



Monmouth County Environmental Newsletter: Spring 2023

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Wall Township to rename Self-guided Nature Trail to honor environmental advocate Wilma Morrissey

Join Wall Township in celebrating the legacy of Wilma Morrissey, former chair of the Monmouth County Environmental Council and the Wall Township Environmental Advisory Committee, at the renaming of the Self-guided Nature Trail to The Wilma Morrissey Nature Trail.

A respected pillar of her community, Wilma served on the Wall Township Environmental Advisory Committee for 25 years and on the Monmouth County Environmental Council for more than 15

Upcoming environmental & outdoor events in Monmouth County:

- [April 3, 12-1 p.m. - Virtual Zero Waste Workshop](#)
 - [April 16, 2023, 10 a.m. - 12 p.m. - MCAS April 2023 Field Trip - look for osprey, herons, egrets and arriving spring migrants at Sandy Hook.](#)
 - [April 20, 7-8 p.m. - Striped Bass: The Most Interesting](#)
-

years, along with volunteering for countless other community efforts.

The dedication ceremony will take place at the **Wall Township Municipal Building on Saturday, April 29th at 11 a.m.**, followed by a reception. This event honors Morrissey's commitment to environmental conservation and invites the community to enjoy the trail and learn about the local ecosystem.

“My advice is to get involved and volunteer. You will be surprised to see how everything falls into place. I never sought out these positions in the environmental movement, but I am glad they were presented to me. Things have come my way and I was open and ready when I was asked to serve.”

Wilma Morrissey,

2017 Sustainable Jersey interview

[Fish Along the Jersey](#)

[Shore! Bayshore](#)

[Waterfront Park Activity Center](#)

- [May 4 and May 10, 9-10 a.m. - Spring Migration Madness Birding Walk, Bayshore Waterfront Park](#)
- [May 14, 8-11 a.m. - MCAS May 2023 Field Trip - walk in search of migrant passerines, Allaire State Park](#)
- [May 18, 7-8 p.m. - Horseshoe Crabs Trying to Survive in a Modern World, Bayshore Waterfront Park Activity Center](#)

Monmouth County preserves 35-Acre Feiler Farm in Colts Neck and 26-acre Linney Farm in Howell



Feiler Farm. Source: Monmouth County Division of Planning

The Monmouth County Division of Planning is pleased to announce the preservation of the Feiler Farm on Montrose Road in Colts Neck. The County, the Township of Colts Neck and the State Agriculture Development Committee partnered to purchase a 35-acre agricultural easement on the sheep and orchard operation, also restricting it from further development. The Farm is an important connector to other conservation lands and is traversed by a tributary of Yellow Brook. A few weeks after the County's easement was recorded, the Feilers completed the long-planned sale of the remaining property rights to a conservation-minded buyer who will continue to use the land for agricultural purposes.



Linney Farm. Source: Monmouth County Division of Planning

At the end of February, Monmouth County also preserved the Linney farm on Five Points Road in Howell. The County, the Township of Howell and the State Agriculture Development Committee partnered to purchase a 26-acre easement on the property, restricting it from further development and ensuring that the land will be permanently devoted to agricultural use. The Farm is an important connector to other conservation land in Howell and Freehold townships. The Linney family also owns the preserved Lynwick Gardens property down the street.

There are now more than 225 easements preserving more than 15,730 acres of farmland in the County. To learn more about the County's farmland preservation efforts and its agricultural economy you can view the latest Monmouth County Farmland Preservation Plan [here](#).

Monmouth County's Coastal Resilience Design Study

The Monmouth County Division of Planning has completed its Bayshore Coastal Resilience Design Study, which was funded through a grant provided by the Office of Local Defense Community Cooperation. This report is a follow-up to the 2019 Raritan/Sandy Hook Bay Coastal Resilience Planning Study and offers wetland restoration strategies for Whale Creek in Aberdeen Township and Flat Creek in Union Beach Borough.



The recommendations are based on field assessments, tidal data and hydrodynamic modelling to improve resiliency and mitigate damage caused by flooding, storm surge and sea level rise. The report suggests removing invasive species, planting native species and managing waterflow and marsh boundaries. These site-specific recommendations are aimed at improving the resiliency of these tidal marsh locations against current and future threats.

Both the [executive summary](#) and the [complete report](#) are available online.

Whales washing ashore in droves along the East Coast: a cause for concern



Source: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Bill Thompson, 2017

According to [an article in Yale Environment 360](#), the number of dead whales washing up on the East Coast in recent months is alarming to federal scientists, even though the total numbers are below some prior years. According to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), 23 dead whales have washed ashore since early December, 12 of them in New Jersey and New York. While the total number of strandings is below prior years, the rate at which they are occurring is raising concerns. These strandings are part of an ongoing “unusual mortality event” of humpback whales that began in 2016, according to NOAA. Other whale species, including four critically endangered North Atlantic right whales, have also stranded along the East Coast since January.

The marine environment is facing increasing stressors and changes due to human activity whose impacts are still not well understood. Contributing factors include the rebounding population of Humpbacks and the shifting migration patterns caused by rising ocean temperatures. The surge in cargo shipments due to online shopping has resulted in bigger ships travelling closer to the coast, increasing the chances of collisions with predominantly juvenile whales who are searching for food closer to shore.

Some groups opposed to offshore wind have blamed the recent whale strandings on seafloor surveys conducted by wind energy companies. However, the Marine Mammal Commission, an independent government agency that oversees the conservation of marine mammals and their

environment, said in February that “There is no evidence to link these strandings to offshore wind energy development.” Scientists who study the impact of sound on marine mammals say the types of sound recently used by these companies operate at frequencies that pose little risk to Baleen Whales like the Humpback. Scientists who study whale behavior in general say it's impossible to definitively link the strandings to a single cause given the complexity of the ocean, the dramatic changes the North Atlantic has experienced in recent decades, and how much is still unknown about how these changes might be affecting baleen whales.

NJ State News

NJDEP's Youth Inclusion Initiative seeks to inspire next generation of environmental professionals



Source: NJDEP Youth Inclusion Initiative

The New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) is set to partner with five community-based organizations for its Youth

NJDEP seeks public input to expand outdoor recreation and open space opportunities

The New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) is seeking public input through an online survey as part of the *Outside, Together!* initiative, with the goal of enhancing and expanding outdoor recreation and open space opportunities. The survey responses will help the NJDEP develop an action plan and funding priorities to expand high-quality open space and recreational opportunities across the state. The plan will prioritize equity, environmental justice, climate resilience, sustainability and investments in ecotourism, technology, stewardship, biodiversity conservation and restoration. Learn more about the *Outside, Together!* initiative and take the survey [here](#).

Inclusion Initiative, which seeks to inspire and train youth from overburdened communities to become the next generation of diverse environmental professionals.

Partner organizations will receive up to \$100,000 to provide outreach, recruitment, job training and post-program employment opportunities for participants ages 16 to 20.

The six-week program running from July 6 to August 16 offers hands-on experience in air monitoring, water sampling, natural resource management and other areas related to environmental protection and conservation. Participants will also visit facilities and receive professional development training, including resume writing and cover letter sessions.

[NJDEP Press Release](#)

Governor's Office unveils a six-point plan to combat climate change in New Jersey

The New Jersey Governor's Office has revealed a six-point plan focused on combatting climate change in New Jersey. The cornerstone of the plan is a pledge to reach 100% clean energy by 2035, 15 years earlier than the previous target. Other components of the plan include a commitment to electrifying 400,000 homes and 20,000 commercial properties, making 10% of low- to moderate-income properties electrification-ready by 2030, and investing \$70 million in lowering upfront costs for medium- and heavy-duty electric vehicles. The plan also calls for a shift to zero-emission vehicles, with all new cars and light-duty truck sales to be zero-emission by 2035. [To learn more about the six-point plan, see the press release here.](#)

Grant Opportunities!



NJDEP launches \$19 million grant program to enhance stormwater infrastructure and mitigate flooding and pollution

New Jersey has announced a \$19 million grant program to help municipalities transition to new stormwater permitting systems, aimed at protecting the State's waterways from pollutants and mitigating localized flooding exacerbated by climate change. The New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection is prioritizing modernizing stormwater infrastructure and redesignating all 101 previous Tier B municipalities to Tier A to better manage stormwater discharges. The State is also implementing the Inland Flood Protection Rule to protect New Jersey's people and economy from catastrophic floods by requiring new assets to be designed and constructed using climate-informed precipitation data. Any questions about the program can be submitted to: stormwatergrantsinfo@dep.nj.gov

Notice of Funding

American Water announces 2023 grant opportunity to protect local watersheds and drinking water supplies

Attention community organizations! American Water is now accepting grant applications for projects that address watershed or source water protection needs within American Water service areas. Eligible projects must be new or innovative, completed between May 1 and November 30,

2023, and be carried out by partnerships between two or more organizations. Grants of up to \$10,000 are available to fund projects such as reforestation efforts, wildlife protection, hazardous waste collection and water protection education. Don't miss this opportunity to make a positive impact in your community and protect public drinking water supplies. Find out more about this opportunity [here](#).

ANJEC small grants for environmental commissions to support open space stewardship projects

The Association of New Jersey Environmental Commissions (ANJEC) is providing small grants of up to \$1,500 to support local open space stewardship and raise the profile of environmental commissions through publicity and collaboration with local groups. Funding will go toward open space preservation, management, restoration and education, and 2023 funding even includes the possibility for projects on or near remediated sites. Suitable projects include (but aren't limited to) pollinator gardens, trail building and maintenance, printed or online guides/maps, multi-town plans to link open space/trails, and more! No cash match is required to apply, but local volunteers and commission members must provide and track a minimum of 80 hours of labor toward the project. Applications are due by 4:30 p.m. on Monday, April 17, 2023. Instructions and requirements for submitting an application can be found [here](#).

About This Newsletter

The purpose of the newsletter is to inform Monmouth County citizens about 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 County Commissioners 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:
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