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BUSINESS FOR A
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ECONOMY

CLEAN WATER IS GOOD FOR BUSINESS



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ASBN's "Clean Water is Good for Business" campaign engages businesses in the Delaware River Watershed and across the U.S. to make the economic case for sensible clean water protections. We are excited to share our collective efforts to protect our water and build a more just & sustainable economy. If you are a business leader concerned about protecting the Delaware River Watershed or other watersheds in the U.S., please join our campaign by contacting Liza LaManna, ASBN's Manager of Regenerative Agriculture & Clean Water.

CLEAN WATER NEWSLETTER

Take Action

Victory in NY: Thanks to everyone in New York who called Gov. Hochul, New York state officially passed the Birds and Bees Protection Act, a first-in-the-nation bill that will limit the use of neonicotinoid pesticides that pollute our water and kill pollinators and other wildlife.

Read more about the act in [Clean Water Issue 5](#).

Protect Aquatic Life in the Delaware River: The EPA proposed a rule revising aquatic life-designated use and dissolved oxygen water quality criteria for the Delaware River, which would protect all life stages of oxygen-sensitive species (including several endangered species) and provide economic benefits – up to \$62 million each year – to the region. **Urge the EPA to finalize this rule: Click [HERE](#) to submit your support by Tuesday, Feb. 20.**



State Updates

NEW YORK: Gov. Kathy Hochul unveiled a new [plan](#) to strengthen clean water protections. The clean water funding plan will ensure affordability and prioritize benefits for rural and disadvantaged communities, fortify clean drinking water, preserve lakes, address emerging contaminants, combat climate change effects, plant 25 million trees, and support tourism and recreation. Gov. Hochul's holistic approach signifies a significant step toward securing New York's vital water resources.

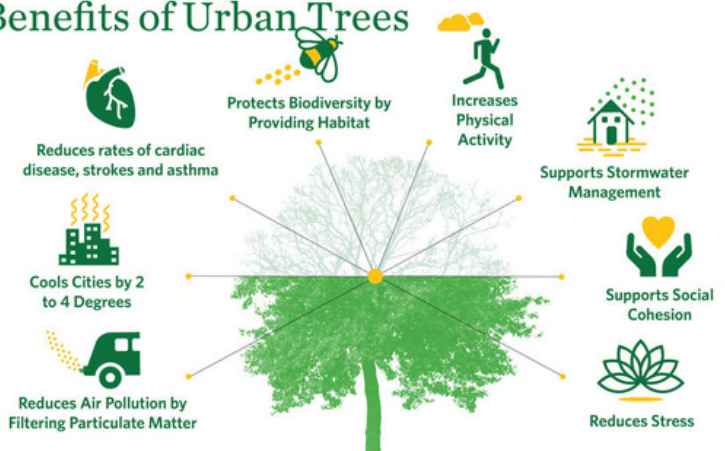
NEW JERSEY: Gov. Phil Murphy recently signed multiple bills that will address the harmful impacts of emerging contaminants to water, public health, and local economies:

- [A4821/S3283](#): Directs the NJ Dept. of Environmental Protection (DEP) to identify and test microplastics in drinking water; requires DEP and Board of Public Utilities to study and promote use of microplastics removal technologies.
- [A4691/S1530](#): Requires hazard mitigation plans to include climate change-related threat assessments and hazard prevention and mitigation strategies.
- [A4760/S3176](#): Requires DEP & Drinking Water Quality Institute to perform a study on the regulation and treatment of perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl substances.

PENNSYLVANIA: Philadelphia secured a \$12 million grant through the Inflation Reduction Act to advance the [Philly Tree Plan](#), a collaboration of several city departments and nonprofits including the Sustainable Business Network of Greater Philadelphia, a member of the Clean Water is Good for Business executive committee. The Plan aims to reach 30% tree cover in 10 years. It will promote cooling in heat islands where temperatures are higher due to limited shade and the abundance of asphalt, concrete, and buildings, which disproportionately impact low-income communities and communities of color. Increasing tree cover will also improve water retention, reduce stress on storm water systems, and mitigate the impacts of flooding.

A new infographic from the Nature Conservancy illustrates the many benefits of urban tree cover.

Benefits of Urban Trees





Delaware Watershed Health

The Partnership for the Delaware Estuary (PDE) released the [2023 State of the Estuary](#) report, which is a “condensed, user-friendly companion to the 2022 [Technical Report for the Delaware Estuary and Basin \(TREB\)](#)”. PDE gave the watershed a “fair” rating, unchanged since 2012, noting that some indicators have improved and some have gotten worse. The report draws attention to the reduced water protections and growing impacts on our natural resources, which is particularly concerning for the tidal wetlands indicator which received a “fair, but getting worse” rating. While Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and New York have some state-level watershed protections, Delaware (which has lost 3,000 acres of wetlands over the past 15 years) now has zero state or federal protections.

The watershed, which provides water to 13 million people, faces pressure from development and climate change. The “fair” status means that the watershed has seen some improvements, such as a “good” ranking for water consumption and temperature, as well as significant habitat protection and restoration efforts across sectors. Water consumption is improving largely due to the work of the Delaware River Basin Commission (a Clean Water is Good for Business steering committee member), who continually tracks and assesses water use to inform policy decisions.

The DRBC established the Advisory Committee on Climate Change to provide scientific information for identifying threats to the Basin’s water resources, such as declining temperature and precipitation. In the short term, programs like the Philly Tree Plan and New York’s reforestation project can help combat some of these impacts.

The report also looked at the issue of contaminants of emerging concern, such as PFAS, and rated this as “fair but declining.” Legislative measures in New Jersey (A4760/S3176 and A4821/S3283) offer direct solutions. The report gave dissolved oxygen one of the lowest rankings, impacting other indicators like Atlantic Sturgeon populations. However, if implemented, the EPA’s proposed rule to revise aquatic life-designated use and dissolved oxygen criteria will help safeguard the Atlantic Sturgeon population and overall water health. **You can support the EPA’s aquatic life protections by sending a message [HERE](#).**



Businesses Protecting the Watershed

Clean Water is Good for Business steering committee member Ed Clerico is working to develop a New Jersey-based agroforestry business centered around hazelnuts. While currently in a pilot phase, Clerico Farms plans to showcase the economic and environmental advantages of agroforestry with four acres of trees yielding the first harvest. Clerico Farms also plans to collaborate with several other like-minded farmers in some form of cooperative. Agroforestry will provide farmers with a good income, while also providing climate change mitigation benefits to the farm and everyone downstream.

According to the USDA, additional forest and tree cover will help landowners to better cope with increasing precipitation events by intercepting rainfall, increasing groundwater infiltration, and mitigating the volume, velocity, and peak flows of runoff. Agroforestry not only brings added value to the farmer but also better protects downstream businesses and communities.

