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**Public conveys support of a Green Amendment
to New Jersey legislators**

Trenton, NJ – Today New Jersey legislators heard from 80 organizations that signed on in support of passage of a New Jersey Green Amendment. Representatives of the groups walked the halls of the state Capitol urging legislators to sign on in support of the passage of the constitutional amendment that would enshrine the right of every New Jerseyan to “a clean and healthy environment, including pure water, clean air, and ecologically healthy habitats,” and to protect these rights for “both present and future generations.”

Participants educated legislators on what a Green Amendment would mean for the people of New Jersey and encouraged their active support.

“Passage of a New Jersey Green Amendment would be a historic first step for the people of New Jersey and would set the state as a national leader on the issue of environmental rights. Currently there are only 2 states that recognize and protect the inalienable right to clean water, clean air and a healthy environment on par with other civil, political and human rights; they are Pennsylvania and Montana. In addition to New Jersey, there are Green Amendment proposals in New York, Maryland and West Virginia. We would like to see New Jersey to be the first state in the modern day to add a Green Amendment to its state constitution,” **explained Maya van Rossum, founder of Green Amendments For the Generations**, as well as being the Delaware Riverkeeper and leader of the Delaware Riverkeeper Network.

“The people of New Jersey have relied on federal and state legislation to protect their natural resources. However, the laws have let them down. New Jersey water, air, forests, and other special places, from the highlands to the pinelands, have been allowed to degrade in ways that are harming people’s lives,” **said Amy Goldsmith, NJ State Director of Clean Water Action**.

“A Green Amendment to the NJ State Constitution is simply a reminder that we humans have been given responsibility to be the stewards of God’s Creation,” **said John R. Holt, Secretary, Washington Township Land Trust**.

"We in New Jersey are very fortunate in that we enjoy a long tradition of habitat conservation, species preservation and good public access legislation - much of it based on our state's embrace of the Public Trust Doctrine," **said Captain Bill Sheehan, founder and Executive Director of Hackensack Riverkeeper**. "A Green Amendment for New Jersey would embrace our entire history of environmental victories - in the Pinelands, the Meadowlands, the Highlands, the Skylands, the Sourlands, the farmlands, the wetlands, the coastlands, ALL of our lands - and the waters that enfold them."

“Enacting the constitutional Green Amendment is clearly one of the most effective ways to protect the Earth and future generations from pollution and toxic contamination. Having demonstrated its value in Pennsylvania and Montana, this amendment ought to be enshrined in every state and national constitution,” **said Jonathan Cloud, Executive Director, Possible Planet.** “This is especially appropriate in New Jersey today, the state with the most Superfund sites in the country, and increasingly fragile coastlines and watersheds that need protection.”

“Given all the environmental problems New Jersey has with clean air, clean water, toxic sites, and climate change, it becomes even more important for us to have a green amendment. We can adopt a constitutional amendment guaranteeing those rights to every man, woman, and child in our state. For far too long polluters and developers have been getting away with destroying our environment and impacting public health. When government doesn’t work on behalf of the people, citizens should have the right to fight back. When the government ignores environmental problems and sides with special interests, then communities should have a constitutional amendment allowing them to protect themselves and force the government to do their jobs,” **said Jeff Tittel, Director of the New Jersey Sierra Club.**

If passed, New Jersey would become the third state in the nation to protect environmental rights in the bill of rights section of its constitution. Over 40 other states talk about environmental protection in their state constitutions, but only Pennsylvania and Montana protect the rights to clean water, clean air and a healthy environment as self-executing, inalienable and in the Bill of Rights section of the constitution.

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