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Global Neighborhood Story

Global News

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For my global neighborhood story, I chose to discuss the phenomenon of New Jersey being the fastest-warming state in the Northeast. This topic is being discussed worldwide and has profound local impacts. The effects of this climate change are worthy of our attention for several reasons. The Rising temperatures affect public health, agriculture, and energy consumption, and according to the New Jersey.com news article the longer warm months and mild winters, disease-carrying ticks and mosquitoes are becoming more dangerous in New Jersey. Due to an exceptionally wet year and unusually warm July, algae blooms have flooded some of the state's biggest and most well-known lakes this summer. Additionally, fish that used to be common off the New Jersey coast have moved north in pursuit of cooler waters (Scott Fallon, Andrew Ford). Temperatures in New Jersey have increased by an average of 3.6 degrees since the late 19th century, compared to the global average of 1.8 degrees. New Jersey is usually vulnerable to rising sea levels being that it is a coastal state, but it has risen about 1.5 feet over the past century threatening the homes and infrastructure every time there is a flood. North Jersey.com article states "New Jersey is fast becoming ground zero for climate change. Sea level rise is happening so fast in the state that it's double the global average, thanks in part to melting glaciers and the expansion of warmer water along with a gradually sinking coastal landmass"(Fallon, Ford). The

predominant U.S. media image of climate change in New Jersey focuses on the impact that the extreme weather and rising sea levels through dramatic visuals. For example, there are images of flooded streets with people trying to get through, damaged homes, and heatwaves which is a great way to make the public aware of the urgency of this issue. Climate change is happening here because of the way humans are living. The North Jersey.com article states “The overwhelming majority of scientists, peer-reviewed studies, and government agencies have shown that the planet is warming due in large part to human activity, such as burning fossil fuels like coal, natural gas, and gasoline, which has increased the concentration of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere, preventing heat from escaping into space”(Fallon, Ford). People from neighboring cities of the town Lyndhurst where I live are being interviewed about their personal stories of how their community is being affected. The heat is making the concrete and asphalt extremely hot, the Meadowlands are disappearing which affects my town personally and I interviewed my dad John Montillo who is the Commissioner of the Parks and Recreation of Lyndhurst, New Jersey to get his point of view. When asked about how he feels that the Meadowlands will one day be gone due to climate change he states “I will be very upset and nostalgic because I grew up playing in the Meadowlands and going fishing with my dad here. I brought you and your siblings here as well and still go to this day.” Next, I followed with the question is there anything you can do to get the town to be a part of change and he said “ I never really thought about it until now but I definitely can see and try to get the community to be involved in slowing the progression down.” This brings me to discuss the CBS article where Trenton Mayor Reed Gusciora states that “the ultimate goal is to reduce carbon emissions in cars, homes, and factories, but he said some short-term solutions include investing in more green space and planting more trees (Brandon Goldner). This phenomenon should be covered by the

media by putting more emphasis on the long-term impacts this will have on the state and even the world. There should be emphasis on the economic shifts and the changes in the ecosystem. The fish that once were here are not anymore because the water is too warm for them. Media coverage should also look at systemic solutions and policy changes in both state and federal laws as well. Successful mitigation and adaptation strategies should be discussed to create a more informed and productive public. There also is not as much media coverage for the North Jersey towns which are affected as well as the South Jersey towns near the ocean as well. In conclusion, the affected communities would include East Rutherford, Hackensack, Leonia, Lyndhurst, North Bergen, Ridgefield, Ridgefield Park, Secaucus, and South Hackensack are going to be hit the most in the next 16 years with the rising sea-level changes and we need to as a community figure out a plan to reduce the speed of this.