



Save the Date! NJ Environmental Federation's 23rd Annual Conference
Clean, Green, and Working, Saturday, April 4th, 2009 (8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.)
 Rutgers University School of Law in Newark, NJ. Governor Corzine invited keynote speaker.

Kids Help Monitor Newark's Dirty Diesel Near Their School

In December member groups of the Coalition for Healthy Ports (CHPs, which NJEF chairs) and dozens of environmentalists, community activists, port drivers, and students conducted a truck count at various locations in the East and South Wards of Newark where port trucks first hit the local streets. The Ironbound Community Corporation (ICC) did a great job organizing truck counting in front of the Hawkins Street School and other neighborhood locations in Newark. Additional truck counting was conducted in the South Ward by the graduates of NJEF's Newark-based Urban Environmental Institute.



"Every week, thousands of trucks pass through the Ironbound going to and from the port, spewing toxic diesel emissions, which we know are a major cause of asthma," said Cynthia Mellon, community organizer for ICC and Ironbound resident. "We now have the numbers to prove it. Until the Port becomes a better neighbor, we will continue to see high levels of asthma and other respiratory illnesses in our neighborhoods."

The intention of the "port truck count" was to raise public awareness about the dangerous effects of pollution from the goods movement in local port communities, amongst the drivers, and their families, many of them low-income and without health insurance.

CHPs has already drafted its own Clean Air Action Plan and plans to press the Port Authority of NY/NJ to adopt it. The Coalition is also pushing officials here to adopt a comprehensive

clean-air plan modeled after a landmark Port of Los Angeles policy. The LA "Clean Trucks Program" has been lauded by economists and environmentalists alike, as the October 2008 green-growth initiative will reduce emissions from port trucking by 80 percent, deliver over \$5 billion to the regional economy, and drastically reduce security risks through key enforcement provisions that require the industry to take responsibility for clean vehicles and its workforce.

New Jerseyans now face the nation's second greatest cancer risk from diesel soot in the nation. According to UMDNJ, treatment for asthma alone accounts for 12 percent of New Jersey's managed care costs. Newark's school children experience a 25 percent asthma rate, double the state and national rates. The city's residents are hospitalized and experience premature deaths at twice the rate of Essex County Suburbs.

"This is an environmental injustice," remarked Amy Goldsmith, State Director of NJEF. "The Port Authority can bury their heads in the sand and remain one of the region's dirtiest problems or be an East Coast leader when it comes to move freight with good jobs and clean air."

Newark Councilman Oscar James has echoed the Coalition's call for a bold solution: "Anyone who works along or lives near these transportation corridors pays a price with their lungs and livelihoods, and its time for port and public officials to pay attention," said James.

A New Year Confronts Old Problems in NJ and the Nation Economic, Climate and Foreign Policy Crises Create Opportunity

Who would have thought this time last year that Barack Obama would be President and our nation would be facing its worst economic crisis since the Depression?

Coupled with the international global warming and New Jersey's multi-year budget crises, we certainly have our hands full!

Fortunately there are solutions. The 2008 federal election results and upcoming 2009 state elections create the opportunity for change.



consensus says is needed to avert the worst impacts of global warming.

In September, New Jersey became the nation's leader in developing offshore wind in approving a pilot project off of Atlantic City, thus encouraging others. In October, Governor Corzine released an Energy Master Plan that increased emphasis on energy efficiency and clean renewables while de-emphasizing reliance on fossil (with the unfortunate exception of liquefied natural gas) and nuclear fuels.

The most anti-environment presidency in the nation's history is behind us and President Obama has made confronting the climate crisis and energy policy, which are inextricably linked to the economy and foreign policy, one of his top three priorities.

We are optimistic that his "green team", most notably NJDEP Commissioner Lisa Jackson as head of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA), and a new greener Congress, including the two new Reps. from New Jersey—John Adler (D-Camden) and Leonard Lance (R-Hunterdon)—are up to the challenge.

While climate and energy might be the top of the list, it's not a short list. Our federal government must not only undo the damage done by the Bush Administration, e.g., restoring the Clean Water Act to its original intent, but also be forward thinking. Making decades and centuries old water and transportation infrastructure worthy of a green 21st century, and reforming chemical policy that fails to protect public health and the environment would be two great places to start.

Green jobs will play a huge role—addressing the aging, inadequate grid, upgrading water plants and sewer lines; making old buildings and new developments energy efficient; manufacturing, installing and maintaining solar panels and wind turbines; cleaning up and redeveloping contaminated sites; fixing existing bridges and roads; building high speed rail lines; retrofitting diesel vehicles; and more.

While meaningful action on these priorities is just getting started in DC, it's already happening in New Jersey to varying degrees. In the last few months of 2008, the state took major steps to begin meeting the mandates of its 2007 Global Warming Response Act (GWRA) to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 20% by 2020 and start down the road to 80% reductions by 2050. These are the reductions the scientific

In December, the state participated in its first auction under a regional cap and trade program to make global warming polluters pay and use the proceeds to combat global warming.

In December, NJDEP also laid out new recommendations as to how the state could meet the GWRA mandates with a moratorium on new coal plants and major changes in the land use and transportation sectors. While this is just the beginning and implementation is key, the Corzine Administration deserves credit for really turning up the heat (no pun intended!) these past few months.

Unfortunately for much of the rest of the environmental agenda, the Corzine Administration and NJ Legislature have not measured up as we head into an election year for the Governor and NJ Assembly. Despite repeated commitments to the contrary, the Governor has permitted funding for open space, farmland and historic preservation to dry up while the Legislature with a few notable exceptions just points fingers or doesn't care.

Further, the state has some 20,000 contaminated sites with the vast majority not getting cleaned up at all, well, and/or fast enough. Rather than fixing the root of the problem—providing the NJDEP with the funding, the will, and the staff to get the job done—the Governor with nary a peep from the Legislature at least so far has made the purely political call to privatize the clean-up program. Under draft legislation expected to move early in the year, polluters could too often hire and pay contractors to signoff on clean-ups—the proverbial fox watching the henhouse.

Also expected early in this New Year is an oft-delayed update to the state's antiquated Water Supply Master Plan. Whether it ensures that development only occurs where there's clean, plentiful, and affordable water remains to be seen.

Continued on page 4

Continued from page 1: A New Year Confronts Old Problems

Finally, in the run-up to the 2009 elections and as the state's environmental justice executive order is set to expire in February, we look to the Governor to fulfill, with support from the Legislature, a key 2005 election promise to give NJDEP the power to say no when pollution unfairly impacts low income and/or minority communities. Senators Weinberg and Rice have introduced legislation that with amendments holds great promise.

It may be winter in New Jersey but the real climate and the political climate are warming. Help us use the latter to stop the former as we need cool water not hot air from either politicians or polluters!

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A Safe Energy Future

The ongoing battle to stop the relicensing of the Oyster Creek Nuclear Generating Station in Lacey Township is entering its third year. The NJEF led coalition of environmental and citizen's groups called STROC is making headway in the courts and in Washington, D.C. Oyster Creek is the oldest operating nuclear power plant in the nation, with the worst environmental and safety record.

The coalition won a key decision this fall when the federal Atomic Safety Licensing Board (ASLB) agreed that AmerGen, the plant owners, had used faulty math in its analysis to prove that the drywell, the steel containment that surrounds the reactor, met safety standards. Had AmerGen used the factor recommended by an independent laboratory, retained by the federal Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC), Oyster Creek would not meet minimum safety standards, and by the NRC's own rules, not be allowed to continue in operation.

In October, the ASLB directed that the analysis be sent to the Sandia National Laboratory for independent review. The NRC however has failed to act upon that recommendation to date. To the coalition's credit, AmerGen's apparent attempt to cheat on their safety data would have gone undetected if it weren't for the independent expert analysis that was citizen funded.

All of the safety data and AmerGen's shenanigans have been brought to the attention of the New Jersey congressional delegation, as well as state and county legislators. We are hearing a chorus of outrage as more elected officials demand more NRC oversight of the industry. The delegation has joined us in the call for plant data to be made public for independent analysis.

Oyster Creek was built in the 1960's with 1950's technology that was scrapped in the 1970's and has already operated past its original design life. Despite a U.S. Environmental Protection (USEPA) regulation calling for the use of the "best" technology at nuclear power plants, our efforts to push the NJ Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) to require cooling towers at Oyster Creek and slash the impacts on Barnegat Bay continues to be stonewalled by the Bush Administration. The Supreme Court will soon rule whether to overturn an Appellate decision that upheld the US EPA's ruling.



Rep. Chris Smith and NJEF Staff at a Oyster Creek fundraising event at the home of NJEF Board member Janet Tauro. From L to R: (Top) Canvass Director Kirby Torrance, Program Organizer Peggi Sturfels, State Director Amy Goldsmith, Janet Tauro, (Bottom) Communications Coordinator Jenny Vickers, NJ Congressman Chris Smith

While we continue our legal effort in the courts, the coalition is also spearheading a congressional effort to rewrite the nation's radiation exposure standards. Currently, acceptable doses of low level radiation from nuclear plants are set according to the most robust—a healthy 35-year-old 170-pound-male, rather than the most vulnerable, infants and pregnant women. We are working with Congressman Christopher Smith (R-4th District) on the rewriting of the standards.

Please Lend A Hand...And Carry Us Through To Victory

We need to hire top-drawer technical experts to support our legal case. This is expensive, but it is the only way we can win in court.

Support our efforts! Make a tax-deductible contribution payable to Clean Water Fund.

- ♦ **Online:** Visit www.cleanwaterfund.org. Click on contribute. Please write Oyster Creek NJ in the "comment" section of the website.
- ♦ **By phone:** call Peggi Sturfels in our Belmar office at 732-280-8988.
- ♦ **By check:** Please write Oyster Creek in the "for" or "memo" section of the check and send to: Clean Water Fund, 1002 Ocean Belmar, NJ 07719, Attn: Peggi Sturfels.

Please include your phone number and email address.

NJ Environmental Federation's Environmental Victories in 2008!

- ✓ Helped secure changes to **New Jersey's new Energy Master Plan (EMP)** that shift the state away from relying on traditional fossil and nuclear fuels and instead for substantial increases in the generation of energy from renewable sources and the implementation of comprehensive energy efficiency measures.
- ✓ Strengthened the **NJ Highlands Regional Master Plan (RMP)** to regulate development in 1,250 square miles in the NJ Highlands region, a valuable area that provides water for 60 percent of the state's residents. Helped pass an **Executive Order (EO)** that addresses some of the RMP's remaining flaws and strengthens the document further by ensuring little to no growth in preservation zone communities.
- ✓ Helped pass three important bills to **increase recycling of residential and electronic waste and strengthen enforcement of key pesticide and land use laws.**
- ✓ Lead the effort to ensure **stricter regulation and testing of PFOA**, a highly toxic chemical used to make non-stick cookware. The NJ Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) found PFOA in public water supply systems. NJDEP scientists recently recommended that 4 water suppliers reduce the levels of PFOAs to 40 parts per trillion in order to protect the public.
- ✓ NJEF testified before a U.S. Senate subcommittee on **water quality on pharmaceuticals in drinking water.** An Associated Press investigation published in March found that the drinking water of millions of Americans may be contaminated by a wide range of pharmaceuticals.



Green Jobs Rally in Newark

- ✓ Our newly formed Newark-based **Urban Environmental Institute**, held successful environmental justice leadership training courses in the spring and summer of 2008. Students from the course later held a "Green Jobs Now" rally, installing a cool/reflective panel on the roof of a local bakery in the South Ward of Newark.
- ✓ NJEF's "**Sustainable Communities**" programs helped implement green cleaning policies in five municipalities, two churches, and one school; idle-free policies in six municipalities and two schools; and pesticide free zone policies in ten municipalities, one school district, and one church.
- ✓ NJEF coordinated a dozen **School Integrated Pest Management (IPM) training sessions** for school personnel including additional onsite trainings. To date, over 3000 facility managers and principals have been to our IPM trainings as mandated by state law.
- ✓ NJEF co-led **Stop the Relicensing of Oyster Creek Nuclear Power Plant Coalition (STROC)** to obtain a U.S. Senate subcommittee hearing on lack of plant oversight of the plant by the federal Nuclear Regulatory Commission. Recently won a crucial legal round when the federal Atomic Safety Licensing Board agreed that age management of the radiation containment vessel at Oyster Creek needs independent review.
- ✓ Working in coalition with the **NJ Working Family Alliance (WFA)** to ensure that as NJ faces the current economic crisis, core government programs and services are adequately funded through progressive taxation and other means, inappropriate subsidies are opposed, and polluters pay their fair share for wrong doing.
- ✓ **9 out of 9 candidates endorsed by NJEF in 2008 won.** Our canvass identified thousands of pro-environmental voters in key districts across NJ. In one key race in NJ's 3rd CD, NJEF knocked on over 25,000 doors, made 4,500 calls, sent 30,000 emails, and 4,500 direct mail pieces to help elect Senator John Adler (D) to Congress.
- ✓ **NJEF community organizers** reached almost 200,000 households, generated over 65,000 new individual members, over 10,000 email alert subscribers, and over 15,000 handwritten letters, phone calls, and telewires on environmental issues.