclub.org](mailto:richard.isaac@sierraclub.org)

**Chapter Vice-Chair**  
Joe Testa • [Testa-J@live.com](mailto:Testa-J@live.com)

**Conservation Chair**  
Greg Gorman • [ggorman07419@embarqmail.com](mailto:ggorman07419@embarqmail.com)

**Conservation Vice-Chair**  
Gina Carola (856) 848-8831  
[ginaceee@verizon.net](mailto:ginaceee@verizon.net)

**Political Committee Chair**  
Karen Becker  
[political.chair@newjersey.sierraclub.org](mailto:political.chair@newjersey.sierraclub.org)

**Parliamentarian and Council (CCL) Delegate**  
Joe Testa  
[CCLDelegate@newjersey.sierraclub.org](mailto:CCLDelegate@newjersey.sierraclub.org)

**Secretary**  
Jim Andreano • [Jimandreano@gmail.com](mailto:Jimandreano@gmail.com)

**Treasurer**  
Paul Sanderson (908) 233-2414  
[Treasurer@newjersey.sierraclub.org](mailto:Treasurer@newjersey.sierraclub.org)

**Co-Vice Treasurers**  
George Denzer (609) 799-5839  
[GDenzer73@gmail.com](mailto:GDenzer73@gmail.com)  
Jim Andreano • [Jimandreano@gmail.com](mailto:Jimandreano@gmail.com)  
Sunil Somalwar • [sunil.somalwar@gmail.com](mailto:sunil.somalwar@gmail.com)

**Membership Co-Chairs**  
Jill Costa • [jillcosta73@gmail.com](mailto:jillcosta73@gmail.com)  
Seth Kantor • [sdk4100@outlook.com](mailto:sdk4100@outlook.com)

**Outings Chair**  
Leona Fluck (609) 259-3734  
[leona@pinepaddlers.com](mailto:leona@pinepaddlers.com)

**Newsletter Editor**  
Tony Hagen (609) 499-8678  
[editor@newjersey.sierraclub.org](mailto:editor@newjersey.sierraclub.org)

**Webmaster**  
Dennis Colligan  
[webmaster@newjersey.sierraclub.org](mailto:webmaster@newjersey.sierraclub.org)

**Video Producer**  
Heather Semler • [heathermakesithappen@gmail.com](mailto:heathermakesithappen@gmail.com)

**NEW JERSEY CHAPTER LEADERSHIP**

**Advisors and Liaisons**

**GIS (Geog. Info. Systems) Advisor**  
Abdel Alfahham • [adiaa.kc@gmail.com](mailto:adiaa.kc@gmail.com)

**School Liaison**  
Raghav Akula • [23akular@mtps.us](mailto:23akular@mtps.us)

**Inspiring Connections Outdoors Chair (ICO)**  
Oscar Nazar • [ICOChair@newjersey.sierraclub.org](mailto:ICOChair@newjersey.sierraclub.org)

**Legal Chair (Compliance Officer)**  
Bill Singer, Esq. (908) 359-7873  
[wsinger@singerfedun.com](mailto:wsinger@singerfedun.com)

**Transportation Outreach Coordinators**  
Matthew Bewley • [14bewley@gmail.com](mailto:14bewley@gmail.com)  
Jordan Rosenbloom • [rosenbloomjordan@gmail.com](mailto:rosenbloomjordan@gmail.com)

**Regional Issues Liaison**  
Joan Denzer • [JDenzer73@yahoo.com](mailto:JDenzer73@yahoo.com)

**Committees**

**Building and Electrification Committee**  
Steve Miller, Co-Chair • [stevemiller@comcast.net](mailto:stevemiller@comcast.net)  
Pat Miller, Co-Chair • [patmiller@comcast.net](mailto:patmiller@comcast.net)

**Communications Committee**  
Allen Swanson, Co-Chair • [afswanson@hotmail.com](mailto:afswanson@hotmail.com)  
Seth Kantor, Co-Chair • [sdk4100@outlook.com](mailto:sdk4100@outlook.com)

**Elections Committee**  
S. Pasricha, Chair • [spjersey@gmail.com](mailto:spjersey@gmail.com)

**Environmental and Social Justice Committee**  
Renée Pollard, Chair • [rpollard16@comcast.net](mailto:rpollard16@comcast.net)

**Facilities Committee (office, meeting sites)**  
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**Explore, enjoy, and protect the planet**



# An Overview of the DOE's Proposed Hydrogen Hubs

The Department of Energy's Office of Clean Energy Demonstrations (DOE OCED) oversees the plan for 6 to 10 hydrogen hubs that would produce hydrogen at such a scale that the cost per kilogram is intended to drop to \$1 within 10 years. The current cost of hydrogen made from natural gas in the United States is between \$5 and \$7 per kg, according to SGH2 Energy.

The rapid scale-up of hydrogen production under the hub program is concerning, considering that actual green hydrogen production represents just a tiny fraction (< 1%) of current production and the methods chosen for this ramp-up could significantly increase greenhouse gases and climate change.

The OCED has billed this project as "a transformative moment in our clean energy future," but a look at the seven hydrogen hubs proposed thus far suggests that dirty fuel production of hydrogen will be the dominant mode into the foreseeable future.

In the United States, hydrogen is an essential component in ammonia production, and 55% of all hydrogen produced goes toward this need. Hydrogen is also broadly used in petroleum refining to break down hydrocarbon molecules, remove contaminants like sulfur, and create methanol.

OCED aims to produce 3 million metric tons of hydrogen per year through these proposed hubs. A seven-month hub approval process for seven initial hubs (\$7 billion) is underway.

These hubs would include existing resources, such as fossil fuel production facilities, nuclear power plants, some solar and wind energy production, and networks of distributors and consumers. The hub program would expand and consolidate these networks and resources.

"The fallacy behind the current plans of all of the hubs is that they will not only produce CO<sub>2</sub> but will create a very expensive hydrogen infrastructure that we can't afford and don't need," said Kip Cherry, NJ Chapter Executive Committee member and the conservation chair for the Central Group.

An unproven technology, carbon capture storage, is intended to be a major bulwark of this program in preventing the release of carbon into the atmosphere. "Put bluntly, carbon capture is a highly problematic technology. It depends on capturing, transporting and storing CO<sub>2</sub> without leakage and at great expense," Cherry said. "The United States ought to be perfecting alternatives to CO<sub>2</sub> production."

An additional concern is that many of the proposed hydrogen hubs have primary facilities in disadvantaged communities. Expansion of operations could further threaten health and quality of life for residents in these locations.

Hydrogen at these hubs would also be "blended" with natural gas to help "decarbonize" energy use, although this would perpetuate use of fossil fuels.

*Below is a list of proposed hydrogen hubs compiled by Sia Satish, a member of the NJ Chapter's Youth Committee.*

## Appalachian Hydrogen Hub (ARCH2)

- Hub would serve West Virginia, Pennsylvania, and Ohio.
- Hydrogen would be produced with local natural gas. Carbon capture would be employed.
- The DOE declares the hub would provide jobs for more than 21,000 residents of coal-producing regions.

## California Hydrogen Hub (ARCHES)

- Hub would serve California residents.
- Hydrogen would be produced from renewable energy and biomass, which is not an emissions-free fuel.
- According to the DOE, the California hub would provide 220,000 jobs, partly for disadvantaged communities and construction workers.
- The DOE claims this hub would help decarbonize public transport, trucking, and port operations, which it says are some of the most difficult industries to decarbonize.

## Gulf Coast Hydrogen Hub

- Located in Houston, this hub would produce hydrogen via natural gas and renewable sources.
- The hub would create 45,000 jobs and help to lower hydrogen costs, according to the DOE.

## Heartland Hydrogen Hub

- This hub would extend through the huge oil and gas production regions of North Dakota, South Dakota, and Minnesota.
- The DOE states the Heartland Hub would help decarbonize the fertilizer production industry, lower hydrogen costs, and promote hydrogen use in heating and electricity generation, while expanding "equity ownership" for regional tribal communities.

## Mid-Atlantic Hydrogen Hub (MACH2)

- This hub would serve New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Delaware.
- Hydrogen would be produced via nuclear and renewable energy and would help repurpose oil infrastructure.

## Midwest Hydrogen Hub (MachH2)

- This hub would serve Michigan, Illinois, and Indiana.
- Hydrogen would be produced with nuclear energy, renewable energy, and fossil fuels.
- This hub would help decarbonize steel production, aviation, heavy trucking, and electricity generation, the DOE said.

## Pacific Northwest Hydrogen Hub (PNW H2)

- This hub would serve Washington, Oregon, and Montana.
- Hydrogen produced from "renewable energy sources" is expected to be a dominant mode of operation.

## TRENTON REPORT

# Withdrawn Woodbridge Gas Plant Application

In a victory for pollution-oppressed residents of communities surrounding Woodbridge, Competitive Power Ventures (CPV) has backed away from building a natural gas-fired power plant there.

CPV said the plant was necessary to respond to growing demand for energy in the Newark area, but it said the decision to withdraw the plan was based on market conditions—such as low energy prices—and a lack of subsidies from New Jersey government.

The company was under obligation to either construct or terminate the project by September 30, and it let the deadline pass by without action.

The plant would have been a sister operation to an existing Woodbridge power plant that residents say has contributed to respiratory problems that have sent their children to emergency rooms. Middlesex County, which includes Woodbridge, has been given an "F" for ground-level ozone pollution by the American Lung Association.

Anjuli Ramos-Busot, director of the New Jersey Chapter of the Sierra Club, said the project would have increased the state's output of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by 2%, spewing over 2 million metric tons of GHG into the air above schools and working communities in New Jersey each year.

She added an operating permit for the plant likely would have been denied since it would have exceeded nitrous oxide emission allowances.

"This is a great victory for the residents of Keasbey, as well as all adults and children in adjoining communities who would have suffered if this unnecessary power plant were built," said Gary Frederick, conservation chair of the NJ Chapter's Raritan Valley Group. "Once again, this proves the power of community protests and opposition."

## TRENTON REPORT

# Former SC Employee Is Now BPU President

Former NJ Chapter employee Christine Guhl-Sadovy has been appointed president of the NJ Board of Public Utilities (BPU), succeeding former president Joseph L. Fiordaliso, who passed away in September after a career dedicated to public service, including 17 years leading the BPU.

Guhl-Sadovy previously worked at the BPU, rising to chief of staff under Fiordaliso and significantly advancing Gov. Murphy's clean energy agenda.

Among many other environmental accomplishments, Guhl-Sadovy was involved in the drafting of the state's 2010 Energy Master Plan and worked to incentivize electric vehicles in the state. She also worked as an organizing representative for the Sierra Club for over five years.

"We are proud to see a former Sierra Club employee at the helm of New Jersey's clean energy transition and are more than confident that she will be a great leader when it comes to effective climate action for the state," said Anjuli Ramos-Busot, director of the NJ Chapter.



"The ABC's of Electric School Buses," an information session sponsored by the NJ Chapter of the Sierra Club, was held November 28 at the Trenton YMCA. The event featured speakers from the NJ Department of Environmental Protection, the Environmental Protection Agency, the NJ Board of Public Utilities, and PSEG, among others. Pictures (clockwise from left): Marissa Evanego, DEP bureau chief; Dan Benson, outgoing NJ assemblyman and incoming Mercer County executive; Cathleen Lewis, BPU E-Mobility Programs manager; and audience members. Photos: Bill Beren

