



NJ INTERAGENCY COUNCIL ON CLIMATE RESILIENCE 2025 ANNUAL REPORT

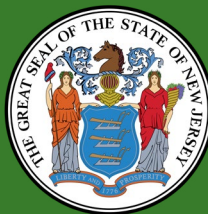
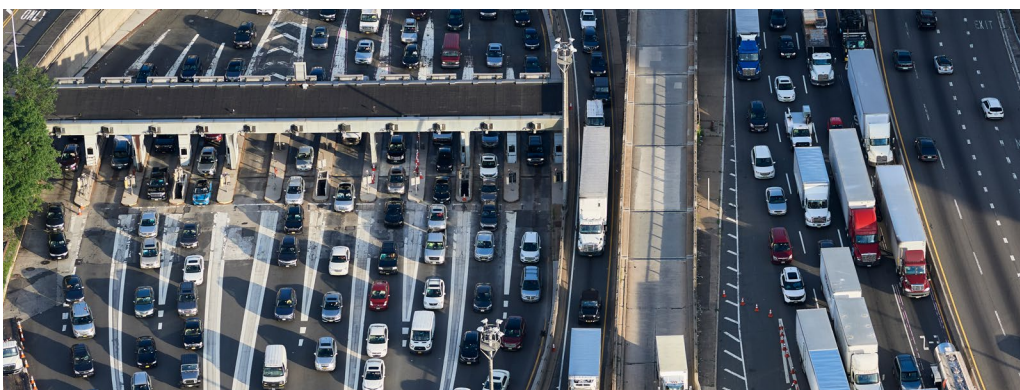


TABLE OF CONTENTS

Table of Contents..... 2

Introduction..... 3

2025 | Year In Climate..... 5

Collaborative Activities of the Interagency Council..... 6

Priority 1: Build Healthy and Resilient Communities..... 8

Priority 2: Strengthen the Resilience of NJ’s Ecosystems.....20

Priority 3: Promote Coordinated Governance.....24

Priority 4: Invest in Information & Increase Public Understanding.....25

Priority 5: Promote Climate-Informed Investments & Innovative Financing.....33

Priority 6: Coastal Resilience Plan.....38

IAC Over the Years.....41

This work was made possible with financial assistance from the Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972, as amended, administered by the Office for Coastal Management, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) through the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, Coastal Management Program.

INTRODUCTION

In 2019, Governor Murphy signed [Executive Order No. 89](#), which ordered New Jersey to take proactive and coordinated efforts toward climate resilience. This landmark executive order called for the development of the [Scientific Report on Climate Change](#) (Scientific Report), which summarizes the current state of knowledge regarding the effects of climate change on New Jersey’s environment. Released in 2020, the Scientific Report informs state and local decision-makers as they seek to understand and respond to the impacts of climate change.

Executive Order No. 89 established the [Interagency Council on Climate Resilience](#) (referred throughout this report as the “Interagency Council” or IAC), now comprised of 26 State departments and agencies and the Governor’s Office. The Interagency Council is tasked with coordinating the State’s resilience policies and initiatives. The position of Chief Resilience Officer was also established to support this work and to lead what is now the Office of Climate Resilience within the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (DEP).

Together, the Chief Resilience Officer and Interagency Council, with support from the Office of Climate Resilience, develops and coordinates on short- and long-term actions that promote the mitigation, adaptation, and resilience of

New Jersey’s economy, communities, infrastructure, and natural resources. The [Statewide Climate Change Resilience Strategy](#) (Resilience Strategy) was released in October 2021 and serves as the foundational policy framework guiding state agency actions to address the impacts of climate change and its implementation thereafter. The Resilience Strategy exists as a model and guidance document, establishing resilience goals for the state and its agencies across six priority areas. These serve as the framework for agency activities described in this publication:

The Interagency Council has continued to work to turn the Resilience Strategy’s vision into action and has published a series of reports highlighting agency resilience accomplishments over the last five years since the Resilience Strategy’s publication. These include an [Accomplishments Report issued for the two-year anniversary](#) of the release of the Resilience Strategy, and well as the [IAC 2024 Annual Report](#). The 2025 Annual Report builds on that foundation, providing brief updates on New Jersey State agencies’ climate resilience achievements and ongoing efforts throughout the 2025 calendar year.

All publications by the Interagency Council can be accessed at resiliencycouncil.nj.gov.



INTERAGENCY COUNCIL ON CLIMATE RESILIENCE MEMBER AGENCIES

The Interagency Council on Climate Resilience 2025 Annual Report would not have been possible without the help of the State departments and agencies that make up the Interagency Council on Climate Resilience.

- Board of Public Utilities (NJBPUB)
- Department of Agriculture (NJDA)
- Department of Banking and Insurance (DOBI)
- Department of Children and Families (DCF)
- Department of Community Affairs (DCA)
- Department of Corrections (DOC)
- Department of Education (DOE)
- Department of Environmental Protection (DEP)
- Department of Health (DOH)
- Department of Human Services (Human Services or DHS)
- Department of Labor and Workforce Development (NJDOL)
- Department of Law and Public Safety (LPS)
- Department of Military and Veterans Affairs (DMAVA)*
- Department of State (DOS)
- Department of Transportation (NJDOT)
- Department of the Treasury (Treasury)
- New Jersey Economic Development Authority (NJEDA)
- New Jersey Highlands Council (Highlands)
- New Jersey Housing and Mortgage Finance Agency (NJHMFA)
- New Jersey Infrastructure Bank (I-Bank)
- NJ TRANSIT (NJT)
- New Jersey Office of Emergency Management (OEM)
- New Jersey Pinelands Commission (Pinelands)
- Port Authority of New York and New Jersey (PANYNJ)
- New Jersey Sports & Exposition Authority (NJSEA)
- New Jersey Turnpike Authority (Turnpike Authority)

* This document was produced prior to the organizational transition of the New Jersey Department of Military and Veterans Affairs (DMAVA). Effective Jan. 9, 2026, DMAVA will formally split into two agencies; the Department of Military Affairs (DMA) and the Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA). Future revisions of this publication will reflect the updated agency structure.

2025 | YEAR IN CLIMATE

The 2024 trend of record-breaking extremes across global climate indicators continued throughout 2025. Antarctic sea ice remained near historic lows, and global greenhouse emissions showed no significant decline. Global trends magnify local impacts, resulting in more frequent and intense weather events internationally and across the United States.

In New Jersey, 2025 marked a year of significant climate variability and persistent drought. The year began with the coldest January since 2014 as well as the third-driest January on record with only 0.92 inches of precipitation. Meanwhile, spring began with the tenth-warmest March and below-normal precipitation for the seventh consecutive month. These conditions exacerbated early season wildfires, including the Jones Road Fire, which began on April 22, 2025 and has become one of the largest in the state's history, burning across more than 15,000 acres and threatening numerous structures.

Water resources rebounded slightly with precipitation in May, now considered the wettest May in the state since

1990. July 2025 temperature and precipitation levels also stand out. It was ranked sixth-warmest July since 1895, with a statewide average over 78 degrees Fahrenheit, nearly three degrees above normal. Warmer air is known to hold more moisture, and July storms averaged slightly-above-normal rainfall. Unfortunately, devastating flash flooding across the state in July resulted in significant property damage and loss of life, with Union and Somerset counties being particularly hard hit.

Lower-than-normal precipitation levels returned in August 2025. In December, after deficient precipitation levels in 14 of the previous 16 months, the DEP issued a statewide water supply Drought Warning.

In the face of these events, New Jersey remains committed to advancing bold initiatives that strengthen our ability to address, adapt to, and plan for the impacts of climate change at both the state and local level.



COLLABORATIVE ACTIVITIES OF THE INTERAGENCY COUNCIL

This report, which can be accessed online on the Interagency Council's webpage (resiliencycouncil.nj.gov), focuses on the accomplishments that the Council has made towards a building a more resilient New Jersey in 2025.

Throughout the 2025 calendar year, member agencies of the Council continued to advance activities through the workgroups, described below. The Interagency Council held monthly meetings of senior staff representatives to review progress in advancing the recommendations of the Resilience Strategy and related publications and to learn from each other's resilience efforts. Key IAC accomplishments include the publication of the [New Jersey Statewide Flood Resilience Initiatives report](#) to coincide with New Jersey's first-ever annual [Flood Safety Week](#) (Aug. 25-29, 2025) and the 2025 update of the [New Jersey Extreme Heat Resilience Action Plan](#), released in November.

The Interagency Council also advanced special projects across three topical workgroups.

Outreach and Engagement Strategy Workgroup

Chaired by the New Jersey Department of Transportation (NJDOT), the Interagency Council's Outreach & Engagement Strategy workgroup was established to enhance and improve public understanding of the Council's work. One special project which is near completion is the development of [member agency profiles](#) designed to succinctly highlight how each member agency of the IAC is working to advance climate resilience in New Jersey.

The workgroup also hosted conversations designed to gather the climate resilience needs and wants of New Jerseyans. Agency representatives engaged attendees of the Governor's Conference on Housing and Economic Development (Sept. 16-17, 2025, Atlantic City) and the Association of New Jersey Environmental Commissions 2025 Environmental Congress (Oct. 10, 2025, New Brunswick). The workgroup also hosted virtual "Listening Sessions" during the NJDOT's quarterly meeting of county transportation engineers and during DEP's quarterly meeting of environmental coordinators from military installations across the state.



The feedback gathered in these diverse settings helps the Council better understand the top priorities articulated by resilience stakeholders and how it can best aid and assist municipal leaders in implementing local climate resilience projects. Over the last five years, the Council has received over 350 open-ended responses to a consistent set of questions, listed below:

- What would you like to see the Interagency Council do more/less?
- How can the Interagency Council best support municipal and local-level climate resilience action?
- What one action do you think the Interagency Council needs to take in the next five years to increase New Jersey's overall resilience to climate change?

The Interagency Council invites members of the public to lend their voice by completing the [Listening Session Questionnaire](#) available online.

Extreme Heat Coordinated Communications Workgroup

Chaired by DEP, the Extreme Heat Coordinated Communications Workgroup was launched in tandem with the publication of the [New Jersey Extreme Heat Resilience Action Plan](#) to respond to the clear need for consistent messaging and improved reach and efficiency across state government agencies issuing informational and educational materials regarding extreme heat.

From 2023-2024, the workgroup produced [Heat Hub NJ](#), a digital resource on all things related to extreme heat in New Jersey, and custom built the [Chill Out NJ](#) app, which generates a list of free or low-cost places New Jerseyans can visit to seek relief from the heat. Throughout 2025, the Heat Hub NJ platform has been continually improved and now includes [videos about the real world impacts of extreme heat in children and the elderly](#), an [Extreme Heat Preparedness Checklist](#), downloadable outreach materials designed to provide [key heat health information for people experiencing homelessness](#), and a [Heat Severity Map](#). The workgroup also continued its public education webinar series focused on climate-driven extreme heat to raise awareness among residents about this climate impact and its effects. [Four webinars held in 2025](#) provided insights from subject matter experts and professionals about how New Jersey can prepare for and respond to heat emergencies (April 2025), how to build heat-resilient infrastructure in New Jersey (May 2025), how extreme heat threatens environmental justice goals (June 2025) and how extreme heat can threaten New Jersey's natural world (July 2025). Last, but not least, members of this IAC workgroup led the development of an Extreme Heat Outreach Toolkit which pulled together over 40 infographics, flyers, and graphics for social media to be distributed during New Jersey's first-ever [Extreme Heat Awareness Week](#). This toolkit was disseminated across all 26 IAC member agencies—and, by extension, a network of regional and community-based organizations and social service providers who support the on-the-ground efforts of State agencies.

Vulnerability Assessment Workgroup

Co-chaired by the New Jersey Turnpike Authority and the Meadowlands Research and Restoration Institute (MRRI) at the New Jersey Sports and Exposition Authority, the Vulnerability Assessment Workgroup was formed to provide a platform for Interagency Council members to discuss how state agencies are conducting vulnerability assessments, increase interagency information sharing, and help standardize concepts related to vulnerability used in assessments and other resilience analyses. Seventeen Interagency Council member agencies participate in this workgroup, representing a majority of the Council. The workgroup has recently concluded a monthly peer exchange series, which featured 15 presenters from eight New Jersey state agencies and two external organizations to share their knowledge about how climate-related risks and vulnerabilities are analyzed in various settings. The series was designed to help agencies learn from one another about various approaches to developing and using vulnerability assessments and better understand how vulnerability assessment findings are used to drive climate resilience action.





PRIORITY 1: BUILD HEALTHY AND RESILIENT COMMUNITIES

NJPACT REAL (NJ Department of Environmental Protection)

On Aug. 5, 2024, the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) proposed the [Resilient Environments and Landscapes](#) (REAL) rules to address sea-level rise, climate change, current and future flood storage, flooding, stormwater management, and inundation concerns. A part of the [New Jersey Protecting Against Climate Threats \(NJ PACT\) initiative](#) directed by Governor Murphy's [Executive Order No. 100](#), the REAL rules amend, repeal, and add new requirements to the Coastal Zone Management Rules, Freshwater Wetlands Protection Act Rules, Flood Hazard Area Control Act Rules, and Stormwater Management Rules. On July 21, 2025, following a 90-day public comment period and in response to newly available scientific data and public comments received, the DEP proposed a Notice of Substantial Change. A public hearing and a 60-day public comment period accompanied the Notice of Substantial Change.

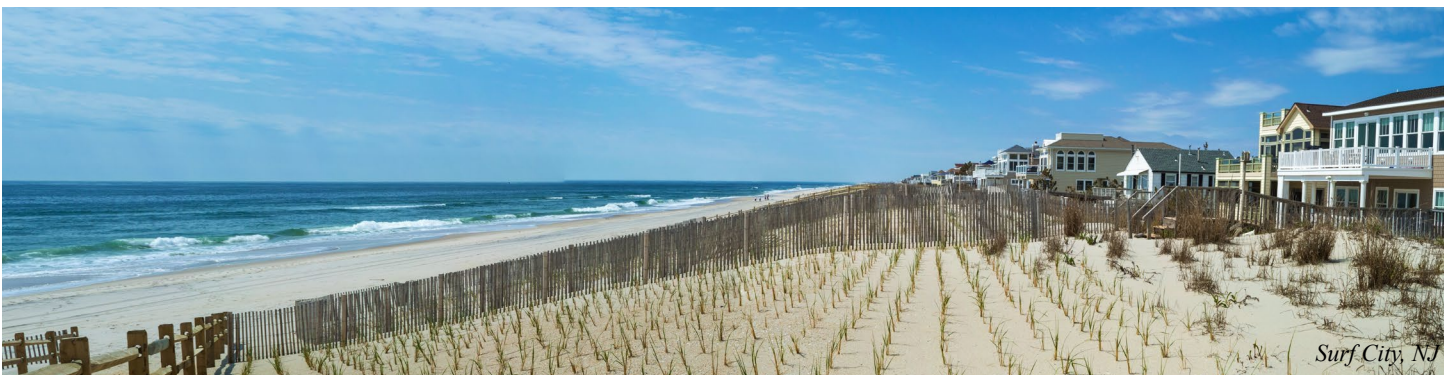
Responses to both public comment periods will be published with the adoption of the rules in the New Jersey Register. Adoption is anticipated for January 2026. With the rule adoption, New Jersey will become the first state to enact a comprehensive update of land use regulations that are focused on the impacts of a changing climate.

New Jersey State Development and Redevelopment Plan (NJ Department of State)

The updated [New Jersey State Development and Redevelopment Plan](#) (State Plan) was formally adopted on Dec. 17, 2025. The State Plan is a guidance document for planning that prescribes best practices related to land use, transportation, housing, environmental protection and enhancement, economic development, provision of public infrastructure, historic preservation, and more.

The final adoption took place a year after the State Planning Commission (SPC) released the Preliminary State Plan in December 2024. The release of the Preliminary State Plan initiated a process of “cross acceptance” by which every county or a designated negotiating entity provided comments and agreements and disagreements. Throughout the first half of 2025, the SPC’s Negotiating Committee reviewed feedback and held public meetings to discuss agreements and disagreements. During this time, the SPC also released the State Plan Impact Assessment—which evaluated the potential impacts of the State Plan on growth trends, redevelopment, infrastructure, and environmental indicators—and the Draft Infrastructure Needs Assessment—which provides information on present and prospective conditions, needs, and costs with regard to State, county, and municipal capital facilities, including water, sewerage, transportation, solid waste, drainage, flood protection, shore protection, and related capital facilities.

New goals related to climate change, equity, and environmental justice have been added as part of the 2050 Statewide Planning Goals, Strategies, and Priorities.



Municipal Plan Endorsement (NJ Department of State)

[Municipal Plan Endorsement](#) is a voluntary review process designed to ensure the coordination of state, county, and municipal planning efforts in achieving the goals and policies of the State Plan. Multiple state agencies, including DEP and the Department of Transportation (NJDOT), are engaged in Plan Endorsement. In 2025, the State Planning Commission granted Plan Endorsement to three municipalities: the Town of Newton, the Borough of Seaside Heights, and the Town of Dover. All three municipalities are required to develop and adopt a [climate change-related hazard vulnerability assessment](#) (CCRHVA) within the first half of their endorsement period. Through the CCRHVA, municipalities will analyze current and future threats associated with climate change-related natural hazards, including increased temperatures, drought, flooding, hurricanes, and sea-level rise, as required by New Jersey's Municipal Land Use Law.

Resilient NJ (NJ Department of Environmental Protection)

[Resilient NJ](#), New Jersey's flagship climate resilience planning assistance program, supports municipalities in developing community-driven resilience action plans to respond to the climate hazards, vulnerabilities, and risks affecting their community. Forty-three municipalities have participated in these regional and municipal Resilient NJ programs to date, with guidance and technical support from a team of consultants who work with participating towns to analyze current and future climate hazards and threats. These findings are used to develop a menu of strategic actions spanning a variety of costs, timeframes, and level of effort. The culmination of this process is a resilience action plan for the region or municipality.

Through partnerships launched in late 2024 and advanced throughout 2025 with Rutgers University and The College of New Jersey, 16 additional municipalities have been engaged to develop CCRHVAs (described above). Their efforts will also demonstrate a variety of approaches which other municipalities can model to inform their own assessment efforts.

In total, since 2020, Resilient NJ has supported 59 municipalities, and a new round of regional technical assistance projects is slated to kick off in early 2026.

Blue Acres (NJ Department of Environmental Protection)

For three decades, DEP's [Blue Acres](#) program has been a pillar of New Jersey's flood resilience activities, acquiring more than 1,200 flood-prone homes and converting them into open space that buffers communities from future storms. By combining disaster recovery and proactive risk reduction with land acquisition for flood storage, Blue Acres not only protects lives and property but also restores natural floodplains, reduces long-term costs, and strengthens the state's ability to adapt to rising seas and intensifying weather events.

In 2025, the program acquired 42 properties, with 51 additional buyout offers accepted and expected to close in 2026. A total of 35 homes were demolished and restored to



open space during the year. An additional 35 properties are currently pending full and final approval for federal buyout funding.

Of the over 150 voluntary buyout applications Blue Acres received in 2025, approximately half were in response to the devastation of a severe flooding event that took place on July 14, 2025 impacting communities in the Green Brook Upper Basin. Blue Acres responded quickly to homeowners that applied for a voluntary buyout, obtaining approval to proceed with buyouts for 18 of the most severely impacted homes through state funding.

In a landmark demonstration of New Jersey's leadership in climate resilience and flood mitigation, the Blue Acres program received its second-largest state funding allocation to date in October 2025: \$825,000 in administrative support and \$22,200,000 in dedicated buyout and conservation funding through the [Garden State Preservation Trust \(GSPT\)](#). The GSPT funding bills authorizing this allocation must be both approved by the Legislature and signed by the Governor. By leveraging revenue from the Corporate Business Tax, New Jersey continues to set a national example for how states can proactively fund voluntary buyouts, reduce flood risk, and restore natural floodplains without relying solely on federal dollars.

Housing Elevation Programs (NJ Department of Community Affairs)

The New Jersey Department of Community Affairs (DCA) has implemented home elevation programs in areas of significant flood or storm surge risk, thus mitigating the potential damage caused by future floods and storms. Elevation increases resilience to flood- and storm-related risks by placing residential living spaces above the base flood elevation as well as limiting the future construction of living space below the elevated living space. This work, funded primarily with federal resilience and disaster recovery dollars from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, began after Hurricane Sandy and continues to the present day. Thousands of properties have been elevated over the last 12.5 years since Hurricane Sandy, with many more advancing throughout 2025.

Smart Move Program (NJ Department of Community Affairs)

In October 2025, five housing development projects were selected for awards under the [Smart Move Program](#), a Hurricane Ida recovery initiative that funds the construction of quality, energy-efficient, resilient, and affordable single-family homes in lower-risk areas within or near disaster-impacted communities. The program is designed to provide safe housing options for families displaced by Hurricane Ida, including participants in State property buyout programs as well as first-time homebuyers. The Smart Move program will increase the State's resilience by funding new developments outside the 500-year floodplain as well as prioritizing the new developments for individuals participating in property buyouts of their high-risk housing, decreasing the total housing stock at risk during flood events.



Flooding in New Brunswick during Hurricane Ida

Continued Water Supply Drought Response (NJ Department of Environmental Protection)

New Jersey has been experiencing a persistent dry period which started in September 2024 and continued throughout 2025. Out of the 16 months between September 2024 and December 2025, 14 have had below average precipitation. October 2024 was the driest month ever recorded (with data going back to 1895), and the period between September 2024 through November 2024 stands out as the driest fall on record. DEP issued a statewide water supply Drought Watch on Oct. 17, 2024, followed by the issuance of a statewide water supply Drought Warning on Nov. 13, 2024, which was lifted in June 2025 after record rainfall in

May 2025 (with the exception of the Coastal South, which remained in a Drought Watch). However, after persistent below-average precipitation and deteriorating water supply conditions, another water supply Drought Watch was issued on Oct. 1, 2025, followed by another Drought Warning on Dec. 5, 2025. The Administrative Orders declaring the Drought Warnings direct DEP to take several actions, such as modifying passing flows and reservoir releases, to better manage the state's water resources. Additionally, the State called on the residents of New Jersey to voluntarily conserve water. Weekly updates are provided on the Water Supply Drought [website](#). As of the writing of this document, New Jersey remains in a statewide Drought Warning.



Wanaque Reservoir Drought

Climate Risk Assessment (Port Authority of New York and New Jersey)

In 2025, the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey (PANYNJ) completed facility-specific Climate Risk Assessments (CRAs) for its airports, finalizing the CRAs across its full portfolio of facility types, including ports, bridges, tunnels, and the Port Authority Trans-Hudson (PATH) system. The CRA is a detailed, asset-level evaluation that identifies key climate-related risks, develops targeted mitigation strategies, and prioritizes cost-effective measures for investment. These assessments inform the integration of high-priority risk reduction projects into the PANYNJ capital planning process. As a result, targeted mitigation strategies have been incorporated into the Port Authority's Capital Plan 2026-2035, strengthening resilience across the agency's infrastructure portfolio in preparation for a changing climate.

Climate Resilience Design Guidelines Update (Port Authority of New York and New Jersey)

To embed climate resilience into all relevant capital projects, the PANYNJ applies Climate Resilience Design

Guidelines—standards that exceed code requirements and national benchmarks. These guidelines take a risk-informed approach to strengthening the region's infrastructure for long-term climate challenges. In 2025, the PANYNJ marked the 10-year anniversary of the initial Guidelines. The PANYNJ is updating the Guidelines to incorporate the latest science on sea-level rise, stormwater flooding, extreme heat, and risk management.

Human Health and Extreme Ambient Temperatures Initiative (Port Authority of New York and New Jersey)

In 2025, the PANYNJ launched an initiative to assess and address the impacts of extreme heat on customers, employees, and critical infrastructure. The team gathered both quantitative and qualitative data to better understand the scope of the issue and evaluated a range of mitigation strategies. These findings will inform future strategies for heat resilience.



Resilience Program (NJ Turnpike Authority)

In 2025, the New Jersey Turnpike Authority (Turnpike Authority) continued to advance its agency-wide Resilience Program and hired its first full-time staff dedicated to managing the Turnpike Authority's climate resilience and sustainability initiatives. This includes, in part, executing a Resilience and Sustainability Communications Plan designed to build awareness across the Turnpike Authority on how climate impacts affect the agency and how considerations of climate-related hazards will be integrated into culture, operations, services, and asset management agency-wide. The Turnpike Authority's Resilience and Sustainability Program aims to integrate resilience into agency decision-making processes and provide guidance and criteria by which to adapt the Turnpike Authority's operations, systems, and assets to prepare for changing conditions and shocks.

Moreover, when adopting and publishing the five-year Strategic Plan in May 2025, resilience and sustainability were identified as core values of the Turnpike Authority. The Strategic Plan's outward commitment to resilience will be operationalized through the Resilience Program.

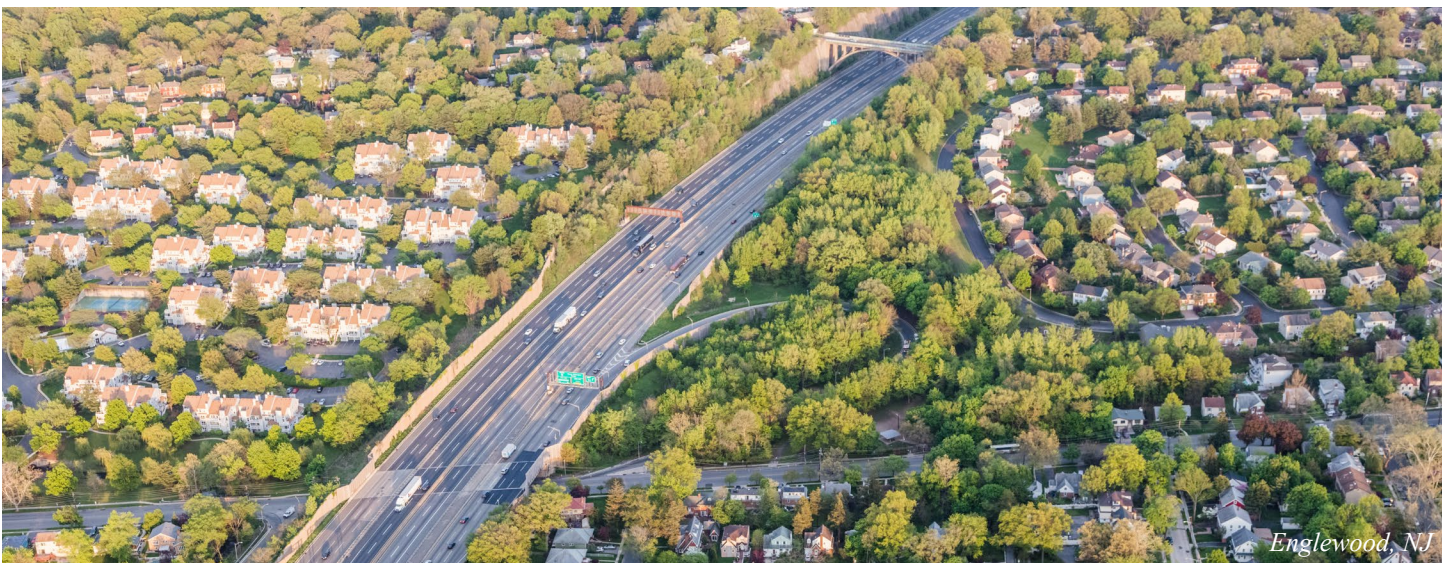
Flood Exposure (FLEX) Visualization Tool (NJ Turnpike Authority)

The Turnpike Authority continued to enhance and utilize its Flood Exposure (FLEX) Visualization tool throughout 2025. First developed in 2024, the FLEX tool is used to identify potential flood exposure and maximum flood depths exclusive to individual Turnpike Authority assets. The tool supports baseline screening efforts to help inform project design and prioritization by accounting for current and future inland and coastal flooding, allowing the Turnpike Authority to incorporate climate impacts into asset management.

Resilience Projects (NJ Turnpike Authority)

The Turnpike Authority is building upon the insights from the five locations examined in pilot studies completed in 2024 to develop a methodology for evaluating asset vulnerability to extreme rainfall conditions. This framework and approach have been applied to planning considerations in 2025 and beyond.

In 2025, the Turnpike Authority completed a flood mitigation project in the northeast section of the New Jersey Turnpike and began preliminary design for two additional flood mitigation projects along the New Jersey Turnpike. These projects employ a variety of engineering solutions to enhance flood resilience and reduce weather-related disruptions for the motoring public.



Resilience Management System (NJ Department of Transportation)

In 2025, the New Jersey Department of Transportation (NJDOT) screened 85 roadway segments and bridges for potential flood risk as part of the Department's internal Resilience Management System (RMS) to integrate flooding considerations into state, county, and regional planning documents and initiatives to help guide actions by the agency. If possible, depending on funding and project limitations and permit requirements, flood mitigation measures may be incorporated into the project.

Mapping NJDOT's Drainage Infrastructure (NJ Department of Transportation)

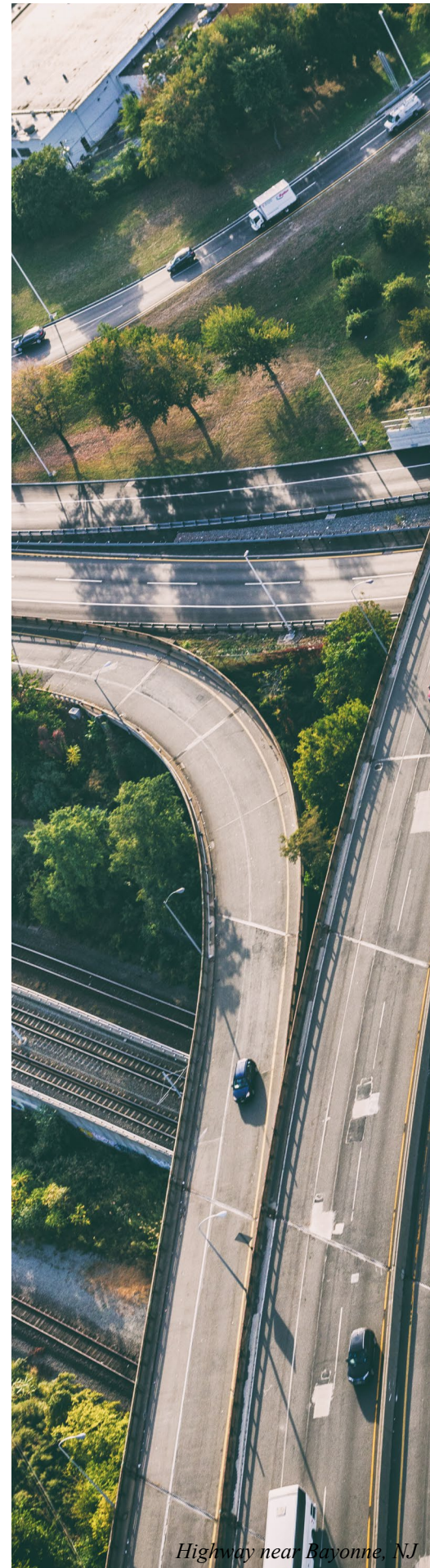
Throughout 2025, NJDOT has advanced its efforts to inventory its drainage infrastructure across the state. Data, such as asset location and condition, are being compiled into a database and mapped as part of a long-term data collection effort. Once compiled, this data will allow NJDOT to prioritize investment and improvements on those roads most impacted by high traffic.

Highway Bridge Multi-Hazard Design Guidelines (NJ Department of Transportation)

NJDOT is conducting research to develop guidelines to provide comprehensive and integrated recommendations for the design, assessment, and retrofitting of highway bridges in New Jersey exposed to multiple hazards. These hazards include natural events, such as earthquakes, floods, hurricanes, scour, and wind, and man-made threats, such as vessel collisions, vehicle collisions, blast, and fire. By consolidating multi-hazard design criteria into a single framework, this research offers designers, engineers, and decision-makers a unified reference to ensure that New Jersey's bridges are robust, adaptable, and prepared for both current and future challenges.

Improvements to Pavement Management System/New Pavement Types (NJ Department of Transportation)

As part of their commitments in New Jersey Extreme Heat Resilience Action Plan (see page 07), NJDOT advanced improvements to the agency's internal Pavement Management System to integrate findings from a report by Rowan University on how to increase the quality and duration of pavement projects. As the incidence of extreme heat events increase in New Jersey, the impacts of chronically higher temperatures require innovative mitigation strategies. Currently, high-temperature events and rapid temperature fluctuations are being managed at the project level through crack-sealing treatments, scheduled preservation treatments, and timely rehabilitation to address block cracking. NJDOT is also designing and constructing high-performance mixes, such as interlayers and polymer-modified binders (e.g., stone matrix asphalt), to enhance pavement resilience against future temperature fluctuations.



Extreme Heat Employee Development and Education (NJ Department of Transportation)

NJDOT employees often operate outdoors and, as such, are vulnerable to extreme heat and its side effects. To mitigate these risks to personnel, the agency has invested in recurring programs to keep employees who work in these conditions aware of extreme heat risks and educate them on personal mitigation strategies to ensure safety. In 2025, several training sessions were presented to operations crew and other outdoor personnel about heat illness prevention.

REACH Partnership for Flood-related Technical Assistance (NJ Office of Emergency Management)

New Jersey Office of Emergency Management (OEM)'s Hazard Mitigation Unit collaborates with the New Jersey Institute of Technology (NJIT) [REACH \(Resilience Excellence and Capacity Hub\) program](#) to advance state and local government efforts in building resilience against disasters, with a particular focus on socially vulnerable and overburdened communities. In 2025, this effort empowered the Town of Dover, the City of Patterson, and the City of Plainfield with knowledge, resources, and flood-related technical assistance—including direct engineering technical support, mapping, and modeling—to help the municipalities advance implementation of sustainable development and disaster mitigation strategies.



Community Assistance Visits (NJ Department of Environmental Protection)

Throughout 2025, DEP's Community Assistance Program continued to support local officials seeking to effectively manage their floodplains in compliance with the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). With grant funding from FEMA, during Community Assistance Visits (CAVs) and Community Assistance Contacts (CACs), DEP staff act as a liaison between FEMA and local officials to conduct in-person and virtual reviews of community floodplain management programs. In 2025, the DEP initiated 82 new CAVs/CACs and closed out 75 CAVs/CACs from previous years. CAVs/CACs are closed out once communities demonstrate proper floodplain management to ensure community compliance with NFIP requirements. These programs are essential for assisting communities in enhancing their community resilience to flood risks and ensuring affordable flood insurance remains.

Technical Resources for Climate Resilience in the Highlands Region (NJ Highlands Council)

The Highlands Council is providing technical resources to support climate resilience activities throughout the region. In May 2025, the Highlands Council launched an [updated website](#) featuring a dedicated page on climate resilience. This new section provides municipalities with guidance on incorporating climate adaptation and environmental sustainability into their master plans. It also includes a link to a model scope of work that Highlands municipalities can use when applying for Highlands Council grant funding to support climate adaptation planning. Several projects have already received grant approvals, with additional applications anticipated in 2026.

Additionally, in October 2025, the Highlands Council awarded funding for the development of a Climate Change Technical Report for the Highlands region. This report will compile and analyze existing climate data and projections relevant to the region, evaluate potential climate impacts on key natural and built resources, and recommend adaptation and resilience strategies. The findings will inform future amendments to the Highlands Regional Master Plan, helping guide long-term regional resilience planning.

2025 Update to NJ Extreme Heat Resilience Action Plan (Interagency Council on Climate Resilience)

Following the release of the [New Jersey Extreme Heat Resilience Action Plan](#) (Extreme Heat RAP) on July 19, 2024, the Interagency Council continued to build on the plan's foundation and released an update in November 2025 that included actions from new IAC member agencies: the Department of Children and Families, the Department of Corrections, the Department of Education, and the Department of Labor and Workforce Development. With the addition of these four agencies, the Extreme Heat RAP now includes over 140 actions, reflecting an expanded and more comprehensive statewide effort.

Weatherization Assistance Program (NJ Department of Community Affairs)

Managed by DCA, the 2025 Weatherization Assistance Program leverages federal Low Income Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) funding from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and the U.S. Department of Energy to assist elderly, handicapped, and low-income persons under 200% of the federal poverty guidelines in weatherizing their homes, improving their heating system efficiency, and conserving energy. Through 2024, the Weatherization Assistance Program helped 1,395 housing units, which included 3,499 total occupants, and the program continues this work in the 2025 application cycle. The program helps communities become more resilient to extreme heat and cold events by ensuring dwellings are able to retain heat during winter months and remain cool during the summer months, reducing energy costs to residents and drain on the local energy grid. Weatherization Assistance Program funds are administered in partnership with a network of [17 non-profit organizations](#) that serve as sub-grantees tasked with providing weatherization services to their respective communities at the local level.

Green Workforce Training Grants (NJ Economic Development Authority)

Through the [Green Workforce Training Grant Challenge](#), the New Jersey Economic Development Authority (NJEDA) awarded grants to aid implementation of innovative workforce training and skills programs focused on strengthening and diversifying New Jersey's green economy talent pipeline, especially in overburdened communities. In 2025, NJEDA approved four awards totaling \$4,349,987 for training individuals in the following careers: Solar Technician, NJ Clean Energy Program Installers, Weatherization and Energy Auditors, Weatherization and HVAC, Green Stormwater Infrastructure Occupations, and Clean Transportation/Electric Vehicle Occupations. By building a workforce ready to accelerate deployment of weatherization and stormwater infrastructure projects, the NJEDA is helping improve community resilience by strengthening New Jersey's building stock (residential and commercial buildings as well as assets like schools and hospitals) and critical infrastructure to withstand extreme temperatures and using proven nature-based interventions to mitigate and manage stormwater runoff.

Urban Heat Island Mitigation Grant Program (NJ Board of Public Utilities)

On July 16, 2025, the New Jersey Board of Public Utilities (NJBPUB) [announced](#) the launch of the [Urban Heat Island \(UHI\) Mitigation Grant Program](#). The UHI Mitigation Grant Program is designed to help New Jersey's most vulnerable communities combat extreme heat and rising energy costs by providing funding for overburdened municipalities and community-based organizations implementing cooling tactics within a community. The program's three-tiered funding levels include: grants of up to \$1 million for Comprehensive Public Space UHI Interventions (i.e., major community revitalization projects that focus on the improvement of public spaces and parks development using a whole neighborhood approach); grants of up to \$500,000 for Cooling the Built Environment (i.e., projects focusing on public cooling centers, resilience hubs, and other cooling and energy efficiency interventions in public buildings); and up to \$50,000 for Urban Microclimate Interventions (i.e., small-scale, localized community projects identified by CBOs that mitigate the UHI effect).

Community Energy Plan Grants (Board of Public Utilities)

NJBPU enables local communities to solve their own unique energy challenges through the [Community Energy Plan Grants \(CEPG\) Program](#). The CEPG program's fourth year started on June 9, 2025, and it continues to empower local communities to create community energy plans that align with [New Jersey's Energy Master Plan](#). Awards of up to \$25,000 can be used to create localized community energy plans to combat climate change, with a specific focus on equitable access, energy resilience, renewable energy, and energy efficiency.

Greenbrook Upper Basin (NJ Department of Environmental Protection)

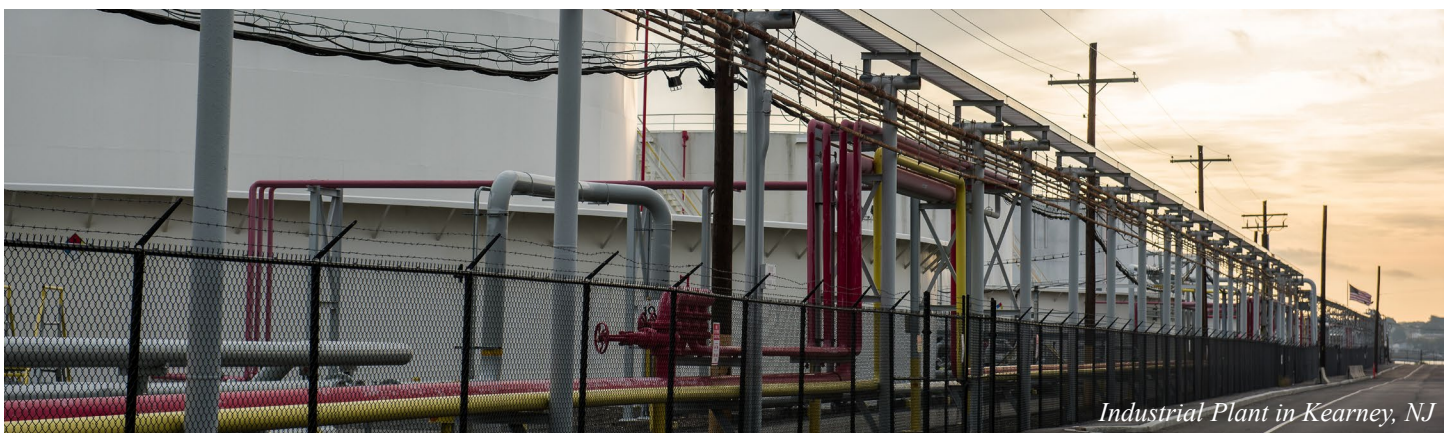
On July 14, 2025, communities in the Green Brook Upper Basin faced a severe flooding event that resulted in the tragic loss of two lives and significant property damage. DEP-led field investigations and community engagement subsequent to the July 14 storm have shown that flood elevations in some locations were similar to those experienced during Hurricane Ida in 2021. As such, DEP staff have continued to support efforts to integrate recent data into the ongoing General Reevaluation Report study by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

Embedding Resilience Throughout Agency Planning and Standard Operating Procedures (NJ TRANSIT)

Staff across NJ TRANSIT (NJT) have been working throughout 2025 to embed resilience into planning and standard operating procedures (SOPs) across the agency. In September, NJT launched the development of a Resilience Design Manual, which will incorporate resilience considerations into capital building and infrastructure projects. The manual, expected to be finalized by the end of June 2026, will complement the NJT Design Standards and Sustainable Design Manual, which is being developed simultaneously to support multiple teams throughout the capital planning and design process.

In October, NJT launched the first edition of its Climate Vulnerability Screening SOP, an initial screening tool within the agency's capital planning process that identifies climate vulnerabilities along NJT's network and signals locations where further investigation is advised when designing a capital project. This framework integrates climate resilience considerations into early-stage planning, protecting the long-term resilience of NJT's assets and preventing inefficient investments. The agency plans to launch a second edition in 2026, which will expand the SOP's scope to cover extreme heat and wind event hazards.

Lastly, an SOP was developed to clarify the roles and responsibilities across NJT departments involved in the process of identifying damages to NJT-owned facilities, allocating appropriate funding, and conducting repairs to address damages to facilities. The development of the SOP is supplemented with an ongoing effort to collect and compile data related to damage assessments from prior storms.



Climate Vulnerability Dashboard (NJ TRANSIT)

Since 2023, NJT has been making continual improvements to an internal climate dashboard, enhancing its functionality as a decision-making tool. In 2025, the dashboard was updated to include additional geospatial and environmental data providing additional context about vulnerabilities and environmental considerations to support resilience-related capital planning initiatives across NJT’s service area.

Resilience Capital Project Concepts (NJ TRANSIT)

In the third quarter of 2025, NJT staff leveraged findings from the agency’s 2024 Flood Risk Calculator Report alongside data from its improved Climate Vulnerability Dashboard to create concepts for nine new capital resilience projects meant to fortify the system from extreme weather events and long-term climate change. These capital project concepts, once approved by internal stakeholders, will be added to the agency’s forthcoming capital plan.

Flood Early Warning System (NJ TRANSIT)

Through 2025, NJT upgraded its existing Flood Early Warning System (FEWS) for Hoboken Terminal and began development of a new FEWS for the Oradell Bus Garage. An effective FEWS proactively alerts transportation authorities and emergency responders to incoming flood events, allowing for informed decision-making regarding facility operations, resource deployment, and evacuation planning.

South Jersey Vulnerability Assessment (NJ TRANSIT)

In late 2025, NJT launched its South Jersey Vulnerability Assessment to assess climate hazard vulnerabilities within the South Service Region and develop mitigation concepts to address identified risks. The project will take place throughout 2026 and will identify extreme weather and climate change impact risks and vulnerabilities along the rail alignments, capital infrastructure, and bus facilities; establish baseline conditions by collecting asset and infrastructure resilience data; and identify and propose asset-specific mitigation strategies.

Active and Practical Rail Resilience Strategy Report (NJ TRANSIT)

As a member of the International Association of Public Transport (UITP, or Union Internationale des Transports Publics in French) Regional and Suburban Rail Committee, NJT is supporting the creation of a new report, “Developing an Active and Practical Rail Resilience Strategy.” This report aims to update UITP’s 2017 guidance on urban rail, climate change and resilience and serve as a complement to the [2024 Climate Adaptation Framework](#). Through this effort, NJT staff have been compiling global best practices and case studies relating to resilience-oriented public transit strategy development, operational practices, and infrastructure investments in urban rail systems.



School Facility Project Support (NJ Department of Education and Schools Development Authority)

In September 2023, in conjunction with the Schools Development Authority, the New Jersey Department of Education (DOE) [announced](#) the approval of nearly \$450 million in school construction funds to address critical facilities needs in 261 school districts throughout the state. The grant prioritized school facilities projects that addressed

the most critical operational building needs, including health and safety issues. Specific top priority areas included essential building systems upgrades (repair or replacement of structural components, mechanical/heating and cooling, electrical, and plumbing systems); building skin (repair of roof, windows, masonry, etc.); and building code issues. The funding provided numerous high-priority upgrades, including 320 HVAC systems, 79 boilers or water heaters, and 211 roofs. School district projects supported by these funds have continued through 2025.





PRIORITY 2: STRENGTHEN THE RESILIENCE OF NJ'S ECOSYSTEMS

Double Trouble State Park Natural Resources Stewardship Plan (NJ Department of Environmental Protection)

In 2025, the New Jersey Forest Service completed implementation of the [Double Trouble State Park Natural Resources Stewardship Plan](#), a comprehensive land management plan spanning a 10-year cycle and 2,906 acres of forest managed. The plan included management activities that aimed to conserve biodiversity, enhance forest health and resilience, protect soil and water resources, and reduce wildfire risk while sustainably managing forest resources to support recreational opportunities for current and future generations.

Allen and Oswego Road Fire Mitigation and Habitat Restoration Project (NJ Department of Environmental Protection)

In 2025, the New Jersey Forest Service and Forest Fire Service completed the multi-year Allen and Oswego Road Fire Mitigation and Habitat Restoration Project in Bass River State Forest. Through the creation of a firebreak, thinning of 1,305 acres of highly flammable ladder fuel forest, and maintenance of 13 miles of roads, the project helps reduce the risk and severity of wildfires, support healthier forest and historic habitat, and create safer access for firefighting. In the long term, these actions will make the forest more resilient to climate change, southern pine beetle outbreaks, and other environmental stressors.

Protecting Drinking Water Sources from Harmful Algal Blooms (NJ Department of Environmental Protection)

More frequent extreme precipitation events increase runoff carrying excess sediment, nutrients, and contaminants into New Jersey's streams. Combined with increased temperatures and drier conditions, this leads to increased potential for rapid and excessive growth of harmful algal blooms (HABs). The Cyanobacterial Harmful Algal Bloom Freshwater Recreational Response Strategy, updated in February 2022, provides a unified statewide approach to protect the public from risk associated with these toxins in recreational waters and sources of drinking water. Each year, the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) Water Resource Management evaluates the Strategy guidance and makes revisions if necessary to ensure it remains current with the best-available science. Throughout 2025, DEP monitored and assessed the conditions of sources of drinking water as well as freshwater lakes, rivers, and streams with potential public access for recreational use, including licensed bathing beaches.

DEP is actively researching HABs that have been increasing in occurrence across the state. In a U.S. Environmental Protection Agency funded partnership with George Mason and Rutgers universities that concluded in February 2025, researchers investigated the presence and toxicity of HABs in salt marsh ponds located within the Tuckerton peninsula, revealing the presence and dominance of five algal toxins in all study ponds. Understanding the relationships between HAB development and toxin release to sea-level rise and climate change will need further investigation.



Round Valley, NJ

Pinelands Conservation Fund Land Acquisition Grants (NJ Pinelands Commission)

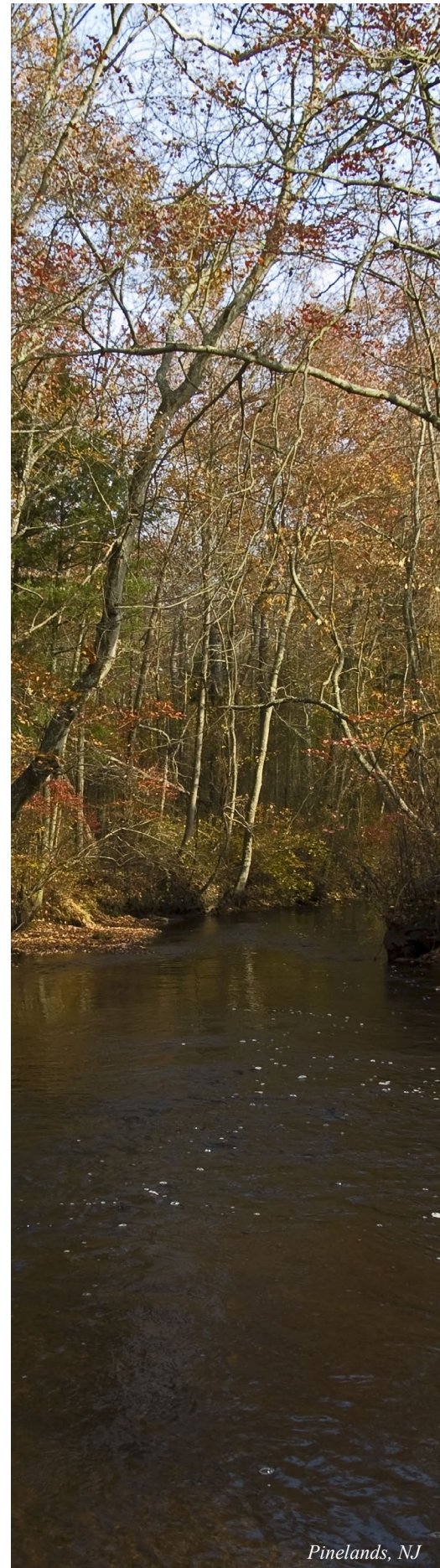
In May 2025, the New Jersey Pinelands Commission opened a new funding round under the [Pinelands Conservation Fund \(PCF\)](#), making \$3 million available for land acquisition projects that permanently protect critical Pinelands resources. The funding is prioritized for properties located within designated acquisition areas, and proposals are evaluated based on factors such as the presence of endangered or threatened species habitat, connectivity to existing preserved lands, proximity to overburdened communities, and the availability of strong matching contributions. In October 2025, the Commission awarded the full \$3 million to the New Jersey Conservation Foundation for a proposed acquisition in the Pinelands Area of Burlington County.

Black Run Watershed Headwaters Forest Area Designation (NJ Pinelands Commission)

In October 2025, the Pinelands Commission formally adopted an amendment to the Comprehensive Management Plan redesignating approximately 2,440 acres of the Black Run watershed in Evesham Township, Burlington County from a Pinelands Rural Development Area to a Pinelands Forest Area. The redesignation represents a significant advancement in climate resilience planning, ensuring long-term protection of critical forested watersheds that buffer against flooding, maintain aquifer recharge, and enhance landscape connectivity in the face of accelerating climate impacts across southern New Jersey.

Highlands Sustainable Agriculture Grants Program (NJ Highlands Council)

In 2025, the Highlands Council approved \$280,000 in its second year of funding through the Highlands Sustainable Agriculture Grant Program. This program supports sustainable farming practices, including the expansion of organic and regenerative agriculture within the Highlands region. As climate change places increasing pressure on food production, strengthening local and regional agriculture is critical to maintaining a reliable food supply. The program also promotes the distribution of sustainably grown produce to local communities, increasing access to fresh, locally grown food while supporting job growth in the agricultural sector. To date, nearly \$800,000 has been awarded to six organizations, helping ensure food production in the Highlands remains local, reliable, and resilient. Given the Highlands' role as both a primary drinking-water source and a region capable of significant food production near New Jersey's largest population centers, these investments strengthen agricultural resources and food supply systems while supporting the long-term resilience of the Highlands' drinking-water supply.



Pinelands, NJ

Nature-Based Solutions Reference Guide (multiple agencies)

In 2025, several State agencies, including DEP, the New Jersey Infrastructure Bank (I-Bank), and the New Jersey Office of Emergency Management (NJOEM), participated in the steering committee for the [New Jersey Nature-Based Solutions: Planning, Implementation, and Monitoring Reference Guide](#) alongside federal agency representatives from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The Reference Guide, prepared as a collaborative effort between The Nature Conservancy, the State of New Jersey and the New Jersey Climate Change Resource Center at Rutgers University, offers a guide to navigating the world of nature-based solution projects designed to help mitigate natural hazards.

Climate-Smart Agriculture Conservation and Adaptation (NJ Department of Agriculture)

In 2025, the NJ Department of Agriculture (NJDA) advanced statewide efforts to address climate-related agricultural challenges. NJDA supported DEP in developing the [Comprehensive Climate Action Plan](#) and updating the Scientific Report on Climate Change (see page 03). These publications outline NJDA's ongoing efforts to support climate mitigation and adaptation strategies within the agricultural sector.

Over the past year, NJDA expanded climate-smart practices across conservation programs and leveraged funding to boost long-term resilience in key priorities areas: strengthening production systems, managing climate risks, enhancing soil carbon sequestration, and improving nutrient efficiency.

Two notable achievements are the launch of the NJDA's [Nutrient Assistance Management Grant](#) and the development of [NJ ManureLink](#). The Nutrient Assistance Management Grant pilots a cost-share program providing awards of up to \$25,000. In its first year the program helped four producers

purchase manure spreaders, and developed community equipment-sharing initiatives and peer-to-peer technical outreach. Also in 2025, NJDA completed a two-year U.S. Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service [Conservation Innovation Grant](#) project supporting the development of NJ ManureLink, an online exchange platform connecting producers and compost users. Launched in 2024 in partnership with Rutgers University and promoted through outreach and training sessions delivered in partnership with the New Jersey Composting Council, the platform now has more than 217 registered users.

Beyond maximizing soil productivity and addressing water quality concerns due to excess nutrient runoff, these efforts improve climate resilience by creating healthier soils that are better able to withstand climate-related threats such as erosion, drought, and extreme precipitation.

Agricultural Preservation and Land Stewardship (NJ Department of Agriculture)

The State Agriculture Development Committee (SADC), which administers the [New Jersey Farmland Preservation Program](#), continues to strengthen conservation outcomes on preserved farmland through the Soil and Water Conservation Cost-Share Program. In 2025, the SADC [proposed amendments](#) to increase available conservation grant funding using a revised formula that improves the accessibility of this funding program, particularly for small farms, and authorize increased cost-share funding for the development of conservation plans, a critical requirement for participation in both state and federal conservation programs.

On April 7, 2025, the SADC adopted the Statewide Farmland Preservation Formula, which provides landowners with an alternative valuation method when preserving their farms through a formula that captures land value beyond traditional market indicators by incorporating agricultural productivity and natural resource characteristics, offering a more comprehensive assessment of easement values.

Community Forest Management Plan Guidelines and Grants (NJ Department of Environmental Protection)

In 2025, the NJ Urban and Community Forestry program rolled out new Community Forest Management Plan (CFMP) Guidelines to support local governments in their CFMP development efforts. The guidelines include outreach and data communication through in-person seminars, webinars, and other methods. These new guidelines require a tree inventory; updated mapping; and descriptions of environmental benefits provided by the tree canopy, such as shade provision and reduction of urban heat island effects, carbon sequestration, neighborhood beautification, increased property values, and stormwater management.

Currently, 250 New Jersey communities have CFMPs. To support them in the development of these plans and the tree inventories, a Green Communities grant program is available to help municipalities statewide better understand their tree canopy and make better informed management decisions, with priority given to overburdened communities. In 2025, two Green Communities grants closed, 11 grants to develop tree inventories were finalized, and 102 remain in progress.

Trees for Schools Program Round 2 (NJ Department of Environmental Protection)

In 2025, the Trees for Schools program—a joint effort of DEP and Sustainable Jersey at The College of New Jersey—awarded \$4.5 million in grants to 40 public

schools, colleges, and universities who will use these funds to plant trees on campuses across the state. Funding was prioritized for municipalities that are most impacted by lack of tree cover and a high percentage of impervious surface. A total of 4,500 trees will be planted in the spring of 2026 and will provide a multitude of benefits, including helping to sequester carbon, mitigating urban heat island impacts, and assisting in stormwater management. This is the second round of the grant program; nearly 3,000 trees were planted at 33 school campuses following the first round of funding awards in 2023.

Our Water is Worth It Campaign (NJ Department of Environmental Protection)

DEP launched the [*Our Water's Worth It*](#) campaign in 2024 to raise awareness about the fundamental importance of water supplies, the threats they face, and the steps DEP is taking to ensure all New Jerseyans have access to clean drinking water and healthy, resilient waterways. In 2025, DEP honored two organizations through the Our Water's Worth It campaign. The Camden County Municipal Utilities Authority was [recognized](#) for its efforts to reduce combined sewer discharges and localized flooding through sewerage and green infrastructure improvements, as well as its public education and job training partnership efforts. The Watershed Institute was also [awarded](#) for improving regional stormwater management, highlighting the critical role that strong planning and infrastructure play in making communities more resilient to intensifying climate impacts, including heavier precipitation and more frequent, severe storms.



3



PRIORITY 3: PROMOTE COORDINATED GOVERNANCE



Legal Actions on Resilience Funding (NJ Department of Law and Public Safety)

Throughout 2025, New Jersey’s Attorney General has filed—and prevailed in—a number of lawsuits challenging the federal government’s unlawful attempts to terminate or constrain critical funding related to resilience programs for New Jersey.

In July 2025, the Attorney General joined a coalition of 20 states suing to enjoin the Federal Emergency Management Agency’s (FEMA) sudden termination of the Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) program, winning a preliminary injunction enjoining the government from spending the funds allocated to BRIC for any non-BRIC purpose until the court is able to render a final judgment.

The Attorney General also joined a multistate coalition that successfully challenged FEMA’s imposition of unlawful immigration-based conditions on a host of grant programs, including some programs that address disaster relief and disaster risk mitigation, including FEMA Flood Mitigation Assistance Grants (which fund measures to reduce or eliminate the risk of repetitive flood damage) and the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (which funds the development and implementation of hazard mitigation plans and projects), among others. The states won summary judgment on Sept. 24, 2025, requiring FEMA to remove the unlawful immigration conditions from these critical grants.



PRIORITY 4: INVEST IN INFORMATION AND INCREASE PUBLIC UNDERSTANDING

Current Science on Sea-Level Rise and Coastal Storms in New Jersey (NJ Department of Environmental Protection)

In 2025, Rutgers University convened a panel of scientists in a Science and Technical Advisory Panel (STAP) on behalf of the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) to identify and evaluate the latest science on sea-level rise projections and coastal storms to inform coastal decision-making. The STAP is composed of 17 nationally and internationally recognized experts in climate science, oceanography, meteorology, coastal engineering, and public policy and is tasked with identifying, evaluating, and summarizing the most current science on sea-level rise and changing coastal storms. The STAP was first convened in 2016 and re-convened in 2019 and 2025 to update its findings based on new climate science and data. The recently released report, entitled [New Jersey's Rising Seas and Changing Coastal Storms](#), builds on previous STAP reports from 2016 and 2019, and provides a Summary and Frequently Asked Questions companion document.

Climate Change Facts Campaign (NJ Department of Environmental Protection)

DEP launched an outreach campaign to inform the public about ways in which climate change results in lived impacts

to New Jersey residents, businesses, and visitors. The three featured topics in the 2025 campaign drew attention and focus to online resources for New Jerseyans to help “Know Your Flood Risk”, be “Wildfire SMART”, and seek rest and shade during periods of extreme heat.

The campaign included social media ads, billboards, and radio public service announcements in both English and Spanish and resulted in increased public awareness and understanding of DEP’s climate change and resilience efforts.

New Jersey Statewide Flood Resilience Initiatives Report (NJ Interagency Council on Climate Resilience)

The Interagency Council on Climate Resilience (IAC) collaborated to develop the [New Jersey Statewide Flood Resilience Initiatives report](#) in August 2025, in conjunction with New Jersey’s first-ever Flood Safety Week (see page 06). With a dense population, extensive coastline, and critical infrastructure positioned along state waterways, New Jersey’s environment, economy, communities, and infrastructure all face heightened vulnerability to the impacts of flooding. This report highlights programs and initiatives undertaken by IAC member agencies to reduce the state’s risk of damage and destruction from floods.



Images from Climate Change Facts Campaign

Climate Change Education Grants (NJ Department of Education)

The Department of Education (DOE) makes grants available to school districts and institutions of higher education to advance K-12 climate change education throughout New Jersey. Grants to school districts support development and implementation of climate change curricular units that culminate with student-led community resilience projects. Student-led projects can range from efforts to educate community members about climate change impacts—such as extreme heat—to supporting community efforts focused on mitigating flooding and coastal erosion. Grants to institutions of higher education support centers for free professional development, technical assistance, and networking opportunities to support school districts in their climate change education efforts.

Climate Change Resource Library for New Jersey (NJ Department of Education, NJ Department of Environmental Protection, Office of the Governor)

In coordination with the First Lady's Office and DOE, the DEP Office of Environmental Education developed a [Climate Change Resource Library for New Jersey Educators](#). The library, which is updated on an ongoing basis to reflect the best-available climate science, includes curated resources from environmental nonprofit organizations, government agencies, and other subject-matter experts. These materials support K–5 educators by providing climate change resources and lesson plans that can be integrated into existing required units across subject areas, including math, language arts, social studies, science, art, physical education, and others.

Climate Change & Health Resources Webpage (NJ Department of Health)

The New Jersey Department of Health (DOH) maintains an [online resource page](#) to inform public health professionals, local health departments, schools and youth camps, and the public about the health impacts of climate change. With regular updates throughout the year, the page offers tools, resources, and educational materials in English and Spanish

on topics such as heat-related illness (including a focus on workers), air quality impacts from wildfires, carbon monoxide poisoning, post-storm tree damage safety, and other related topics.

Public Health Dashboards for Decision-Making (NJ Department of Health)

Public health surveillance and early warning systems are important for managing the health risks of climate change from vector-borne diseases and heat-related illness, the primary climate change-related health risks in New Jersey. DOH has developed a [near real-time dashboard](#) to track cases of tick- and mosquito-borne diseases, such as Lyme disease and West Nile virus, and vector-related emergency department visits, which are expected to increase as New Jersey warms. This surveillance, updated regularly throughout 2025, is designed to help health officials understand the spread of vector-borne disease. In addition to helping the public to be informed about the risks of vector-borne diseases in their area, the dashboard may also help officials identify the impacts of a changing climate on patterns of known diseases as well as detect the emergence of new diseases. In 2025, DOH staff implemented new geospatial and temporal analyses of mosquito-borne diseases in order to enhance surveillance capabilities and better target mosquito prevention and local public health activities.

Complementing these vector-borne disease tools, DOH also maintains a [heat-related illness \(HRI\) dashboard](#) through the [Environmental Public Health Tracking Project](#). Heat-related illness occurs when the body is unable to maintain a normal temperature, resulting in serious conditions such as heat exhaustion or life-threatening heat stroke. The dashboard, updated weekly May through September and more frequently during significant heatwaves, offers New Jerseyans a comprehensive, statewide view of emergency department visits, hospitalizations, deaths, and illnesses associated with heat exposure.

Climate and Behavioral Health Training (NJ Department of Human Services)

The New Jersey Department of Human Services (DHS) continues to provide training sessions for mental health providers and other professionals on the behavioral health consequences of climate change. In 2025, the DHS Division of Mental Health & Addiction Services presented this topic at the annual Mental Health Climate Change Alliance Summit. The Department has also taken steps to ensure that crisis counseling programs are climate-informed and that conversations around disaster mental health take into consideration the effects of climate change and extreme heat.

Next Generation Warning System (NJ Office of Emergency Management)

In 2025, the New Jersey Office of Emergency Management (OEM) applied for and received a grant from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)'s [Next Generation Warning System Grant Program](#). Through this grant, NJOEM will improve the timely delivery of public safety information and alerts. Project components include the enhancement of warning capabilities, improved resilience of emergency alert and warning systems to disseminate

emergency alerts and warnings across existing and new distribution pathways (i.e., streaming services, sirens, giant-voice systems, satellites, and internet connected devices), and other solutions.

Extreme Heat Awareness Week (NJ Interagency Council on Climate Resilience)

New Jersey hosted its first [Extreme Heat Awareness Week](#) from May 26-30, 2025 equipping the public with information and tools to cope with climate-driven extreme heat, particularly its health impacts. At the outset of Extreme Heat Awareness Week, DEP launched a comprehensive outreach campaign including branding, social media, video, and website design. The DEP homepage was updated to raise awareness about extreme heat, highlight the week's announcements, and encourage audiences to visit [Heat Hub NJ](#) for information on responding to heat waves. These materials were shared for use by all member agencies of the IAC. The IAC's Extreme Heat Coordinated Communications workgroup developed an infographic illustrating the signs of heat exhaustion as well as two original videos demonstrating the impacts of extreme heat on older adults and children, featuring examples heat resilience interventions led by Groundworks Elizabeth. The majority of the outreach materials were provided with Spanish subtitles and/or translations.



Extreme Heat Awareness Week Information Materials

Heat Hub NJ (NJ Department of Environmental Protection)

Heat Hub NJ is a comprehensive resource for all things related to extreme heat in New Jersey. Initially launched during Climate Week 2023, Heat Hub NJ is updated regularly. In 2025, the site featured “real world” videos wherein individuals experiencing direct impacts to health and well-being share how they stay safe when temperatures rise. In the lead-up to Extreme Heat Awareness Week (described on page 27), Heat Hub NJ was updated to include downloadable flyers and infographics designed specifically to reach New Jersey’s homeless populations, with clear guidance about the signs and symptoms of heat-related illnesses (see image on page 27) and ways to stay protected (see image on page 26), as well as a [checklist](#) for actions New Jersey residents should take before and during a heat wave. By the end of the 2025 summer season, Heat Hub NJ reached over 120,000 views.

Flood Safety Week (NJ Department of Environmental Protection)

During New Jersey’s first-ever [Flood Safety Awareness Week](#), DEP led the development of a comprehensive outreach campaign including branding, social media, videos, and a dedicated webpage with key resources for households and individuals seeking to build their capacity to cope with flooding events. The [Know Your Flood Risk tool](#) was designed and promoted in time for Flood Safety Week and serves as user-friendly resource that combines FEMA, DEP, and Rutgers maps to help residents understand and act on their flood risk.

The outreach efforts urged the public and local governments to increase awareness and preparedness for confronting increasing flooding due to climate change. Some of the featured items included in the outreach campaign included: a Flood Safety Tips infographic (available in both English and Spanish), the announcement of the New Jersey Statewide Flood Resilience Initiatives report (see page 28), and new videos demonstrating the [success of the Blue Acres program](#) and the success of resilience efforts underway in [Hoboken](#).

NJ Climate Week 2025 (NJ Department of Environmental Protection)

DEP celebrates the annual tradition of [Climate Week](#) by showcasing climate change initiatives across New Jersey and educating New Jerseyans about what they can do to prepare for its impacts across the state. In September 2025, DEP lauded New Jersey’s program in being guided by science and equipping the public with tools and information to make informed decision; making communities, ecosystems, the coastline and inland infrastructure more resilient; protecting New Jerseyans from wildfire risks and the dangers of extreme heat; and continuing to build upon and accelerate efforts to fight mitigate emissions of carbon and other planet-warming gases.

Climate & Environmental Stewardship Focused AmeriCorps Training Programs (NJ Department of State)

Within the Department of State’s Volunteer and National Service, the NJ AmeriCorps program serves communities throughout New Jersey in the priority areas of education, disaster response, social services, and environmental stewardship. Throughout 2025, the AmeriCorps Watershed Ambassadors program, hosted by DEP and a network of host organizations across the state, built 68 rain barrels which mitigated over 95,000 gallons of stormwater, planted 912 trees and shrubs, removed 44 tons of litter and 2 tons of recycled materials from the environment, and treated 41 acres of parks or public lands through projects other than cleanups.

Developing a Clearinghouse Website for Climate Change (NJ Department of Environmental Protection)

The DEP invests in a significant amount of research with in-house and contracted academic and research partners. In 2025, the Division of Science and Research developed a [website](#) that builds on the [climate change science web resource](#) with content related to completed and ongoing research, including on how climate change is already impacting New Jersey’s ecosystems, natural resources,

community health, and economy. The new website includes environmental trends reports (e.g., forest soil carbon and biofuels) as well as decision-making tools and resources to support policy development and program implementation.

Updates Climate-related Environmental Trend Reports (NJ Department of Environmental Protection)

Throughout 2025, the DEP has worked to incorporate recent data in updating three of its Environmental Trend Reports on climate-related topics: [Climate Change in NJ: Trends in Temperature & Sea Level](#), [Energy Use & Renewable Energy Sources](#), and [Greenhouse Gas Emissions](#). The updated reports are expected to be available [online](#) in February 2026.

2025 Update to the New Jersey Scientific Report on Climate Change (NJ Department of Environmental Protection)

Working in close collaboration with staff at the New Jersey Departments of Health, Agriculture, and Human Services, DEP released a comprehensive update to the 2020 New Jersey Science Report on Climate Change. This update summarizes the current state of knowledge regarding the effects of climate change on New Jersey's environment and integrates the 2022 Climate Change Impacts on Human Health and Communities: Addendum to the Scientific Report on Climate Change into a single comprehensive report designed to inform state and local decision-makers seeking to understand and respond to the impacts of climate change. This update includes relevant new science released since the original Scientific Report was issued in 2020, expanded scientific discussion throughout report sections, and coverage of new topics. The updated report can be found at <https://dep.nj.gov/climatechange/science/>.



Temperature and Precipitation Studies for New Jersey (NJ Department of Environmental Protection)

DEP's Division of Science and Research staff scientists frequently review climatological and meteorological research and trends relevant to New Jersey. After unusually warm and dry conditions during the summer and fall of 2024, as well as extreme heat events New Jersey experienced both summers in 2023 and 2024, DEP assessed the frequency, duration, and temperature ranges of heat waves that took place during the 30-year period from 1994-2023. The study found a significant increase in heat wave frequency and a significant decrease in diurnal temperature range, or less daily cooling. In other words, not only were there more heat waves, but the overnight temperatures remained warmer than in earlier decades, resulting in limited cooling effect normally experiences the mornings.

Beyond analyzing observations from New Jersey's recent decades, DEP scientists have also developed updated annual temperature and precipitation projections in alignment with the most recent scientific data. The results of this analysis were referenced in the Climate Change in New Jersey: Impacts & Effects [web resource](#) and are included in the 2025 update to the Department's Scientific Report on Climate Change (described above, on page 29).

Last millennium relative sea-level change on the western coast of southern New Jersey (NJ Department of Environmental Protection)

In partnership with researchers at Rowan and Rutgers universities, in 2025, DEP scientists completed a project to reconstruct the sea level fluctuations for the last millennium and evaluate current trends to explain the anomalous subsidence area (land that is gradually caving in or sinking) along Dennis Creek at the New Jersey Delaware Bayshore. The research used palaeoecological investigations to reconstruct past millennium sea levels, as well as accretion and subsidence rates in the Delaware Bay area of Dennis Creek, based on sediment cores and wetland surface sediment samples. The study revealed accelerated sea-level rise over the last century that was faster than sites located on the Atlantic coast, underlying the importance of understanding local factors that affect sea-level changes and wetland subsidence.



New Jersey Tidal Wetland Monitoring Network (NJ Department of Environmental Protection)

In 2018, the New Jersey Tidal Wetland Monitoring Network (NJTWMN) was formed to improve the resilience of coastal communities and ecosystems by identifying current conditions and trends of tidal wetlands in New Jersey to better prioritize restoration efforts and inform management decisions. The Network is now composed of more than 15 entities that conduct long-term monitoring of tidal wetlands in New Jersey with annual monitoring funding support from DEP. The current focus of NJTWMN efforts has been standardizing and collecting data related to the over 200 Surface Elevation Tables positioned across the State of New Jersey. To this end, between 2019 and 2025, NJTWMN established standardized protocols and data sheets for measurements of Surface Elevation Tables, Marker Horizon plots, vegetation plots, and tidal datums, with more to come. Launched in 2025, DEP Division of Science and Research built a database and [interactive website](#) that houses the Network's data and maps tidal wetland resilience to sea-level rise.

2025 Surface Elevation Table and Wetlands Inundation Response Studies (NJ Department of Environmental Protection)

A project advanced significantly in 2025 focused on wetland elevation measurement methodologies, with the aim of developing a standard operating procedure that can help balance accuracy and precision with cost-effectiveness for an ongoing monitoring approach that can evaluate wetland responses to inundation.

Since 2023, researchers in the DEP Division of Science and Research (DSR) have been managing a research project with collaborators from Stockton University, Rutgers University, and DEP Division of Land Resource Protection to conduct a state-wide map-based evaluation of coastal wetlands to identify the vulnerability of individual wetland parcels to sea-level rise as well as their ability to persist through inland migration or vertical building. In 2026, the resulting tool will be integrated into existing wetland monitoring and climate decision-making support resources, including [NJ ResTOrS](#) and [NJ Adapt](#). Further, the project evaluated the current state and effectiveness of marsh protection and restoration strategies. Outcomes of the study advance the New Jersey Coastal Zone Management Program's 2026-2030 Strategy commitment to better understand how wetlands are adapting to sea-level rise in order to identify regulatory and/or programmatic changes that will support the resilience of tidal wetlands.



Seagrass Restoration Research (NJ Department of Environmental Protection)

Seagrass beds are an extremely important ecological system that serve as habitat to many species of commercial, recreational, and ecological significance in New Jersey. In 2025, researchers at the DSR continued its ongoing study of diatoms, microscopic algae that are extremely sensitive to ecological conditions and are widely used as valuable environmental indicators. For this project, DSR is assessing diatom communities in areas devoid of seagrass and comparing them to lush seagrass beds in search of insights into what causes the loss of seagrass. This research helps scientists identify underlying small-scale differences in areas where submerged aquatic vegetation is thriving.

Base Level Engineering and Flood Studies (NJ Department of Environmental Protection)

A Base Level Engineering (BLE) study is an approach to flood hazard analysis that combines high-resolution ground elevation data with advanced modeling technology. This method creates engineering models and flood hazard data on a large scale, such as watersheds, rather than focusing on individual stream reaches.

As a Cooperating Technical Partner with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Region 2, DEP is tasked with providing a priority list of streams to FEMA for study. To that end, DEP hosted two virtual Discovery Meetings in March 2025 to engage local stakeholders in conversations about flood risk, introduce the project team, and outline the goals of the BLE study. These meetings featured breakout discussions to gather input on flood hazards, areas prone to flooding, development challenges, and damage caused by recent storms.



Restoration Research

Local Floodplain Administrator Education (NJ Department of Environmental Protection)

The National Flood Insurance Program Review Course is a no-cost training opportunity for New Jersey municipal, county, and state officials and general public to improve their knowledge of floodplain management and compliance and obtain their Certified Floodplain Manager (CFM) certification. The course duration features three in-person instructional days to complement online self-paced learning. In 2025, DEP held the 3-day training course in Middlesex, Burlington, Cumberland, Hudson, Mercer, Essex, Monmouth, Hunterdon and Cape May counties.



PRIORITY 5: PROMOTE CLIMATE-INFORMED INVESTMENTS & INNOVATIVE FINANCING



NJ Community Hazard Assistance Mitigation Program (NJ CHAMP) (NJ Infrastructure Bank and NJ Office of Emergency Management)

In 2025, the New Jersey Infrastructure Bank (I-Bank) continued to implement the New Jersey Community Hazard Assistance Mitigation Program (NJ CHAMP), a partnership between the I-Bank and the New Jersey Office of Emergency Management that provides low-interest financing for hazard mitigation and resilience projects. Under the NJ CHAMP financing program, the I-Bank closed the first two loans in the country capitalized by funding from the federal Safeguarding Tomorrow through Ongoing Risk Mitigation (STORM) Act. Both projects progressed to final design, with one entering the construction phase in 2025. NJ CHAMP financing is supporting the construction of a floodwall at a wastewater pump station in Rutherford, NJ as well as a project to prevent erosion and increase usable storage at a raw water reservoir in Brick, NJ.

Resilient Communities Program (NJ Department of Community Affairs)

The [Resilient Communities Program](#) is a competitive grant program designed to fund unmet recovery and mitigation needs for public infrastructure projects in communities impacted by Hurricane Ida with federal Community Development Block Grant-Disaster Recovery funding that New Jersey received from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. This program helps communities become more resilient to current and future flood-related natural hazards by ensuring that public infrastructure is elevated, relocated, improved, or otherwise hardened against these risks. The New Jersey Department of Community Affairs (DCA) has partnered with various communities and has made preliminary awards of \$34,472,912. These projects commenced their design and engineering work in 2024 and 2025, with the first project anticipated to break ground in early 2026.

Natural Climate Solutions Grant Program Round 2 (NJ Department of Environmental Protection)

In 2025, the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) announced a second round of the [Natural Climate Solutions Grant Program](#), making \$30 million in funding available for local governments, nonprofits, and private property owners to create, restore, and enhance New Jersey's coastal wetlands, forests, and urban tree canopies. Projects support the state's carbon sequestration goal and enhance local ecosystems' ability to withstand and adapt to climate change impacts. Three awards, totaling nearly \$11 million, were announced on December 19, 2025 for efforts in Stone Harbor, Stafford, and Montclair to help mitigate greenhouse gas emissions by restoring coastal marshland and expanding urban tree canopy. DEP continues to accept applications on a first-come, first-served basis through a rolling admission period.

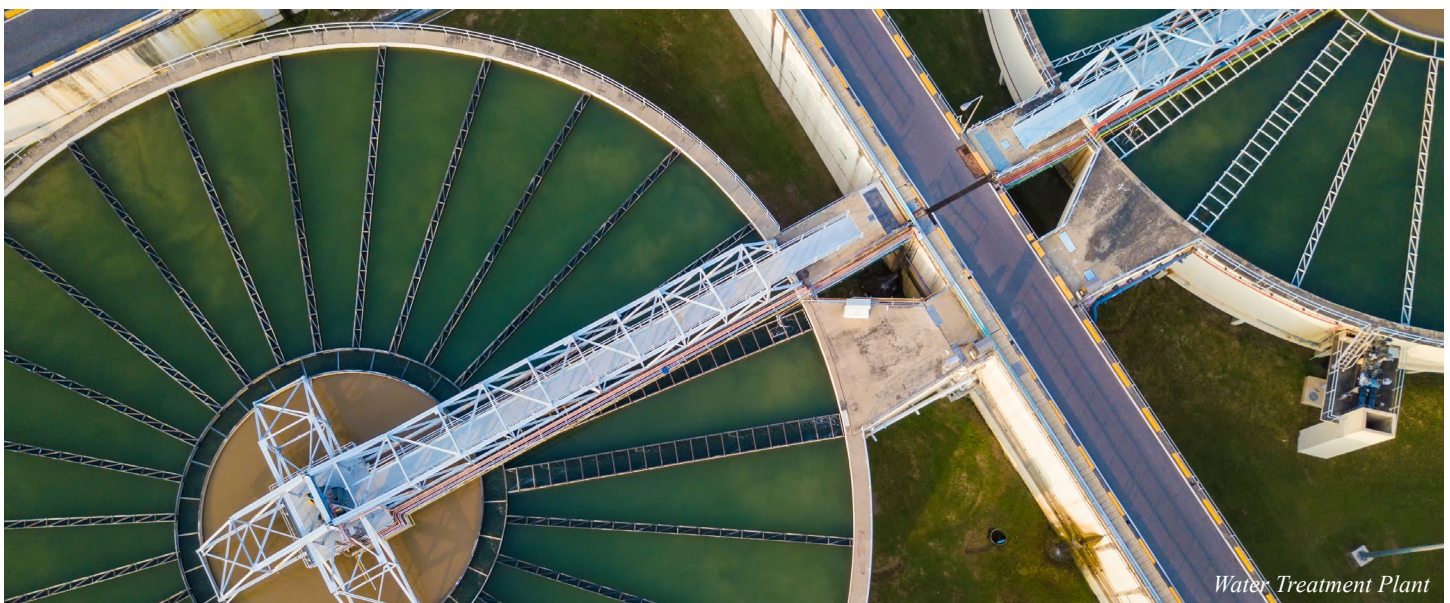
Investments in Resilient Water Infrastructure (NJ Department of Environmental Protection and NJ Infrastructure Bank)

The New Jersey Water Bank (NJWB) is a partnership between the DEP and I-Bank to provide low-cost financing for the design, construction, and implementation of projects that help protect and improve water quality and ensure safe drinking water. The NJWB provides extremely

low- or no-cost financing for entities seeking to improve drinking water quality or reliability or to improve ambient environmental water quality.

The [Water Infrastructure Investment Plan \(WIIP\)](#) is New Jersey's program to optimize the use of limited federal and state resources to address high priority water infrastructure (drinking water, stormwater, and wastewater) needs throughout the state. The WIIP is dedicated to protecting and enhancing New Jersey's water quality and water infrastructure, which is vital to the State's health and economy. Program administrators develop and manage Intended Use Plans (IUP) annually, in accordance with federal funding guidelines, which build on the WIIP by setting the project priorities and the funding packages for a given program year.

The NJWB annually reserves funds, provides principal forgiveness, and awards additional points for water infrastructure projects that improve stormwater management, enhance community resilience, and mitigate localized flooding and enhance the ecological health of waterways, with a focus on projects that utilize green infrastructure technology and nature-based solutions, especially in overburdened communities. In 2025, NJWB reserved a total of \$10 million in principal forgiveness funds for these projects in State Fiscal Year 2026, which began on July 1, 2025 and will end on June 30, 2026. The NJWB accepts applications and awards funds [on a rolling basis](#) to projects demonstrating a readiness to proceed.



Water Treatment Plant

Erosion Prevention in Brick Township (NJ Department of Environmental Protection and NJ Infrastructure Bank)

In April 2025, the I-Bank closed on two loans to support a project jointly funded by the NJWB and the NJ Resilience Bank with the Brick Township Municipal Utilities Authority (Brick MUA). In concert with a Pre-Disaster Mitigation grant from the Federal Emergency Management

Agency (FEMA), the estimated project cost is expected to total more than \$12 million, which will be used to reinforce the upper slopes in the township's man-made raw water reservoir in order to prevent erosion when water levels drop. The project will stabilize an additional 15 feet of the slopes, thereby increasing the reservoir's capacity when river intake is unavailable. By strengthening the reservoir's banks, this project enhances climate resilience, protects the drinking water supply, and ensures the long-term reliability of this critical infrastructure.



Erosion Control in Brick Township, NJ

Spruce Run Reservoir Upgrade (NJ Department of Environmental Protection and NJ Infrastructure Bank)

The NJWB closed on a \$50 million loan to the NJ Water Supply Authority in March 2025 for a project to decrease seepage in the Spruce Run Reservoir dam, which makes up part of the Raritan Basin System that supplies raw water to

over 1.5 million people in central New Jersey. Maintaining the integrity of the Spruce Run Reservoir is crucial for meeting flow requirements in the Raritan River, which supports ecological health and downstream wastewater treatment. This project involves injecting grout into the bedrock to reinforce the foundation and prevent soil migration, ensuring compliance with modern engineering standards and reducing the risk of flooding to critical infrastructure downstream, including wastewater facilities.



Spruce Run Reservoir Upgrade, NJ

Stormwater Management Grants for Water Quality and Quantity Improvements (NJ Department of Environmental Protection)

In 2023, DEP awarded \$7 million in stormwater assistance grants to mitigate localized flooding and improve water quality with funding from the state's Corporate Business Tax and the Coronavirus State Fiscal Recovery Fund. Grants were prioritized for overburdened municipalities with combined sewer systems. Of the 36 grant awards awarded, three grantees finalized and closed their projects within the 2025 calendar year. These include an effort to waterproof a 1-million-gallon underground storage tank in the City of Elizabeth and stormwater planning grants in Bloomfield Township and the City of Hackensack.

Stormwater Utility Technical Assistance Program (NJ Department of Environmental Protection)

In the summer of 2022, DEP's Municipal Stormwater Permitting Unit solicited Letters of Interest from eligible entities for participation in a \$2 million technical assistance program to support the formation of Stormwater Utilities (SWUs). Under this program, the Department engaged the services of qualified consultants to provide individualized services that would assess the feasibility of establishing a SWU for selected entities. DEP selected 15 entities, including 13 towns interested in SWUs for their individual towns and five entities interested in investigating the feasibility of forming two regional SWUs. To date, three municipalities have formed a stormwater utility with support from the program: New Brunswick (May 2024), Maplewood (December 2024), and Raritan Township (July 2025). Carlstadt also established a SWU in April 2025 through independent efforts outside of the technical assistance program.

Ready to be Resilient Stormwater and Resilience Funding Program (NJ Department of Environmental Protection)

Using \$20 million in American Rescue Package funds in 2024, DEP designed a funding program to provide technical assistance and grants to local entities to enhance stormwater management and resilience. The Stormwater & Resilience Grant Program was announced in June 2025, offering formula-based funding to counties and stormwater NJPDES permittees throughout the state. Eligible activities include both efforts to incentivize regional watershed management (\$2.1 million) as well as various activities, such as green streets (\$1.575 million), enhanced stormwater mapping, and improved operations at municipal composting facilities (\$1.35 million). Applicants were notified of their award in November 2025, with projects expected to kick off in 2026.

Property-Assessed Financing for Clean Energy and Resilience in Commercial Buildings (NJ Economic Development Authority)

In August 2025, the New Jersey Economic Development Authority (NJEDA) launched the [Garden State Commercial Property Assessed Clean Energy \(C-PACE\) Program](#), facilitating low-cost, long-term financing for commercial property owners to invest in clean energy projects and eligible resilience-related improvements, such as hurricane resistance, flood mitigation, stormwater management systems, energy storage solutions, and microgrids. By allowing repayment through a special assessment similar to property taxes, the C-PACE Program aims to make projects cashflow-positive from the start. Various municipalities have opted into the program including Hackensack, Lakewood, New Brunswick, Oldmans Township, Plainfield, and Woodbridge. This initiative represents a significant step in promoting sustainable economic development and energy resilience across New Jersey.

Establishment of the New Jersey Green Bank (NJ Economic Development Authority)

The [New Jersey Green Bank](#) (NJGB), a wholly owned subsidiary of the NJEDA, plays a vital role in advancing the state's climate objectives by facilitating climate-focused investments and financial support. It actively works to attract private capital to promote initiatives in zero-emission transportation, building decarbonization and resilience, as well as clean energy production and storage. In October 2025, the NJEDA appointed its first Executive Director of the newly established NJGB to lead these efforts.

Developing Best Practices for Sustainable and Resilient Housing (NJ Housing and Mortgage Finance Authority)

In 2024, the New Jersey Housing and Mortgage Finance Agency (NJHMFA) expanded upon its longstanding energy efficiency commitments by establishing a new site risk assessment protocol designed to evaluate climate change risks to NJHMFA-funded development projects. In 2025, agency staff compiled the available site risk assessment data and leveraged these findings to develop best building practices across its portfolio. In doing so, NJHMFA was

able to identify effective strategies for improving energy efficiency, climate resilience, and adaptability in affordable housing developments and trends in how these strategies are implemented.

As part of this expanded focus, NJHMFA aims to help existing affordable housing developments, with particular interest in helping property owners and residents in areas hardest hit by Hurricane Ida adapt for future climate-related hazards. NJHMFA will be launching the Resilient Multifamily Housing Program (January 2026) with the goal of supporting the implementation of flood mitigation and climate adaptation measures that strengthen building durability and protect residents from future hazards. NJHMFA is also encouraging electrification and emission reduction through electric vehicle charging infrastructure, ensuring affordable housing in New Jersey is both more energy efficient and resilient.

Water Quality Restoration Grants (NJ Department of Environmental Protection)

In October 2025, DEP [announced](#) approximately \$7.7 million dollars in grant funding for watershed restoration, enhancement, planning, and protection strategies that address non-point source pollution and mitigate the impacts of climate change. The 17 grantees are primarily located in the Northeast and Atlantic Coastal regions of the state, which were given priority for this grant cycle. The grantees include local municipalities, nonprofit groups, and academic institutions throughout the state.

Brownfield Development Area Program Relaunch (NJ Department of Environmental Protection)

DEP relaunched the Brownfield Development Area (BDA) program in October 2023 and solicited applications from interested municipalities. In January 2025, the DEP accepted 12 new BDAs, giving special consideration to applicants with redevelopment plans that incorporated climate resilience elements, such as green infrastructure and flood mitigation, consistent with statewide climate resilience policy.





PRIORITY 6: COASTAL RESILIENCE PLAN



Shore Erosion Control, NJ

New Jersey Ocean Acidification Action Plan (NJ Department of Environmental Protection)

In September 2025, the NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) released New Jersey’s first Ocean Acidification Action Plan created with the purpose of balancing ecosystem protection and the state’s fish and shellfish industries. The plan identifies steps DEP has already taken that can help mitigate ocean and coastal acidification and outlines next steps to better understand the current conditions and prepare for additional impacts of acidification. There are five tangible steps in the plan, including 1) establish a monitoring network, 2) conduct research, 3) support and achieve DEP goals related to ocean acidification, 4) make policy changes, and 5) create an outreach strategy.

Rebuild By Design (RBD) Hudson River Project (NJ Department of Environmental Protection)

The [Rebuild by Design \(RBD\) Hudson River project](#) is a comprehensive urban flood risk reduction strategy that will deploy various techniques to overcome flooding challenges in Hoboken, the southern portion of Weehawken, and the northern portion of Jersey City. It is estimated that nearly 80 percent of the City of Hoboken will be protected from storm surge flooding through the RBD Hudson River project.

Also known as the “Resist, Delay, Store, Discharge” project, the project incorporates a variety of methods, including (1) Resist—programmed hard infrastructure and soft landscape for coastal defense; (2) Delay—policy recommendations, guidelines, and urban infrastructure to slow rainwater runoff; (3) Store—interconnected green and gray infrastructure to store and direct excess rainwater; and water pumps; and (4) Discharge—alternative routes to support drainage.

The “Resist” contract was awarded in July 2023, with construction underway throughout 2024 and 2025. Major components include the drainage improvements, retaining walls, over 6,000 linear feet of reinforced concrete floodwalls, site preparation for the urban landscape elements of [Harborside Park](#), and installation of one of the project’s longest floodgates which is housed in the park.

Rebuild By Design (RBD) Meadowlands Project (NJ Department of Environmental Protection)

The [RBD Meadowlands](#) project focuses on an over 5,000-acre area on the Hackensack River consisting of Carlstadt, Little Ferry, Moonachie, South Hackensack, and Teterboro. The project aims to protect critical infrastructure, businesses, residences, and ecological resources and increase awareness of resilience and water management in the region.

The major project components being constructed have made significant progress in 2025 and include new pump stations in Lower Ferry, Carlstadt, and Moonachie. Additional project components advanced into final design and construction in 2025 include a new public park and living shoreline along the Hackensack River.

Higbee Beach Restoration (NJ Department of Environmental Protection)

Supported by \$37 million in natural resource damage recoveries, the Higbee Beach Restoration Project commenced in February 2024 with expected completion in 2026. This initiative enhances climate resilience by restoring tidal marsh hydrology, which buffers against sea-level rise and storm surge, while also protecting freshwater habitat through the construction of an earthen berm.

Rt 40/322 Resilience Improvements, Atlantic County (NJ Department of Transportation)

As New Jersey experiences greater flooding, improvements to coastal infrastructure will be needed to mitigate the threats posed by rising sea levels. The NJ Department of Transportation (NJDOT) is working to improve resilience by raising the profile of an approximately one-mile stretch of Route 40/322. Project design was developed in 2025, with improvements to include new pavement and curbs and new drainage infrastructure as well as the relocation of underground utilities.

CR 551 Flood Mitigation Improvements, Camden County (NJ Department of Transportation)

In partnership with the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC) and Camden County, NJDOT began construction on a series of flood mitigation improvements along two non-contiguous segments of County Route 551 Broadway in 2025. During high tide, tidal backflow prevents positive drainage from upstream inlets. During low tide, insufficient drainage capacity results in the surcharging of inlets. With anticipated future increases in intensity and total precipitation depth for certain recurrence interval design storms, these efforts seek to mitigate the potential for future roadway flooding. Improvements will include larger pipes and drainage infrastructure and the installation of tide check valves. The profile of the road will also be elevated.

Shore Protection (NJ Department of Environmental Protection)

The DEP Office of Coastal Engineering (OCE) is responsible for the oversight, operation, and maintenance of three coastal storm risk reduction projects along the Raritan Bay in Monmouth County which serve to reduce flood damage during coastal storm events. Projects activities span Port Monmouth, Keansburg Beach, Union Beach, and Bay Point and range widely in nature from the construction, operation, and maintenance of tide gate pump stations and other flood control structures (i.e., floodwalls, floodgates, drainage infrastructure, and other facilities) to shoreline restoration and stabilization efforts to nature-based solutions such as creating dune systems and related habitat restoration activities.

Throughout 2025, OCE continued to provide oversight of the Port Monmouth hurricane and storm damage reduction project. These coastal flood risk management measures safeguard the low-lying residential and commercial structures in the surrounding community. The final phase of the project is currently ongoing, with an estimated completion date in 2028.

Staff also oversaw the development of several scopes of work on the Keansburg Beach erosion and hurricane project to ensure the facilities (levee, drainage structures, hurricane closure gate, and the pump station) are operating as designed.

OCE staff also launched a Coastal Storm Risk Management Feasibility Study this year to develop a plan to reduce the risk of storm and flood damage in various areas of concern across Belford, Keansburg, Keyport, Laurence Harbor, and Cliffwood Beach where aging storm protection structures pose the risk of economic damages, impacts to water quality and fisheries resources, and health and life safety concerns.

Lastly, the Bay Point restoration project, completed in February 2025 in Lawrence Township in Cumberland County, is an example of how OCE partners with other units within DEP. In partnership with DEP Blue Acres program (see page 09), OCE removed deleterious concrete, constructed nearshore breakwaters, and placed trucked-in sand to create a beach and vegetated dune system that enhances habitat for horseshoe crabs and beach nesting birds while building resilience to wave energy and storm surge.

Beach Nourishment (NJ Department of Environmental Protection)

DEP continues to work closely with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) to improve the efficacy and adaptability of engineered beach and dune designs, accounting for erosion and deposition rates, identify new sand sources to supply nourishment projects, and increase the ability of engineered beach and dune designs to adapt to changing conditions.

In 2025, in partnership with USACE, DEP's OCE completed placement of approximately 5.4 million cubic yards of sand to protect roughly 19 miles of shoreline totaling approximately \$192 million in Cape May City, Lower Township, Atlantic City, Ventnor, Margate, Longport, Long Beach Township, Beach Haven, Harvey Cedars, Seaside Park, Seaside Heights, Toms River Township, Lavallette, Brick Township, Mantoloking, and Bay Head. These contracts included various activities, including replacement or repair of public accessways to the beach, re-establishment of native dune plant species, installation of dune fence, and the repair of a stormwater outfall pipe.



Atlantic Coast, NJ



Interagency Council by the Numbers

Since the formation of the Interagency Council in 2019:

4,500+

New Jerseyans provided feedback through surveys, webinars, listening sessions, and stakeholder engagement sessions.

6

publications prepared, including [Climate Change Resilience Strategy](#), [Extreme Heat Resilience Action Plan](#), [Resilience Strategy Two-Year Accomplishments Report](#), [IAC 2024 Annual Report](#), [Statewide Flood Resilience Initiatives Report](#), and IAC 2025 Annual Report.

265

recommendations and commitments generated through two significant policy documents: [Climate Change Resilience Strategy](#) and [Extreme Heat Resilience Action Plan](#).

120+

Senior Staff meetings and workgroup meetings held to advance IAC initiatives.

Readers of this report are invited to sign up for quarterly updates regarding the work of the Interagency Council at resiliencecouncil.nj.gov.

