

## Governor Christie's Next Target: Highlands Drinking Water

By David Pringle, Campaign Director

Fresh off [undermining important flood and clean water rules](#), the Christie administration has set its sights on weakening protections of the Highlands, 800,000 acres in Northwestern New Jersey that supply over half of the state's drinking water.



The water sources in the Highlands are vital to New Jersey's economy and quality of life. In 2004, the legislature passed the Highlands Act to protect this region from the threat of sprawl.

The Act required the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) to develop a strict "septic density standard" to ensure development doesn't degrade the area's short and long-term water supply and ecology.

NJDEP implemented that standard 10 years ago using the best available science. Now the Christie administration has proposed weakening that standard — allowing a fourfold increase in development in the most important part of the Highlands Preservation Area, the core ecologically-

sensitive, high-integrity contiguous forests closest to water supply intakes.

The new proposal ignores the Act's requirements to consider deep aquifer recharge and ensure water quality isn't degraded after development.

Don't let Governor Christie call in the bulldozers to overdevelop the Highlands and harm our water supplies.

### TAKE ACTION!

The Legislature has consistently failed to block the Christie administration's most anti-environment efforts, most recently and significantly by allowing flood hazard rules that will reduce buffers and thereby increase flooding and water pollution. That is why the dirty Highlands rule must be stopped. The Legislature can do this with by resolution with a simple majority declaring the Governor's action in violation of legislative intent.

- ▶ Please tell key legislators to pass ACR192 and block the Christie Administration's effort to weaken protections in the Highlands, the source of half of NJ's drinking water. [www.bit.ly/highlands-alert-2016](http://www.bit.ly/highlands-alert-2016)
- ▶ You can also write or call them personally:

Senate President Steve Sweeney  
935 Kings Highway, Suite 400  
West Deptford, NJ 08086  
(856) 251-9801

Assembly Speaker Vinnie Prieto,  
1 Harmon Plaza Suite 205  
Secaucus, NJ 07094  
(201) 770-1303.

And you can find your local legislators' contact info here: <http://www.njleg.state.nj.us/districts/municipalities.asp>



# Join the Reuse Revolution!

By Jenny Vickers, Communications Manager

Enough plastic exists to cover the entire Earth in cling wrap. Everywhere you look, you can find water bottles, grocery bags, random pieces of polystyrene foam, nylons and other plastics.

According to a [study published in Science](#) in January 2016, more than 300 million tons of plastic is manufactured each year. This is close to the weight of nearly every human. The world has produced nearly 5 billion tons of plastic since World War Two and is very likely to reach 30 billion by the end of the century. The impacts to wildlife and human health and the environment are devastating.

Plastic can be found floating across the oceans, littering beaches and neighborhoods, and filling up landfills and incinerators. It has even sunk to the deepest parts of the sea floor. Seabirds and turtles become entangled in plastic and drown or choke to death. A vast proportion of the fish in the sea now have plastic in them. Plastic debris also absorbs and transports pollutants, which move up the food chain, contaminating the seafood on our plates.

## Take the Pledge to Reduce Single-Use

The answer to all of this trash is simple — use fewer single-use plastic items. While recycling is helpful,

it is only part of the solution. The better solution is to avoid using so much plastic in the first place by making the switch to durable, reusable products.

Clean Water Action is taking on single-use disposable products like shopping bags, single-use packaging and containers, plastic water bottles to protect marine life and the environment. Studies show that two-thirds of the litter found in waterways and on our beaches are related to takeout food packaging. We can do better.

There are so many things you can do to reduce your disposables footprint. Make a pledge to continue doing the ones you already do, and choose the new actions you are willing to commit to. Take the pledge at [www.cleanwater.org/content/join-reuse-revolution](http://www.cleanwater.org/content/join-reuse-revolution).

## ReThink Disposable™

ReThink Disposable™ is the path towards embracing affordable and practical options in eateries, food trucks, at events, home, work and school. This free technical assistance program can help businesses and events implement best practices to reduce waste and cut costs by minimizing disposable product usage. Contact Clean Water Action at [njcwa@cleanwater.org](mailto:njcwa@cleanwater.org) or 732-963-9714 or visit [www.rethinkdisposable.org](http://www.rethinkdisposable.org) to learn more.

## Greening Festivals and Events

Clean Water Action is working to ensure greener events in the Garden State. We recently helped implement Rethink Disposable™ practices at the Dodge Poetry Festival, one of the largest poetry festivals in North America. It took place over 4 days in downtown Newark and attracted 14,000 visitors.

This included replacing throwaway containers with reusable baskets at the food truck and encouraging a “no straw” policy. We also assembled a Green Team of 100 volunteers to monitor resource collection stations and educate event-goers on the importance of reducing, reusing and properly recycling materials for repurposing.

Clean Water Action also helped implement waste reduction practices at the 3rd annual Indian Summer music festival in September 2016 at the North Beach and Convention Hall in Asbury Park. The event featured live music and DJs on three stages, a vendor market at the Asbury Park Bazaar, as well as beach camping, bonfire, and brunch, attracting over 2,000



*Clean Water Action set up an educational table and worked with event organizers to replace plastic cups with Asbury Park Brewery reusable stainless steel cups, Sailor Jerry reusable mason jars, and Asbury Park Bazaar reusable tote bags. This prevented over 600 plastic cups and 200 plastic bags from being used during the festival.*

visitors over the course of two days.

With a new part-time Zero Waste Organizer, the organization will launch more waste reduction pilot projects in Newark and Asbury Park. To find out more or get involved, visit [www.cleanwateraction.org/campaign/hsht](http://www.cleanwateraction.org/campaign/hsht).

# Ports of NYNJ Moving Slowly Towards Zero Emissions

By Amy Goldsmith, State Director

Clean Water Action is making headway in the fight for clean air, good jobs and healthy neighborhoods near the Ports of NY&NJ where over 15,000 dirty diesel trucks go in and out of the port every day. The Coalition for Healthy Ports (CHP) which is chaired by Clean Water Action joined Newark Mayor Baraka in two press conferences and a rally at City Hall including a motorcade to the port focused on the health harms and port's discriminatory hiring practices.

The events caught the attention of the Port Authority of NY&NJ (PANYNJ). The Mayor has since issued an executive order creating a Port Authority Oversight Advisory Committee, to which Clean Water's Kim Gaddy has been appointed. A Port Master Plan Committee is also being developed to address current port operations and neighborhood encroachment.

Until recently, it was unlikely that Clean Water Action and CHP would meet with the PANYNJ. Now there are regular quarterly meetings with the PANYNJ's Port Department Director, Molly Campbell, and her staff. Progress is being made to open communication channels while developing clean air priorities. While the pace has been slow in moving the port towards zero emissions, there are some opportunities for advancement. CHP has long advocated that proven and cost effective pollution control systems for ship smokestacks be mandated at PANYNJ.

At CHP's request, PANYNJ undertook a port channel simulation to determine if the air pollution control technology could be mobile by installing it on barges and still have enough room for emergency



*Clean Water Action and Healthy Ports rallying for #ZeroEmissionsNow on the steps of Newark City Hall.*

vessels to maneuver. The answer was no, but PANYNJ determined it could make the technology mobile “on dock” by putting it on wheels. They hope to test its viability in the coming year and expand the program in the future.

CHP has long advocated that those reaping the greatest profits should pay for the solutions. New Jersey State Senator Lesniak has introduced a bill that would assess a container fee for the purpose of creating a pool of money for the replacement of dirty diesel drayage (container) trucks.

Of the 15,000+ trucks that go in and out of the port everyday — approximately 6,000 are frequent callers. Future funding would likely focus on replacing the trucks that are frequent callers (150 port visits per year). This legislation is still a work in progress, but a positive step forward in establishing a means for sharing the costs as the burdens are currently borne almost entirely by port adjacent communities and their residents, as well as port workers and drivers.

*For more information, visit [www.cleanwateraction.org/chps](http://www.cleanwateraction.org/chps)*



# Clean Water Action Endorses Josh Gottheimer for Congress!

Clean Water Action endorses candidates based on their environmental records and commitments. Josh Gottheimer will fight to ensure stronger drinking water safeguards to keep waterways protected and free of harmful pollutants and will oppose attempts to undermine the federal Clean Water Rule.

Josh supports making sure that the EPA has the resources to remediate Superfund sites like the one in Ringwood. He is also committed to commonsense, collaborative solutions to climate change including the Clean Power Plan.

## Pro-Environment Voices Must Represent New Jersey

Historically, New Jersey is known for being a leader in public health and environmental protections. The state deserves to be represented in Congress by people who support clean water, like Josh!

Josh's opponent has one of the worst environmental voting records among New Jersey representatives and is part of a House majority that has consistently voted the wrong way on environmental issues.

The House recently approved permanently categorizing coal ash, which is laden with arsenic, lead, and other heavy metals, as nonhazardous waste. It has voted yes to accelerating pipeline construction

*For more information, visit [www.cleanwater.org/NJ-CD5-Endorsement](http://www.cleanwater.org/NJ-CD5-Endorsement)*



through national parks and undermining protections to waterways that contribute to the drinking water for one in three Americans. It has also pushed to delay implementation of carbon pollution standards for power plants and to allow governors to opt-out of these standards altogether.

We need more voices in Washington with a commitment to protecting the environment and public health.

## Vote Gottheimer for Congress

This election is a toss-up — if you live in the 5th, make sure you to get out and vote on Tuesday, November 8. If you don't, make sure your friends and family who do live there, vote. Polls show that this is the closest race in New Jersey and one of the closest in the country — you can make the difference.

**Hillary Clinton for President.** The stakes could not be higher and the choice could not be clearer. That is why **Clean Water Action has endorsed Hillary Clinton for President.** Hillary Clinton is a fighter and has a strong history of protecting our environment, water, and health as First Lady, Senator, and Secretary of State.

She has called climate change the “defining challenge of our time”, proposed one of the most far-reaching environmental platforms in history, and incorporated a bold vision for environmental justice in her policies. She will continue President Obama's legacy of action on climate — and expand on it, ensuring the nation meets the commitments made in Paris. She will also defend the Clean Water Rule.

Learn more here: [www.cleanwater.org/hillary-clinton](http://www.cleanwater.org/hillary-clinton)



# Clean Water, Good Beer, Good Times!

By Jenny Vickers, Communications Manager

Let's face it, without clean water, there is no good beer. That's why Clean Water has partnered with several breweries to work together to protect water and health from watershed to water tap!

Our 7th annual **Autumn Toast to a Healthy Environment** charity auction at the Pine Barrens Golf Course in Jackson featured wine and chocolate tastings, hors d'oeuvres, gift auctions, as well as beer tastings with Heavy Seas' Beer, a Maryland-based brewery and key partner in our Clean Water Act campaign.

"You don't have to be a scientist or a hard-core environmentalist to get the connection between clean water and great beer," says Hugh Sisson, Heavy Seas' Founder. "Heavy Seas' business depends on clean water

for its success. Of course, beer isn't the only reason to care about clean water. It doesn't matter who you are, where you live, or what you do for a living. We all care about clean water and need to see that it is protected."

Over the summer, Clean Water also partnered with SweetWater Brewing Company, based in Atlanta Georgia, to hold a beer tasting even at Just Jake's in Montclair. The Happy Hour Beach Party for Clean Water included light appetizers, beer tastings with SweetWater Brew and fun giveaways.

At the event, Clean Water staff mobilized people to send postcards to NJ Senate President and Assembly Speaker calling on them to retain strong water resources protections in the New Jersey



Highlands region, which provides half the state's drinking water.

These events are excellent opportunities to meet our staff, engage in grassroots activism, talk to like-minded neighbors — while having a good time! Be sure to visit our [website](#) to find out how you can protect clean water and keep a look out for future events in 2017 celebrating the connections between clean water and great beer.

## Turn down the Heat and Green Jobs/Leadership Trainings

By Amy Goldsmith, State Director



Jeanette Mitchell

Clean Water Action's new Climate Organizer, Jeanette Mitchell, has been working with elderly residents in Newark's South Ward public housing complexes to get the word out about heat waves and related health concerns. Clean Water conducted several educational training sessions, drafted informational door knockers, and installed air monitors in selected apartments that did not have air conditioning to determine indoor air quality during heat waves and how it might add stress to a person's health and quality of life.

As the season begins to cool, attention has turned to the Newark Housing Authority's (NHA) Training Education and Recreation Center (TREC). Clean Water Action is planning to launch a partnership with TREC so as to bring "soft skills" job training, as well as an introduction to environmental justice, Newark's Sustainability Action Plan (SAP) and Resiliency Action Plan (RAP). The organization will be reaching out to Newark's One Stop Career Center to identify additional opportunities for funding, training and hiring for "green" oriented work within the NHA complexes and beyond.

# NEW JERSEY CURRENTS

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