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## Monmouth County Environmental Newsletter: June Edition

Monmouth County, NJ sent this bulletin at 06/03/2019 10:45 AM EDT



*Baptisia australis*, a New Jersey native plant, blooms in a Monmouth County yard. Source: Amber Mallm



## Monmouth County Environmental Newsletter: June 2019

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### Upcoming Environmental & Outdoor Events in Monmouth County:

Some activities require registration and/or fees:



## **Educational Event: Ticks and Mosquitoes in Monmouth County, June 5 at 7 p.m.**

Join the Monmouth County Environmental Council for its round-table event, "**Ticks and Mosquitoes in Monmouth County: Resources to help you protect your family and pets**" on **June 5, from 7 to 9 p.m.** at the Monmouth County Agricultural Building, 4000 Kozloski Rd, Freehold. As we begin enjoying more time outdoors, we are reminded that we must be vigilant against ticks and mosquitoes this season. During this roundtable event, attendees will learn about local ticks and mosquitoes, what diseases they spread to people and pets, how to defend oneself and pets and what Monmouth County is doing to control these nuisances.

We will hear presentations from Christopher Merkel, Public Health Coordinator of the Monmouth County Health Department; Prof. Dina Fonseca, Director of Rutgers Center of Vector Biology; Dr. Deborah Breitstein, veterinarian and partner-owner of Animal Health Care of Marlboro and Victoria Thompson, Superintendent of the Monmouth County Mosquito Control Division. Presentations will be followed by a question and answer session with the speakers. Although this event is free, please RSVP to [Amber Mallm](#).

- [June 3 & June 17, Horseshoe Crab Monitoring, various locations](#)
- [June 4, 10 -11 a.m. & June 17, 9 -10 a.m. Drop-In Kayak Tour, Swimming River Park, Red Bank](#)
- [June 5, 7 -9 p.m. Ticks and Mosquitoes in Monmouth County, Ag. Building, Freehold](#)
- [June 6, 4:30 p.m. Environmental Council Meeting, Hall of Records Annex, Freehold](#)
- [June 8, 9 a.m. -12:30 p.m. Rally for the Rivers Eco-Fest, Victory Park, Rumson](#)
- [June 14, 8:30 a.m. -4:30 p.m. Sustainability Summit, Holmdel](#)
- [June 15, 9 -11 a.m. Stone Road Wetland Clean-Up, Keyport](#)
- [June 15 & 16, 2 -5 p.m. Fishing Derbies, various locations](#)

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## **Christopher P. Merkel Recieves County Service Award**

Christopher P. Merkel, Monmouth County Public Health Coordinator, was recently recognized for his commitment to local government. Merkel was presented the 2019 County Service Award at the 2019 New Jersey Association of Counties (NJAC) Conference. Each year, NJAC recognizes county professionals who demonstrate exemplary leadership, and devotion to county government and NJAC. Merkel started his career as a registered

environmental health specialist at the Salem County Health Department in 1998 and over the past 20 years has worked for three counties in the public health field. Chris joined Monmouth County Health Department in 2014 where he leads the department of 50 staff members and runs day to day operations. He is currently the Vice President and Program Chair of the New Jersey Association of County and City Health Officials, President of the Monmouth County Governmental Public Health Partnership Group and Chairs the Monmouth County Overdose Fatality Review Team.

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## Lake Como Partners with Brooklyn High School on Lake-Front Design



*Joseph Balbuena, and Milani Baldizzi and Kaylin Guzman's landscape design received an award from Mayor Higgins, on May 11. Source: Courtney Winston.*

Lake Como Borough is partnering with the Williamsburg High School for Architecture and Design (WHSAD) and Monmouth University to revitalize its lake-front. WHSAD students, from Brooklyn N.Y., created landscape designs that follow Lake Como's vision. It is the Borough's goal to transform the lake-front into a passive recreation destination for locals and visitors of the shore.

After months of planning, small teams of students presented their landscape designs to the public. A panel of judges, including Mayor Higgins and other Lake Como public officials, evaluated the designs based on recreation, wildlife, feasibility, stormwater management, overall design and aesthetics and applicability to other coastal lake-fronts. Students presented a variety of ideas including meandering foot paths, yoga areas, picnic areas, native gardens and trees, living shorelines and play areas for children. Each group was passionate about creating a park that met the needs of the community.

Kaylin Guzman, Joseph Balbuena and Milana Baldizzi completed the winning design. The team crafted a thoughtful design inspired by New York City parks, including the High-Line and Prospect Park. They planned a passive park with native plants selected for their abilities to attract native bees, benches that convert to picnic tables, a children's play area

comprised of stumps and logs and a living shoreline. WHSAD plans to continue to work with Lake Como over the next five years. Ultimately, Lake Como hopes to create a park that encompasses each student's ideas and the community's desires.

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## Long Branch Public School District Recognized as Sustainable Leader



*Long Branch students gain valuable skills by growing and selling produce. Source Jonathan Trzeszkowski.*

Sustainable Jersey is celebrating its 10th anniversary with the message "Celebrating Progress, Envisioning the Future" by recognizing sustainable leaders throughout the state. Monmouth County is home to a leader in Sustainable Jersey for Schools, the Long Branch Public School District. All nine District schools are Sustainable Jersey Certified. Five schools are bronze certified, while three of the schools have earned silver certification, the highest certification achievable. Each school has fulfilled multiple actions by maintaining school gardens, participating in the USDA Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program to source locally grown produce, using only green cleaning supplies, incorporating sustainable topics into the curriculum of every grade level, by hosting a Green Fair in 2018 and by installing solar panels on eight schools.

Long Branch Schools lead outstanding projects that support sustainable goals and enhance education. At George L. Catrambone Elementary School, students led a campaign against plastic straws and ultimately eliminated plastic straws at all Long Branch schools. At Long Branch Middle School, special needs students manage Bistro 36, a school cafe that opens every Friday. Not only do students cook with ingredients they grow, they learn other valuable skills by writing the menu, taking orders and handling cash. Last year, Long Branch High School reached a community in need overseas by gathering denim jeans for the Sole Hope Foundation which creates shoes for children in Uganda. To learn more about Long Branch Schools' achievements, access the certification reports on the interactive [map](#) or [listen to a recent interview](#) with Long Branch educators and Sustainable Jersey representatives.

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## NJDEP Awards \$10 Million in Grants for Water Quality Improvement Projects in the Barnegat Bay Watershed

In May, New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection announced it is awarding \$10 million in grants to fund water quality improvement projects in the Barnegat Bay Watershed. Projects receiving funding include watershed restoration and protection planning, wetlands restoration, living shorelines, education, stormwater infrastructure mapping, stormwater-basin retrofitting and shellfish habitat restoration. While the Barnegat Bay Watershed mostly encompasses Ocean County, part of the watershed includes southern portions of Monmouth County.



The Brick Township Municipal Utilities Authority received \$950,000 for various water quality improvement projects in the Metedeconk River Watershed. The river's headwaters are in Freehold, Jackson and Millstone, then it flows through Howell Township, Lakewood, Wall and Brick Township and ultimately reaches Point Pleasant and the Barnegat Bay. As the Authority's primary water source, the health of the Metedeconk River is crucial. Funds will enable the Authority to complete source tracking of pathogens in the river's north branch, implement green infrastructure projects, retrofit a stormwater basin in Howell Township and launch a winter road salt demonstration project to identify BMP's and minimize chloride levels in the water supply. These projects aim to fulfill high priority actions in the 2013 [Metedeconk River Watershed Protection and Restoration Plan](#).

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### NJDEP Organizational Changes

This spring the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) formed the Office of Climate Resilience (OCR) in the Commissioner's Office to reduce and respond to climate change. The OCR will be staffed by members of the Office of Coastal and Land Use Planning. DEP is currently searching for a new Chief Resilience Officer to lead the program. The OCR will serve as the center of climate change resilience and adaptation work throughout NJDEP. Climate mitigation efforts to reduce green house gas emissions will continue to be the responsibility of the Air Quality, Energy and Sustainability program,

### USDA Releases 2017 Census of Agriculture

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) National Agricultural Statistics Services released the 2017 Census of Agriculture. The Census, which is conducted every five years, examines land use and ownership, operator characteristics, productions practices, income and expenditures of all U.S. farms. According to the USDA, a farm is considered a rural or urban plot of land on which \$1,000 of agriculture products were produced, sold or normally would have been sold during the census year. When compared to the Monmouth County 2012 Census of

within the Division of Energy and Sustainability. However, the Division will be renamed the "Division of Climate, Clean Energy & Radiation Protection," which reflects efforts in solar and offshore wind development, vehicle electrification, sustainability and environmental justice.

Agriculture, there has been a slight increase in the number of farms and total acres in farming. Next month, the County's Division of Planning staff will take a look at the more detailed County Profile to be released on May 30. Access the 2017 Census of Agriculture supporting documents [here](#).

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## Recent Environmental Bills

Assembly Bill [A4821](#), which had its second reading in Assembly on May 20, establishes new time frames for the Global Warming Response Act. The bill requires that the NJDEP to adopt rules and regulations establishing a greenhouse gas emissions monitoring and reporting program. Within one year after enactment, NJDEP must prepare a report recommending additional measures necessary to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to achieve the State's 2050 goal. Similarly, Senate Bill [S3215](#), which had its second reading in the Senate on May 16, requires any State agency to use a 20-year time horizon when measuring the global warming impact of greenhouse gases.

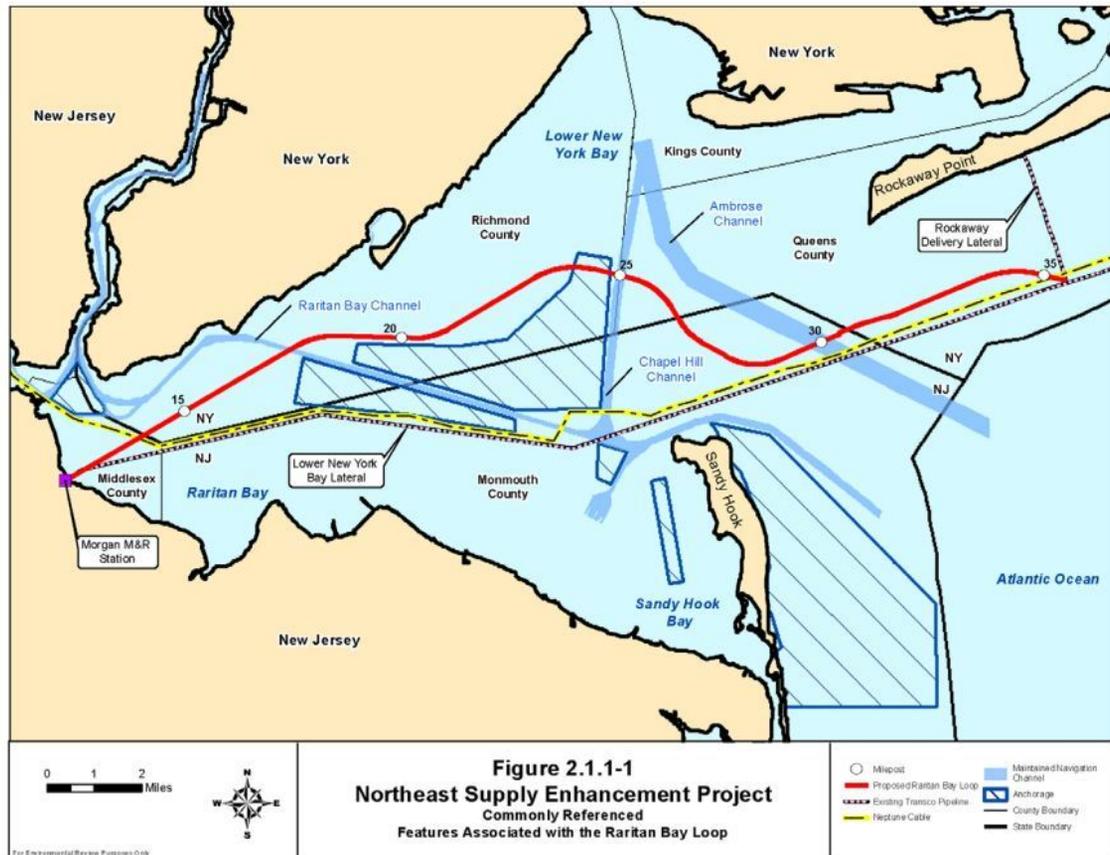
Senate Bill [S3792](#), introduced on May 20, directs the Drinking Water Quality Institute to study microplastics in drinking water and recommend a definition of microplastics to NJDEP within two years after the bill's enactment. Within three years, NJDEP shall adopt a methodology to test drinking water for microplastics, adopt requirements for testing and reporting and accredit qualified laboratories in NJ to analyze microplastics.

Senate Bill [S3800](#), introduced on May 20, amends NJDEP's Green Acres Program to include the promotion and protection of urban forests and allows local governments or nonprofits to use a grant or loan for the creation, enhancement or protection of an urban forest.

Senate Bill [S2905](#), passed in the Senate in January, had its second reading in the Assembly on March 18, prohibits the possession, sale, trade and distribution of shark fins. The bill allows shark fins lawfully obtained for scientific or educational purposes or obtained in consistence with a license or permit held by commercial or recreational fishermen.

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## Freeholders Oppose NESE Pipeline & New York Denies Permit



*The NY Department of Environmental Conservation denied a permit for the proposed NESE pipeline due to significant water quality impacts. Source: FERC, NESE FEIS*

In April, the Monmouth County Board of Chosen Freeholders passed a [resolution](#) opposing Northeast Supply Enhancement (NESE) Pipeline, asserting the project will cause water quality and habitat degradation. More recently, on May 15, the New York Department of Environmental Conservation (NYDEC) denied the project's required Clean Water Act Section 401 Water Quality Certification (WQC) permit, without prejudice. After the NYDEC's review of the WQC application for the Raritan Bay Loop portion of the project, the Final Environmental Impact Statement, and over 14,000 oral and written public comments, the NYDEC found that the project is likely to have significant water quality impacts to New York State. The NYDEC determined significant impacts will be generated by the re-suspension of sediments and contamination including mercury and copper and the disturbance of benthic habitats. Should Transcontinental submit a new WQC application, it must demonstrate the project will comply with water quality standards and it must provide mitigation plans for impacts to water quality, shellfish beds and other benthic resources. Read the full [Notice of Denial](#).

#### *About this Newsletter*

*The purpose of the newsletter is to inform Monmouth County citizens on the health of their environment and list environmental outreach events in their community. The newsletter is produced by the Monmouth County Division of Planning Section of Environmental & Sustainability Planning in coordination with the Monmouth County Environmental Council. The County of Monmouth and the Board of Chosen Freeholders do not necessarily share the viewpoints of any environmental group mentioned in this newsletter.*

*If you have questions, comments, or wish to have an event listed in the newsletter, please contact: [Amber.Mallm@co.monmouth.nj.us](mailto:Amber.Mallm@co.monmouth.nj.us)*

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