



Liberty Township Environmental Commission

2025 Annual Report

Commission Roster

The Liberty Township Environmental Commission (LTEC) was composed of Chairman Larry Supp; Vice Chair Jarod Gajda; Doug Wright (Liaison to the Land Use Board); John Ward; Regan Bottomley; John DeHuff; Ammunje Nyak; and Secretary Carrie Gajda. The Commission currently has two vacant alternate positions.

Meetings and Memberships

Regular meetings were held on the third Thursday of each month at 7:00 PM at the Municipal Building. LTEC maintained its membership in the Association of New Jersey Environmental Commissions (ANJEC) throughout the year.

Aquatic Weed Control

The Lake Subcommittee approved a contract with Lake Management Services (LMS) for aquatic weed control. The beach area showed significantly improved results compared to the prior year and remained largely clear. Some weed growth persisted along the perimeter rope area and in deeper water, indicating opportunities for continued improvement.

Arbor Day Activities

Although the LTEC did not participate in the New Jersey Tree Recovery Campaign this year, it continued its annual free seed packet giveaway. Packets included a variety of vegetables and fruit seeds, along with starter cups and soil. Feedback from residents indicated strong interest in expanding offerings to include more flower seeds in future years. Participation in the tree seedling program has declined over time, and the program at the State level may be discontinuing.

Native Seed Garden

The Wildflower Peaceful Garden was maintained throughout the spring with regular weeding and trimming.

Community Day

The LTEC participated in Community Day with an environmental education theme. Educational games borrowed from ANJEC—including the Wheel of Knowledge and Plink the Plastic—were offered, along with rubber duck and squirty toy giveaways. Attendees also participated in a craft activity decorating tree branch slices, and reusable bamboo and pressed-wheat travel utensils were distributed.

Birding Events

On May 17, 2025, the LTEC hosted its fourth annual public bird walk using the hiking trails at the Pequest Fish Hatchery. The event was well attended. Due to low participation in the Fall 2024 birding event, the Commission elected not to schedule a fall program this year.

Liberty Township Environmental Commission

2025 Annual Report

Lake Signage Improvements

Two educational signs previously installed near the boat ramp and lodge—originally purchased using grant funding—had significantly deteriorated. The LTEC researched, coordinated, purchased, and installed replacement signs to ensure continued public education and safety.

Buzzard's Glory Property / Liberty Lake Dam Removal

The LTEC remains actively involved in reviewing reports and plans related to the Liberty Lake Dam Removal Project at the Buzzard's Glory property. The final engineering report has been submitted to the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP), and the Commission is awaiting next steps.

Lake Monitoring

While LTEC's direct involvement in the Mountain Lake monitoring program was limited, members continued to serve on the Township's Lake Subcommittee. Monitoring results indicated generally good water quality throughout the season. However, an early algal bloom and elevated bacterial levels delayed the opening of the beach. Once conditions improved, the beach remained open for the remainder of the season. Monitoring updates were regularly posted by the Mountain Lake Community Association on its Facebook page and website.

Public Notice Posting Area

To improve communication and organization, Chairman Larry Supp installed a public notice board under the existing lake signage. Weed treatment schedules are now clearly posted to ensure lifeguards avoid opening the beach within two hours of treatment.

Septic Care Ordinance Recommendations

The LTEC again requested that the Township revisit the adoption of a septic care ordinance tied to property resale. While current NJDEP regulations require cesspools to be upgraded upon transfer of title, the rules lack enforcement mechanisms and include numerous exemptions, such as intra-family transfers and low-value sales. In these cases, cesspools are allowed to remain in use if not malfunctioning. The LTEC recommended that the Township consider an ordinance requiring inspections and certification at every residential property transfer to verify the absence of cesspools and confirm that septic systems are functioning properly or are being repaired under County Health Department supervision.

Boat Ramp and Rain Garden Grant

The Township was awarded state grant funding for improvements at the boat ramp, including construction of a macadam parking lot and a rain garden. The LTEC will be responsible for developing educational signage,

Liberty Township Environmental Commission

2025 Annual Report

coordinating its production, and overseeing installation. The Commission will also coordinate on the rain garden construction, with the scope of involvement still being determined.

Vortech Stormwater System

Following discussion, the LTEC recommended that the Township budget for and schedule annual maintenance of the Vortech stormwater management system.

Land Use Board Ordinance Compliance

The Land Use Board should be giving notification to the Environmental Commission regarding applications. Recent discussions between the two bodies have taken place in an effort to resolve this issue and improve coordination.

2026 Meeting Schedule

At the November LTEC meeting, the Commission voted to change its regular meeting schedule to the second Thursday of each month at 6:00 PM, effective February 2026.