

SIXTH ANNUAL NEEC CONFERENCE

2021

FEBRUARY
11, 12, 13



ACTING LOCALLY FOR A MORE
SUSTAINABLE WORLD, MONTCLAIR, NJ

SPONSORED BY THE NORTHEAST EARTH COALITION

6th Annual Acting Locally for a More Sustainable World Conference



February 11th, 12th &
13th, 2021

EDITOR: DAVID WASMUTH

We are delighted to invite you to our Sixth Annual Conference on February 11th, 12th, and 13th, 2021. Our past conferences have been among the largest gatherings of environmental and community activists in New Jersey.

The conference will offer opportunities to virtually meet community leaders and groups from New Jersey and the Northeast region to network about environmental issues, including wildlife habitat, local food, sustainable communities, alternative transportation, renewable energy, clean air and water, and climate change activism.

Location: The conference will be virtual via Zoom. Reserve your tickets at www.neearth.org/events/



For additional information contact us at
(973) 233-1106

Conference Speakers



Dr. Douglas Tallamy,
Keynote Speaker
Nationally Acclaimed Author

Douglas Tallamy is an entomologist and celebrated author. Tallamy's best-selling books, *Bringing Nature Home* and *Nature's Best Hope*, demonstrate the link between native plants and the insects that sustain birds and other wildlife and present a new paradigm for gardening and landscaping based on this link. With his concept of a Homegrown National Park, Tallamy shows how anyone with access to a piece of land can take action to create essential habitat for wildlife. Small efforts by many people in their yards or public spaces can build new ecological networks to connect plant and animal populations, giving them the resilience to survive and thrive and restoring the ecosystem services that sustain us all.



Mary Ellen Lemay, Speaker
Northeast Pollinator Pathways

Mary Ellen Lemay holds a Masters in Environmental Management from Yale. As a former elected official, Land Trust president, current Conservation Commission Chair, and CT DEEP Certified Master Wildlife Conservationist, she has drafted legislation and implemented plans to protect critical open space and watershed lands, developed a "smart growth" pedestrian friendly plan and policy, and co-chairs the MetroCOG Conservation Technical Advisory Committee. Lemay is currently working on green infrastructure projects in the Pequannock River Watershed and recently completed a dune restoration project in Maine. She is founder of Eco-Sites, LLC, an environmental consulting,

design, and outreach cooperative specializing in the use of natural systems for habitat restoration and stormwater management. Lemay is a member of the regional team of the Northeast Pollinator Pathways Project.



**Tobias Fox, Founder of
Newark Science &
Sustainability**

Tobias Fox, agriculturalist, ecopreneur, and founder and managing director of the community-driven nonprofit Newark Science & Sustainability, is a writer, professional organizer, urban farmer, photographer, and coordinator of an annual Sustainable Living Empowerment Conference. He conducts various community events, presentations, and workshops on sustainable living practices and has assisted numerous urban farmers and gardeners with the cultivation of their agricultural space.



**Lana Mustafa
Farm Director**

Lana Mustafa, Farm Director of Montclair Community Farms, is an environmentalist, urban farmer, social justice activist, and educator. She has her own little homestead in Clifton, where she grows a bountiful garden every season with her family, and is a backyard chicken- and beekeeper. Mustafa has always felt a strong sense of connection with nature,

beginning gardening at the age of seven. That love has developed into an everlasting fascination with the complexities and interconnectedness of this planet and society.



**Jose German-Gomez
Founder of the NEEC**

Jose German-Gomez, founder of the Northeast Earth Coalition, has been an environmental activist and urban farmer since he was a teen and has kept the passion for gardening all his life. He is the co-founder of the Montclair Backyard Habitat Project and founder of the Montclair Eco-Film Fest. Jose writes articles and blogs about environmental issues, sustainable communities, and affordable food. He is a master gardener, a Rutgers Environmental Steward, and a passionate advocate for native plants, wildlife habitats, pollinator gardens, and community gardens. He is a member of the Montclair Parks and Recreation Advisory Board and Liaison for the Montclair Environmental Commission.



**Armando Cruz, Speaker
NJ Climate Save**

Armando Cruz, environmentalist, community activist, and animal and human rights advocate, is Senior Nutrition Educator at the Community Food Bank of

New Jersey (CFBNJ). He is also a founder of the New Jersey Climate Save, which has mobilized community residents to collect thousands of pounds of trash, preventing further damage to public parks, rivers, and oceans. Cruz has conducted recycling classes for youth groups, organized peaceful environmental and animal rights actions, and is working to create mini community food gardens in public spaces. By raising awareness of how to grow and access healthy, quality produce and minimize waste, he works to empower all individuals to create change.



**Debra Kagan, Executive
Director NJ Bike & Walk**

Debra Kagan, Executive Director of New Jersey Bike and Walk Coalition, has worked as a consultant for non-profit organizations in the areas of development of advocacy campaigns, community engagement strategies, and campaign implementation. As Lenape Field Manager, Kagan worked with the revitalization initiative and relationships with park conservancies, local governments, and communities. She was previously the President of Bike & Walk Montclair, a nonprofit community-based organization advocating for policies, programs, and street designs that support safe biking and walking and the creation of public places for a more equitable, healthy and livable community where the streets are for everyone. In her position with NJ Bike and Walk, Kagan is a key advocate for the Essex-Hudson Greenway, which will create a safe biking and walking link from Montclair to Jersey City.



Contact us at: Info@neearth.org

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1:00pm Virtual Tabling and Networking

3:00pm: Conference Conclusion



The NEEC is a 501 (C)(3)
volunteer driven organization
www.neearth.org

About the Northeast Earth Coalition (NEEC)

The NEEC works at the community level to protect the environment and promote local sustainability and food security, supporting the work of community and environmental activists who give hope for a better future. To accomplish this, we seek to bring together diverse environmental organizations in the Northeast to share ideas, identify common interests, and provide mutual support in building communities that are sustainable in terms of food production, energy, transportation, and preservation of the natural environment.

Our Vision:

We believe that a strong local food system contributes to the health of our entire community, and we will work to facilitate greater understanding of the social, economic, & environmental impacts of our food choices.

We support small family farms, urban farming projects, community vegetable gardens, and backyard food production. We believe in promoting a healthier society through education about and appreciation of local, fresh, sustainably raised produce and products.

We promote energy conservation and integration of renewable, sustainable energy into local communities through advising local organizations and individuals, demanding better energy policies, and participating in local energy projects.

We support the promotion of sustainable eco-friendly transportation, including biking, walking, and the development of accessible, reliable, and affordable public transportation.

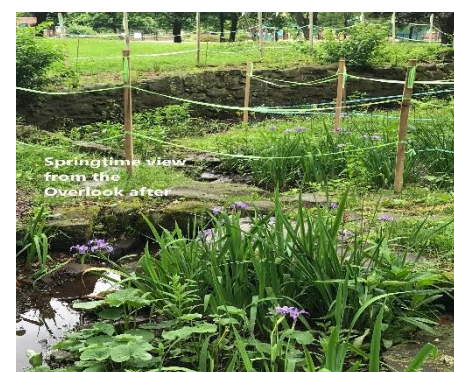
We envision a region where people can coexist and prosper in harmony with their environment. To this end, we promote the preservation and restoration of the natural environment.

Our Programs:

The NEEC has three programs: Environmental Initiatives, Urban Growers, and Community Outreach.

Environmental Initiatives:

This program presents free workshops and training to educate the public about environmental issues, promote the protection of the environment, and create community level environmental education projects.



Urban Growers:

This program sees the growth of community vegetable gardens as an effective strategy to make healthy organic produce accessible to low-income families, ensuring that all members of our community have access to fresh local foods. We educate, coach, and monitor the work of volunteers working with community gardens.

Conference Program

February 11th

7:00pm - Conference Opening

7:30pm - Mary Ellen Lemay

8:30pm - Virtual tabling
Featured group:
Climate Change

February 12th

7:00pm - Tobias Fox

7:30pm - Lana Mustafa

8:00pm - Armando Cruz

8:30pm - Virtual Tabling
Featured groups:
350.org and
North & Central NJ Leaf
Blower Working Group

February 13th

10:00am - Debra Kagan

11:00am - Virtual Tabling

11:30am - Keynote Speaker
Dr. Douglas Tallamy

12:30pm Conference Recess



Community Outreach:

The Community Outreach Program is responsible for reaching out to environmental activists and community groups as well as building partnerships with other organizations, providing support for their work, and collaborating with their programs and agenda. Community Outreach provides educational support and micro-grants to create workshops, trainings, cultural activities, and long-term projects.



**Montclair
Eco-Film Fest**



Strategy:

We work at the community level through direct contact with local community leaders. We support their projects and provide training and workshops. We promote our agenda via social media, the internet, and local newspapers.

Every year, we gather at our annual conference for presentations on issues including urban farming, clean water and water sources protection, renewable energy, sustainable transportation, climate change, wildlife habitat, and environmental preservation and restoration



Partial List of Conference Participants:

Northeast Earth Coalition; Montclair Bike and Walk; Passaic Neighborhood Women's Center; Montclair Chapter, Citizens' Climate Lobby; Purple Dragon Coop; Cornucopia Network of New Jersey; Montclair Environmental Commission; Montclair Parks and Recreation Advisory Board; Montclair Backyard Habitat Project; Friends of Crane Park; Northeast Pollinator Pathways; Newark Science & Sustainability; Bloomfield Kiwanis Club; 350.Org; Clean Water Action; Clean Water Fund; Economics & Policy Lab of Montclair State University; PSEG Institute for Sustainability Studies; Environmental Educational Fund; New Jersey Native

Plant Society; New Jersey Clean Energy Program; Sprouting Totowa Community Garden; MSU Community Garden; The Great Foodscape; Rutgers Environmental Stewardship Program; Essex County Master Gardeners Program; New Jersey Student Sustainability Coalition; New Jersey Clean Choice Energy; New Jersey Peace Action, Edgemont Roots and Shoots Club; Common Interests; Montclair Community Farm; EPA Pesticides and Toxic Substances Compliance Branch; New Jersey Watershed Ambassador Program; New Jersey Association of Environmental Commissions; Locally Sourced; PosiGen; New Jersey Climate Save; among others.

Our Co-Sponsors:

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TV34

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filming and broadcasting
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www.nearth.org