

Office of the Governor

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NEWS RELEASE

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Media Advisory Governor's Weekly Radio Address Encourages New Jerseyans to Celebrate Earth Day

Gov. Christie Whitman provides a weekly radio message to radio stations throughout the state. Each week, the message focuses on a different concern or event of interest to New Jerseyans.

Gov. Whitman's message this week focuses on several ways New Jerseyans can celebrate April 22nd as Earth Day. The Governor suggests getting involved in outdoor activities such as walking or biking. She also suggests helping to clean up our earth by participating in the annual Spring Beach Clean Up which will take place at Sandy Hook on April 25th. Governor Whitman encourages all citizens of New Jersey to take a moment to reflect on the importance of protecting and preserving New Jersey's natural resources.

Attached is the text of the message.

The radio message can be accessed by calling the Governor's actuality line at 609-292-3249. It will be available today, beginning at noon, and will run through the weekend.

Governor's Weekly Radio Address
April 17, 1998

As we head into Earth Week, I'd like to take this opportunity to talk about the environment.

I'm reminded of this thought: "To waste, to destroy, our natural resources, to skin and exhaust the land instead of using it so as to increase its usefulness, will result in undermining in the days of our children the very prosperity which we ought by right to hand down to them amplified and developed."

These words were spoken by Theodore Roosevelt, the first conservationist president, in 1907. Decades later, other leaders started to take his views on the environment to heart. 1970 was a banner year. President Nixon created the Environmental Protection Agency and declared April 22nd Earth Day. In New Jersey, the Department of Environmental Protection was created.

Almost three decades later, environmental concern has not diminished. If anything, the enthusiasm and support for environmental issues have grown stronger in our citizens who weren't even born when the first Earth Day was celebrated.

I see Earth Day and Earth Week as a birthday party for our planet. I hope you will all take time out to celebrate.

Make appreciating New Jersey's great outdoors a family event. Turn off your TV and go outside. Take your kids away from the virtual reality of the computer screens and experience the real thing. Go for a stroll in the park. Bike along the Delaware. Run on the beach.

And remember: when you're out there, be a good guest. Don't trash the great outdoors.

Better yet, be part of the solution. Join me and my staff at the annual Spring Beach Clean-Up next weekend. This year's cleanup will take place at Sandy Hook on Saturday, April 25 from 9:00am `til noon. It's the state's largest environmental event of the year to rid our beaches of litter.

And while you're enjoying nature with your loved ones, take a moment to reflect on how important it is to protect and preserve New Jersey's natural resources.

I know that New Jerseyans care about our environment and understand how important it is to all of us. Time and again, we have voted to protect open space and farmland. We've already saved hundreds of thousands of acres.

In just the past four years, we have preserved 115,000 acres -- including record amounts of farmland. That's a great down- payment on our quality of life, and we can be proud of what we have achieved.

But we can do better. This land helps clean our air. It gives us the water we drink, the food we eat, the places we play, and the tourist dollars we need to thrive. We have an obligation to be good stewards of these blessings.

Two months ago, I set a goal that will nearly triple our pace and preserve another 300,000 acres during the next four years. Our ultimate goal will be to preserve 1 million acres in the coming decade -- a hard task, but I believe we can do it.

During my first term, I challenged my Council on New Jersey Outdoors to recommend a stable source of funding to accomplish this goal.

They have come up with some ideas. Senate President Donald DiFrancesco has outlined a funding proposal of his own. I have pledged to work with him and the Legislature to establish a permanent, stable source of funding -- this year.

Protecting open space is one way the State is striving to be good stewards of New Jersey's abundant resources. But we can't do it alone. Preserving our environment will require everyone's involvement. Let's all make a pledge -- to work each day to help make our world safer and healthier for future generations.