

Clean Ocean Advocate



GOVERNOR SUPPORTS "COZ" INITIATIVE

Announcement of Coast Initiative 2005 for New Jersey

Clean Ocean Action (COA) has worked hard for several years with the NJ Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) and its Commissioner, Bradley Campbell, on the NJ Coastal and Ocean Initiatives. There were several specific actions necessary to improve and protect marine water quality. On April 21, Acting Governor Richard Codey announced the "Coast Initiative 2005." COA applauds Codey's plan to "strengthen protection of our valuable coastal resources."

In releasing the Initiative, Codey said, "The Jersey Shore is one of our greatest natural resources and most important economic engines. Promoting the shore is important, but it is even more important that we have a clean shore to promote."

The Acting Governor outlined an important, broad, and timely list of initiatives and actions that will improve and protect the marine environment. Codey has focused on the plight of the ocean and come to its aid. In particular, the Governor supports the "Clean Ocean Zone" initiative (visit www.cleanoceanzone.org).

COA highlights the following initiatives (visit http://nj.gov/dep/cmp/njcoast_2005.pdf for the complete initiative):

- NJDEP will strengthen standards for ocean dischargers to avoid impacts to water quality. NJDEP will require implementation of measures that will prevent catastrophic sewage spills through maintenance and upgrading of aging infrastructure.
- Following public input and adequate data collection, NJDEP will begin restoration of Wreck Pond (the major source of beach closings in the Spring Lake/Sea Girt area) no later than September 2005.
- NJ will work with anglers, environmentalists, and the New Jersey congressional delegation to establish a "Clean Ocean Zone" to protect water quality in the New York/New Jersey Bight by eliminating and preventing pollution.
- Governor Codey's Blue Ribbon Panel on Offshore Wind Development will ensure a public process when finalizing recommendations to the Governor on whether offshore wind energy is appropriate for NJ.
- NJ will strengthen coastal zone restrictions regarding offshore oil and gas development and will petition the federal government to accept these new restrictions under federal law.
- NJDEP will acquire, clean, and sink three additional ships in 2005 to enhance New Jersey's premier system of artificial reefs.
- NJDEP and the Office of Maritime Resources within the NJ Department of Transportation will assist communities in developing regional dredged material management plans.
- NJDEP will update the state's Dredging Manual to incorporate lessons learned since development of the manual in 1997 to ensure that navigational dredging needs continue to be met using environmentally sound methods and to improve sediment quality data.
- NJDEP will act to restore water quality impairments affecting shellfishing areas.

Last year, the public was given the opportunity to provide comments to the State of NJ and NJDEP regarding critical ocean and coastal issues. COA presented a list of priorities to improve ocean water quality (available by request and posted on COA's website). To contact Governor Codey, call 609-292-6000 or write to: PO Box 001, State House, Trenton, 08625-0001.

Visit www.cleanoceanzone.org for more information about the COZ campaign.

COA PARTICIPATING ORGANIZATIONS Featuring...South Monmouth Board of Realtors

As the weather warms up, many folks think about renting or buying a home along the Jersey shore. The importance of clean water has long made the realty community an advocate of Clean Ocean Action. Indeed, the South Monmouth Board of Realtors, was an early coalition member, with Ed Thomson of Thomson Realty in Avon leading the effort.

The Board consists of over 750 members from Neptune to Brick, NJ, and is a one-stop resource with information for finding a reliable and ethical agent who can offer suggestions and information. The Board works to assure that whether you are a buyer or seller, you will be represented fairly.

Among the many actions they have taken with COA, the members of the South Monmouth Board have led and participated in the Beach Sweeps for nearly two decades. Each spring, the Board welcomes its members, as well as citizens, to Sea Girt's beaches to remove and categorize debris.

A clean ocean is essential for business and tourism in New Jersey. Hence, the Board continues their strong and active participation in COA programs and campaigns, such as the Clean Ocean Zone (COZ).

"Tourists and home buyers are attracted to the Jersey shore because of its beautiful beaches. As realtors, we believe clean beaches are essential to the vitality of both the tourism industry and the housing market," said Catherine L. Schwier-Mencer, GRI, Executive Vice President of South Monmouth Board of Realtors. "The South Monmouth Board of Realtors® has been a supporter of COA for the past 20 years and we are pleased to join with them in the Clean Ocean Zone."

For more information, contact South Monmouth Board of Realtors®, Inc. in Manasquan at (732) 223-3100 or by visiting www.smbro.org.

Adapted from SMBR website and interviews with staff members



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May 2005 Highlights

- Governor Supports "COZ" Initiative
- Regional Efforts to Halt Oil & Gas Drilling
- Family Luau for the Ocean - May 22

May 2005

May 14, Saturday
- **Ocean Fun Day**, 11AM-3PM, Island Beach State Park. Call COA to volunteer.

May 15, Sunday
- **Ocean Fun Day**, 11AM-3PM, Sandy Hook - NJ Marine Sciences Consortium. Call COA to volunteer.

May 22, Saturday
- **Family Luau for the Ocean**, 3-7PM, Ship Ahoy Beach Club, Sea Bright. See inside for details.



Save the Date:

June 11 & 12, Saturday-Sunday
- **NJ Seafood Festival**, 11AM-7PM, 5th & Ocean Avenues in Belmar. Call COA to volunteer.

- **Atlantic City Seafood Festival**, Gardener's Basin, 9AM-5PM. Call COA's South Jersey office to volunteer.



✂ Please clip and send to COA.

STAY INVOLVED IN YOUR COALITION!

MAILING LIST RENEWAL OR SIGN-UP FORM

- ✂ If you received a message on your address label, it's time to renew.
- ✂ Your contribution will ensure that you receive this monthly newsletter, action alerts, and notices of events for one year.
- ✂ To renew, please detach this form and enclose with your check.

Thank you.

Enclosed is my check for (please check one):

\$25 Individual/Family \$15 Student/Senior

\$50 Participating Organizations

Name _____

Street _____ City _____

State _____ Zip _____ Phone _____

Email _____

Please include organization name & contact, if applicable:

Please make check payable to
Clean Ocean Action, PO Box 505, Highlands, NJ 07732
To pay with MasterCard or Visa, please call 732-872-0111.

COA is a 501(c)(3) organization and contributions are tax deductible.

CONTAMINATED SEDIMENTS

Jennifer Samson, Ph.D., 732-872-0111, Science@cleanoceanaction.org

Changes to Wreck Pond Sand Dredging Plan

Wreck Pond, a small coastal lake on the border of Spring Lake and Sea Girt and a major source of beach closures in NJ due to high bacteria levels, is undergoing plans to address water quality problems. One solution is dredging. The NJ Department of Environmental Protection's (NJDEP) Bureau of Coastal Engineering resubmitted their plan for sand dredging at Wreck Pond. The new plan would keep an island near the eastern end of the pond intact along with the shallow areas west of the island. NJDEP received numerous comments from bird watching groups and citizens regarding the importance of the island to local and migrating birds. NJDEP's Division of Fish and Wildlife also raised issues with the birds and the presence of an endangered water plant called the Mudwort. There are plans to enhance the dune area at the eastern end of the Pond (near the outfall pipe) to improve access for Piping Plover chicks to move between the Pond and their nesting grounds on the beach side of the dune.

Unfortunately, issues of public participation opportunities continue to be the main problem with the Wreck Pond project. One example is the recent US Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE) Public Notice (PN) for the sand dredging project, which did not include the aforementioned concerns. NJDEP did write a letter to ACOE asking them to rescind the PN but COA was told by ACOE that a new PN was not guaranteed. COA plans to submit comments stating that the changes to the project are significant and require a renewed opportunity for public input.

Dredging Halted at Highland's Sandy Hook Bay Marina

Thanks to the watchful eyes of several concerned Highlands citizens, the illegal dredging and dumping taking place at the Sandy Hook Bay Marina was stopped. COA received an anonymous call on Thursday, April 21st alerting us that a dump truck was disposing of dredged material on a vacant lot on Locust Street. COA immediately investigated and found the dumpsite and the source. The material was being dredged from the marina. COA was told by the Dock Master that the operation was legally permitted. Calls to NJDEP's Office of Dredging and Sediment Technology revealed otherwise.

The marina had already received a "Cease and Desist" order from NJDEP due to several citizens reporting the incident to the NJDEP Hotline. COA contacted the Dock Master later that afternoon to offer our assistance in properly planning their future dredging activities in a more environmentally sound manner.

REMEMBER: CITIZENS CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE!

- To report an illegal dumping activity, call NJDEP at 1-877-WARN DEP.
- For tips and telephone numbers for reporting such activities, check out "Eco-Emergency Contacts" at www.cleanoceanaction.org, or send a self-addressed envelope to COA requesting a copy of "If You See It, Report It."

EPA's new Selenium Standard Not Protective Enough

COA signed onto a letter with 37 other environmental organizations opposing the US Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) "Draft Aquatic Life Criteria for Selenium." EPA's proposed criterion is much less protective than the current criterion. Selenium is a non-metallic element with metal-like properties and is naturally occurring, but is also a harmful by-product of industries (e.g., coal mine operations, coal-fired power plants, copper and phosphate mines, oil refineries, and irrigated agriculture). Selenium causes reproductive and developmental harm in fish and fish-eating birds, including malformations and deformities.

The result of the new criterion would allow more selenium to be discharged into waters by industries, increasing harm to fish, birds, and other species. COA's letter urged EPA to withdraw the selenium standard and develop a new proposal that is based on available science and will reduce, not increase, harm to fish and wildlife species. Also, over 110 scientists in the field of ecotoxicology submitted a letter of opposition to the proposed standard. It is now up to EPA to decide how to proceed. COA's comment letter is available on our website.

OFFSHORE WINDMILLS

Blue Ribbon Panel on Offshore Windmill Facilities

The Panel scheduled four public meetings, one in each coastal county, in April and May. The meetings in Cape May and Ocean Counties have occurred, and the meetings in Atlantic and Monmouth Counties are May 10 and May 23, respectively. The Panel is accepting comments from officials (4:30-6:30PM; public can attend), and from citizens (7-9PM). Following the four meetings, the Panel will break into committees (which will include additional members of the public) to draft a report to the Governor. Once the draft report is released, the Panel will again host public hearings and accept comments before submitting the report to the Governor.

COA is attending the Blue Ribbon Panel public sessions to listen to concerns and issues. To date, a variety of issues have been raised by elected officials, organizations, and citizens including the effects on the \$30 billion NJ tourism industry, commercial fishing, recreational fishing access, as well as the replacement of nonrenewable energy sources, such as Oyster Creek Nuclear Power Plant, with offshore wind energy.

Currently, COA does not have a position for or against offshore industrial wind turbine facilities. Rather, our concerns are regarding the lack of public policy, regulations, evaluation criteria, and governance. In this light, a list of questions are being prepared regarding the broad public policy issues, as well as operation and management of the facilities. COA will present the full list of questions at the May 10th meeting.

Visit www.njwindpanel.org, or send written comments to NJDEP, Ruth Ehinger, PO Box 418, Trenton, NJ 08625, Attn: Offshore Wind Blue Ribbon Panel.

Blowing in the Wind off Jones Beach

At press time, the Long Island Power Authority (LIPA) and F-P-L Energy announced a joint permit application to ACOE to build 40 wind turbines about five miles off the South Shore of Long Island. Call COA's Sandy Hook office for more information.

COASTAL WATER QUALITY ISSUES

US House Energy Bill Threatens Ocean

The Administration's energy bill passed in the US House of Representatives. It includes many provisions that threaten and undermine ocean, coastal, and environmental protections. A majority of NJ's congressional delegation (10 of 13 members) voted against the bill. An energy bill has yet to be introduced in the US Senate. For the list of votes and/or harmful provisions of the bill, please contact COA.

Regional Efforts to Halt Offshore Oil & Gas Drilling

In early April, US Rep. Frank LoBiondo (R-2) introduced a bill that would permanently ban oil and natural gas exploration off the NJ shore. The bill, H.R. 1571, would make permanent the current moratorium on drilling on the outer continental shelf (OCS) and ban leasing for the purpose of exploration or extraction of oil or gas within 125 miles of the NJ coast. The bill is being considered by the House Committee on Resources. For a list of co-sponsors, contact COA's Sandy Hook office.

Also, on April 23rd, US Senator Jon Corzine (D-NJ) and US Rep. Frank Pallone, Jr. (D-6) announced H.R. 1798, a bill to permanently place a moratorium on oil and gas exploration and drilling on the Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) in the entire Mid-Atlantic, including NJ's coast. The new legislation, called the "Clean Ocean and Safe Tourism Anti-Drilling Act," would permanently extend the federal moratorium, now scheduled to expire in 2012. It would also forbid any federal expenditures for preliminary work paving the way for offshore exploration, such as environmental impact studies.

What's Cool at ICE?

The Institute of Coastal Education (ICE) offers two traveling displays. The first display focuses on the Beach Sweeps and the Clean Ocean Zone -- you may have recently seen it at the Cape May County Library South in Lower Township. It will be replaced in May with the second display about Horseshoe Crabs (see picture).

If you have a south Jersey location for one of these cool displays, please contact Tony.

(What's Cool at ICE and Coastal Creature Feature appear every other month. Please see last month's newsletter to guess the April Coastal Creature.)



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Pacific Avenue, Wildwood
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OUTREACH

Kari Jermansen, 732-872-0111, Outreach@cleanoceanaction.org

Spring into Summer By Volunteering for a Clean Ocean!

Join in the fun and volunteer for COA at a spring festival. Volunteers will speak with people about COA and ocean pollution issues. *Free T-shirts* to volunteers of 2 hours or more. To sign-up for the following events, contact Kari or Tony.

May 14 & 15

Ocean Fun Days, Island Beach State Park and Sandy Hook (respectively), 11AM-3PM. **(Kari)**

June 11 & 12

NJ Seafood Festival, Belmar, 11AM-6PM. **(Kari)**
Atlantic City Seafood Festival, Gardener's Basin, 9AM-5PM. **(Tony)**



EVENTS

Jennifer Smiga, 732-872-0111, Events@cleanoceanaction.org

Flounder Festivities

On April 2nd, COA celebrated our 11th Annual John Murphy and Bob Hunter Memorial Flounder Tournament, hosted by Bahrs Landing in Highlands. Despite high winds and rough seas, many families and local anglers fished their way to flounder success. The winners were: 1st Place - Gene Bradford of Rumson, 2.17lbs (won last year as well); 2nd Place - Robert Madej of Iselin, 2.11lbs; and 3rd Place - Tom Rummell of Middletown, 1.94lbs.

Waves of thanks to Lead Sponsor **West Marine** and Co-Sponsors **Atlantic Yacht Sales, Bahrs Landing, Brookdale Community College, Hunterdon Brewing Company, Monmouth County Department of Economic Development and Tourism, NJ 101.5, Salty Dog Publications, and Friends and Family of Ed Westlund, Jr.** for supporting this "no-entry" fee event honoring fishing legends, John Murphy and Bob Hunter. COA also thanks Committee Members Jay Cosgrove, Bill Duncan, Joan Wicklund, Ed Misiewicz, and Tom and Sasha Morford for their thoughtful support and hard work. Special thanks to weigh-in master Dery Bennett, Andrew and Lori Mencinsky of Elite Designs, and Chuck Abel for creating our 1st Place Winner's fabulous flounder trophy.

NJ Gourmet Basket to Benefit Area Waters and Beaches

Patrick Guba, COA supporter and owner of the **Well Bred Basket** in Red Bank, created a "100% Made in New Jersey" gourmet gift basket containing an array of tasty Jersey goodies. Patrick is donating 10% of the profits to COA. The basket makes a great gift for those visiting the Jersey shore, corporate parties, or friends and family who have moved away and are in need of familiar Jersey treats.

"COA's work and results speak for themselves," says Guba. "Through their outreach, volunteers have removed millions of pieces of debris from our beaches. I have always supported them and now plan to do it through my business."

For more information, please contact the Well Bred Basket at (732) 530-5880 or www.wellbredbasket.com.



(L to R) Winners Robert Madej, Gene Bradford, and Tom Rummell



Patrick presents basket to COA