

# SAFEGUARDING NJ'S FUTURE

## THE COST OF INACTION

Between 2011-2023, New Jersey experienced **14 climate disasters**, leaving each of the state's 21 counties with at least five disaster declarations. New Jersey communities are feeling the effects of hurricanes, extreme rainfall, heat, and drought. These weather events have cost U.S. taxpayers more than **\$7.2 billion dollars**, ranking **NJ third in the U.S.** for per capita spending on climate disasters, and leaving middle class New Jerseyans at more risk than ever to the economic impacts of climate change.

Despite the damage and increasing expenses, **New Jersey has no dedicated funding to build the infrastructure** needed to prepare every community for a future of more extreme weather.

## WHAT WE COULD BUILD

- Higher-capacity sewage treatment plants, water supply systems, and stormwater utilities
- Shorelines that better protect coastal communities from storms and flooding
- Wider culverts and elevated streets
- Innovative flood control infrastructure that combines traditional approaches, like berms and levees, with nature-based systems, like daylighted rivers and restored wetlands
- New parks, community gardens and accessible open spaces that store and absorb water, and also serve as heat refuges
- Expand NJ's Blue Acres program, currently limited to \$5M-\$25M annually, to increase buyouts of repetitively flooded homes and relocate residents to safer areas.

## HOBOKEN'S MODEL FOR CLIMATE-READY INFRASTRUCTURE

Hoboken Resiliency Park is an innovative urban park designed to manage stormwater, mitigate flooding, and provide recreational space. Featuring rain gardens, permeable surfaces, and underground water storage, it serves as a model for multifunctional green infrastructure that safeguards both people and property.



Image Source: E&LP/Hoboken

## EXAMPLES OF NJ'S UNFUNDED PROJECTS

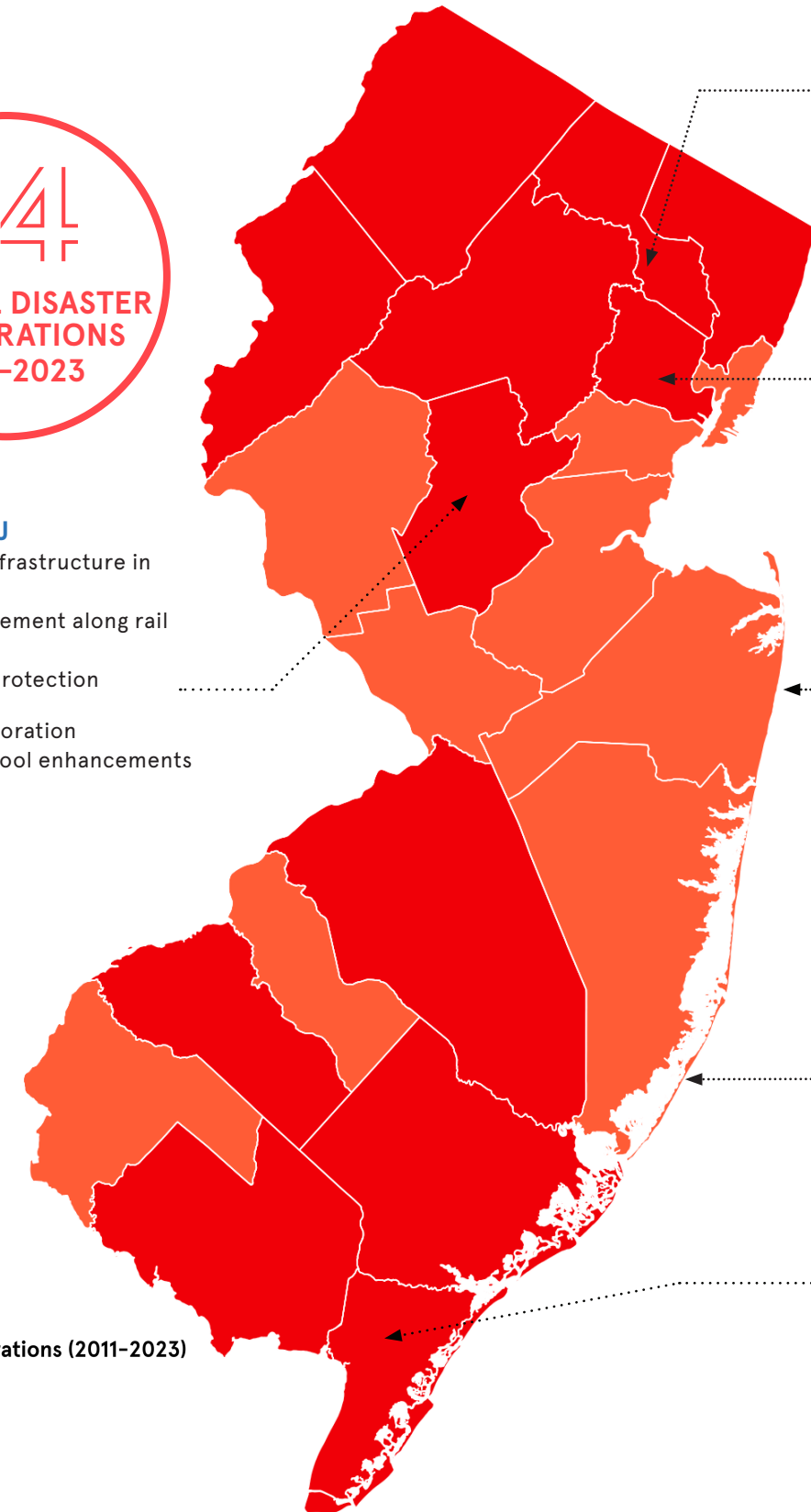
Despite facing 14 major disasters, critical infrastructure projects across NJ remain unfunded. These projects are essential for reducing climate risks and proactively safeguarding communities, yet without dedicated funding, lives and property remain vulnerable statewide.

[Click here for a list of unfunded projects](#)



### CENTRAL NJ

- Resilience infrastructure in greenways
- Flood management along rail easements
- Waterfront protection with berms
- Riparian restoration
- Park and school enhancements



### Major Disaster Declarations (2011-2023)

- 0 occurrences
- 1-2 occurrences
- 3-4 occurrences
- 5-6 occurrences
- 7-9 occurrences
- 10+ occurrences

### NORTHEASTERN NJ

- Shellfish restoration along shorelines
- Revitalization and protection of existing wetlands
- Improve natural drainage corridors
- Green infrastructure
- Resilience hubs
- Firebreaks to protect communities and natural areas

### GREATER NEWARK

- Tree canopy improvement
- Stormwater mitigation
- Wildlife habitat restoration
- Living shoreline in Newark Bay

### JERSEY SHORE

- Erosion management
- Marsh restoration
- Dredging and maintenance
- Wildfire plan
- Shellfish habitat restoration
- Coastal defense
- Living Shorelines

### BARNEGAT BAY REGION

- Island and salt marsh restoration, expansion and creation
- Living shorelines
- Rainwater capture and reuse program
- Open space
- Resilience concept park plan

### SOUTHEASTERN NJ

- Repetitive flooding studies
- Green infrastructure efforts
- Wildfire plan
- Firebreaks near military installations
- Prescribed burns to maintain wildfire resilience

Map Source: Rebuild by Design



# FUNDING NJ'S FUTURE

A majority of New Jerseyans want proactive and comprehensive adaptation strategies to protect lives, livelihoods and communities from increasing climate risks.<sup>1</sup> Investments in climate-adaptive infrastructure are critical to reducing vulnerabilities, creating economic opportunities, and enhancing the state's ability to withstand future challenges.

There are at least **two dedicated funding sources** to support these efforts, providing a pathway to secure New Jersey's future and strengthen its resilience to climate impacts.

## 1 DEVELOP A STATEWIDE BALLOT MEASURE

Voters around the country have overwhelmingly supported funding infrastructure measures that address resilience and other climate-related investments. A campaign to pass a Resilient Infrastructure Bond would create a public conversation with voters on prioritizing infrastructure while galvanizing the support needed to justify this type of infrastructure spending.

## 2 LEVERAGE A MODEST INSURANCE SURCHARGE TO SUPPORT CLIMATE INFRASTRUCTURE

A **modest 2% surcharge** on certain lines of property and casualty insurance (excluding workers' compensation and medical malpractice) could support **\$9.1 billion** in climate infrastructure investments in NJ over 10 years. A surcharge is equitable by exempting lower-income policyholders and vital community services, such as affordable housing.

Visit [www.rebuildbydesign.org/new-jersey](http://www.rebuildbydesign.org/new-jersey) to learn more about how you can contribute to New Jersey's climate-ready future.

## RECENT VOTER-APPROVED BALLOT MEASURES

Across the U.S., states and localities are leading the charge in financing large-scale climate adaptation projects.

YEAR	LOCALITY	AMOUNT	PURPOSE	VOTER %
2024	CALIFORNIA	\$10 billion bond	Climate resilience, infrastructure, and adaptation	58%
2022	NEW YORK	\$4.2 billion bond	Ecological and climate resilience	68%
2022	RHODE ISLAND	\$50 million bond	Municipal climate resiliency and habitat protection	66%
2022	EL PASO, TX	\$272.5 million bond	Streets, parks, and climate projects	55%
2022	DENVER, CO	\$25 million bond	Outdoor learning spaces development	56%
2021	DENVER, CO	0.25% sales tax to raise \$40 million per year	Climate mitigation and adaptation for underserved communities	62%
2021	MAINE	\$100 million bond	Infrastructure adaptation for safety and resiliency	72%
2021	VIRGINIA BEACH, VA	\$567.5 million bond	Comprehensive flood protection measures	73%
2020	KEY BISCAYNE, FL	\$100 million bond	Sea level rise mitigation and infrastructure hardening	57%

## TOGETHER, WE CAN FIX THIS

Across New Jersey, multi-benefit projects are already showing how communities can be protected from extreme weather while enhancing natural and urban spaces.

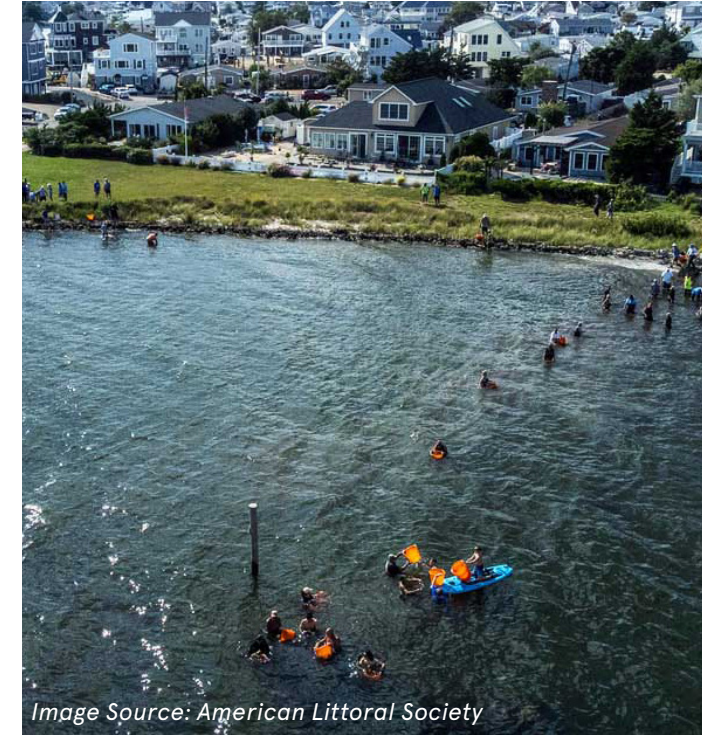


Image Source: American Littoral Society

### FORKED RIVER LIVING SHORELINE PROJECT

In Barnegat Bay, a series of oyster reefs have been installed along a stretch of shoreline, offering protection against erosion and storm surge while also providing habitat for other marine life.



Image Source: NJ DEP

### WOODBIDGE BLUE ACRES ACQUISITION

120 acres of former residential properties is being converted to native floodplain habitat and park trails.



Image Source: Wikimedia Commons djflem

### NEWARK RIVERFRONT PARK

Along the Passaic River, rain gardens, permeable pavements, and elevated pathways manage stormwater, reduce flooding, and create accessible green spaces for the community.

<sup>1</sup> <https://ncse.ngo/new-jersey-residents-overwhelmingly-support-climate-change-education-recent-poll>