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Monmouth County Environmental Newsletter: Winter 2022

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Upcoming Environmental & Outdoor Events in Monmouth County:

- [Jan. 1, First Day Hikes, Various NJ State Parks](#)
- [Jan. 11, 1 p.m. NJDEP Virtual Engagement Session: Inland Flood Protection Rules](#)
- [Jan. 12, 8:30 a.m. -4 p.m. Rutgers Offshore Wind Energy Symposium](#)
- [Jan. 20, 7 -8 p.m. Nature Lecture Series: All about Brook Trout- The State Fish of New Jersey, Freneau Woods Park, Aberdeen](#)
- [Jan. 17, 6:30 -8:30 p.m. Light Up Your Shade Garden with Colorful Plants](#)
- [Jan. 22, 10 a.m. -12 p.m. Monmouth County Audubon Society Field Trip – Manasquan Reservoir, Howell](#)
- [Jan. 29, 1 -4 p.m. Seashore Open House at Seven Presidents Oceanfront Park, Long Branch](#)

Monmouth County and Partners Preserve 28-acre Vos Meer Farm

Monmouth County, with assistance from the State Agriculture Development Committee, Marlboro Township and Freehold Township, preserved the Vos Meer Farm owned by Peter and Carol Van Mater in early December. The 28-acre farm, located on Route 79, includes 26 acres in Marlboro Township and two acres in Freehold Township.

In a December [press release](#), Marlboro Township Mayor, Jonathan Hornik, reported that the municipality has now preserved more than 282 acres of farmland. With the addition of the Vos Meer farm, there is a total of 15,673 acres of preserved farmland in Monmouth County.

10th Anniversary of Superstorm Sandy



Damages inflicted by Superstorm Sandy. Source: Monmouth County Office of Emergency Management.

October 29, 2022 marked the 10th anniversary of Superstorm Sandy, which was the most destructive hurricane ever recorded in New Jersey, and one of the costliest hurricanes in U.S. history. In New Jersey, Sandy caused 38 deaths, \$30 billion in economic damage, and damaged or destroyed 346,000 homes according to the [New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection \(NJDEP\)](#).

Since Superstorm Sandy flooding and resilience have become underlying themes in the way land use and development as well as emergency preparedness and response are considered in the state. With efforts coming from government, academia, non-profits, professional and citizen-led groups, among others, the past ten years have seen countless efforts to make New Jersey more resilient to future storms. These include strengthening of state and local floodplain regulations, infrastructure and drainage improvement projects, buyouts in flood-prone areas, mapping tools developed to assess risk, resilience studies and plans, campaigns to bring awareness to flood hazards, and many more. While there has been progress made in addressing some of the challenges of climate change and flooding, there is always more to be done.

Due to the complexities and uncertainties of adapting to changing weather patterns and more frequent flooding, a variety of strategies are needed to protect people, property, and our environment. Below are some articles and resources related to ongoing challenges in the aftermath of Sandy as well as some work that is being done to mitigate them.

[Monmouth County CRS Program](#)

[NJ Flood Mapper](#)

[NJ Future New Flood Disclosure Legislation](#)

[Nature Conservancy: Lessons from Hurricane Sandy](#)

Proposed Inland Flood Protection Rule

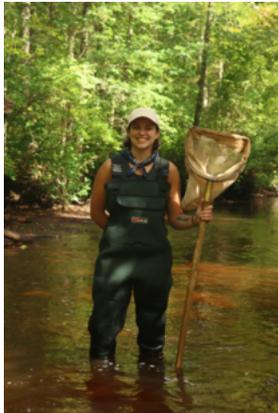
On Dec. 5, 2022, the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) published the proposed Inland Flood Protection Rule in the New Jersey Register. Some key points in the proposal include:

- New Design Flood Elevation raises fluvial (non-tidal) flood elevation mapped by NJDEP by two feet.
- Requires use of future projected precipitation when calculating flood elevations.
- Ensures that DEP's Flood Hazard Area permits conform to NJ Uniform Construction Code standards and meet or exceed the minimum Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) National Flood Insurance Program requirements.
- Requires stormwater Best Management Practices (BMPs) to be designed to manage runoff for both today's storms and future storms.

- Removes use of Rational and Modified Rational methods for stormwater calculations.

Visit the [NJDEP webpage](#) to access the [proposal](#), or participate in a [virtual information session](#) on Jan. 11, 2023, at 1 p.m. Comments will be accepted until Feb. 3, 2023.

2022-2023 AmeriCorps Watershed Ambassador Samantha Tomkowich



For the past two decades, the Monmouth County Division of Planning, Environmental & Sustainability Planning Section has hosted an annual New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) AmeriCorps Watershed Ambassador assigned to Watershed Management Area 12 (WMA 12), the Monmouth Coastal Watershed. The 2022-2023 Ambassador is Samantha Tomkowich.

AmeriCorps Watershed Ambassadors monitor local waterways, provide watershed-related programs to schools, municipalities and community groups, and organize rain barrel workshops, clean-ups and watershed restoration projects. For more information

or to schedule a program or activity, contact [Samantha Tomkowich](#).

Legislation Proposes New Solutions for Pick-your-own Farms

[Senate Bill 3290](#), introduced Oct. 31, 2022, proposes to allow pick-your-own farms to sell ground harvested fruit for use in food and other value-added products such as ciders. The bill also proposes to exempt pick-your-own farms from the plastic bag ban.

Proposed Amendments to Plastic Bag Ban

[Senate Bill 3114](#), introduced on Sept. 29, 2022, proposes amendments to the Plastic Bag Ban. The legislation proposes to eliminate the prohibition on paper bags for groceries prepared for delivery, pickup, or curbside pickup. It also proposes a program for returning reusable bags and extends the timeframe for use of certain bags by food banks and pantries.

King Tide Photo Contest

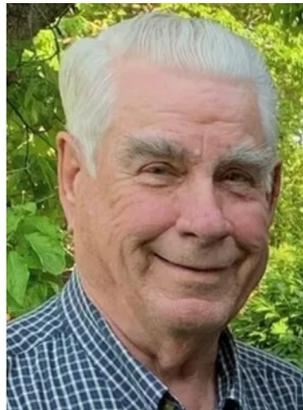


2021 King Tide Photo Contest Winner, Category: Flooding from a River/Stream, Tuckerton Creek, Little Egg Harbor Township, Karen Maroney. Source: My Coast NJ

This November, New Jersey experienced a "King Tide" which refers to the highest tides of the year. They occur when a new or full moon coincides with the moon being at its closest point to earth in its orbit. This happened during the new moon on Nov. 23, with exceptionally high tides from Nov. 23rd to 28th. Visit the [MyCoast](#) website to check out photos taken by citizen scientists capturing the King Tide along the NJ coast.

Honoring Bill Potter

Longtime county volunteer and Monmouth County Agriculture Development Board (MCADB) Chair, Bill Potter, passed away on Oct. 4, 2022. The Board of County Commissioners issued a certificate in Bill's memory at its workshop meeting on Nov. 22, 2022. The certificate contained the following text:



This certificate is presented to the family of William H. Potter III in honor of his life and legacy. Mr. Bill Potter was a lifelong Monmouth County resident who resided in Middletown and was the co-owner of W.H. Potter & Son Lawn Care & Garden. He was a member of the Monmouth County Agriculture Development Board since 1992, in which he assisted in all matters; farmland preservation, agricultural economic development, and right to farm. During his tenure with the Board, Bill helped preserve over 14,178 acres of farmland in the County. In addition, to his work on the Board, he was a lifelong member and leader of the Monmouth County 4-H Program, in which he played an instrumental role in 4-H's livestock clubs. He was also an active member of his church, the Middletown Reformed Church, where he served as an Elder and had an impact on the congregation. His family, friends, and co-workers describe him as kind-hearted, funny, and one you could rely on for sage fatherly/brotherly advice. The Monmouth County Board of County Commissioners gives their condolences to the family and joins in remembrance of the life of Bill Potter and the lasting imprint he left on the County.

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: Amber.Mallm@co.monmouth.nj.us

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