



## For Immediate Release: 6<sup>th</sup> Acting Locally for a More Sustainable World Conference

Montclair, NJ. **The Northeast Earth Coalition (NEEC)** invites you to join its 2021 annual conference from February 11-13, 2021, one of the largest gatherings of environmental and community activists in New Jersey. This year's conference will be virtual due to the ongoing COVID crisis. Participants can join from anywhere in the country – or the world!

You will have the opportunity to meet virtually with regional community leaders and groups and to network about environmental issues, including local food, eco-friendly gardening, sustainable communities, alternative transportation, renewable energy, clean air and water, and climate change activism.



**Dr. Douglas Tallamy** will be the keynote speaker. An entomologist and celebrated author, his best-selling books, *Bringing Nature Home* and *Nature's Best Hope*, present a new paradigm for gardening and landscaping by demonstrating the link between native plants and the insects that sustain birds and other wildlife. With his concept of a home-grown 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 and give them the resilience to survive and thrive.



**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.



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**Lana Mustafa**, Farm Director of at 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/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.



**Tobias Fox**, agriculturalist, ecopreneur, and founder and managing director of the community-driven nonprofit Newark Science and 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.



**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.



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**Debra Kagan**, Executive Director of New Jersey Bike and Walk Coalition, has been a consultant for non-profit organizations, working in the field 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 that advocates 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.

Virtual tabling for registered groups will be available every day during the conference. Participants will have the opportunity to virtually meet the groups, learn about their programs and projects as well as network with them.

You may purchase tickets online at [www.neeearth.org/event/](http://www.neeearth.org/event/). Please visit the website for more Conference information.

**About the Northeast Earth Coalition:** The Northeast Earth Coalition, Inc, (NEEC) works at the community level to protect the environment and promote local sustainability and food security. The NEEC supports 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.

**Contact us at:** Jose German, NEEC CEO, [Info@neeearth.org](mailto:Info@neeearth.org); Phone: (646) 225-8414 (Mobile) & (973) 233-1106 (Office).

### **Multimedia links:**

<https://www.neeearth.org>

<https://www.facebook.com/neeearth.org>

<https://www.northjersey.com/story/news/environment/2018/01/04/montclair-conference-cover-sustainability-many-levels/997163001/>