

Participating Organizations

Alliance for a Living Ocean
American Littoral Society
Arthur Kill Coalition
Asbury Park Consortium
Asbury Park Fishing Club
Bayberry Garden Club
Bay Head Shores Fishing Club
Bayshore Saltwater Flyrodders
Belford Seafood Co-op
Beneath The Sea
Bergen Save the Watershed Action Network
Berkeley Shores Homeowners Civic Association
Cape May Environmental Commission
Central Jersey Anglers
Citizens Conservation Council of Ocean County
Clean Air Campaign
Coalition Against Toxics
Coalition for Peace & Justice
Coast Alliance
Communication Workers Assoc., Local 1034
Concerned Businesses of COA
Concerned Citizens of Bensonthurst
Concerned Citizens of COA
Concerned Citizens of Montauk
Dossil's Sea Roamers
Eastern Monmouth Chamber of Commerce
Elizabeth Water Watch
Environmental Response Network
Explorers Dive Club
Fisheries Defense Fund
Fishermen's Dock Cooperative
Friends of Island Beach State Park
Friends of Liberty State Park
Friends of the Boardwalk
Garden Club of Englewood
Garden Club of Fair Haven
Garden Club of Long Beach Island
Garden Club of Morristown
Garden Club of New Jersey
Garden Club of New Vernon
Garden Club of Oceanport
Garden Club of Plainfield
Garden Club of Princeton
Garden Club of Ridgewood
Garden Club of Rumson
Garden Club of Short Hills
Garden Club of Shrewsbury
Garden Club of Spring Lake
Garden Club of Washington Valley
Great Egg Harbor Watershed Association
Greater Point Pleasant Charter Boat Association
Hi-Mar Stripper Club
Highlands Business Partnership
Highlands Chamber of Commerce
Hudson River Fishermen's Association/NJ
Interact Clubs of Rotary International
International Union of Electronic Workers, Dist. 3
Jersey Coast Shark Anglers
Jersey Shore Audubon Society
Jersey Shore Captain's Association
Jersey Shore Running Club
Junior League of Monmouth County
Kiwans Club of Manasquan
Kiwans Club of Shadow Lake Village
Leonardo Party & Pleasure Boat Association
Leonardo Tax Payers Association
Little Egg Harbor Township Education Assoc.
Main Street Wildwood
Manasquan Fishing Club
Marine Trades Association of NJ
Monmouth Conservation Foundation
Monmouth County Association of Realtors
Monmouth County Audubon Society
Monmouth County Friends of Clearwater
National Coalition for Marine Conservation
Natural Resources Protective Association
Navesink River Municipalities Committee
Newcomers Club of Monmouth County
NJ Beach Buggy Association
NJ Commercial Fishermen's Association
NJ Council of Dive Clubs
NJ Environmental Federation
NJ Environmental Lobby
NJ Marine Educators Association
NJ PIRG Citizen Lobby
NJ Sierra Club
NJ Windsurfing Association
Nottingham Hunting & Fishing Club
NYC Sea Gypsies
NY/NJ Harbor Baykeeper
NY Marine Educators Association
Ocean Advocates
Ocean Conservancy
Ocean County Citizens for Clean Water
Ocean Divas
Ocean Wreck Divers
Outreach/First Presbyterian Church of Rumson
Piscataway Saltwater Sportsmen Club
Raritan Bay Angler's Club
Raritan River Friends of Clearwater
Raritan Riverkeeper
Riverside Drive Association
Rotary Club of Long Branch
Saint George's by the River Church
Saltwater Anglers of Bergen County
Sandy Hook Bay Catamaran Club
Save Barnegat Bay
Save the Bay
SEAS Monmouth
Seaweeds Garden Club
Shark River Surf Anglers
Sheepshead Bay Fishing Fleet Assoc.
Shore Surf Club
Sierra Club, Shore Chapter
Soroptimist Club of Cape May County
South Monmouth Board of Realtors
South Monmouth Chamber of Commerce
Staten Island Friends of Clearwater
Staten Island Tuna Club
Strathmere Fishing & Environmental Club
Surfers' Environmental Alliance
Surfrider Foundation, Jersey Shore Chapter
TACK I
Thousand Fathom Club
Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Mon. County
United Boatmen of NY/NJ
United Bowhunters of NJ
Volunteer Friends of Boaters
Waterspirit
Women's Club of Brick Township
Women's Club of Keyport
Women's Club of Merchantville



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“CLEAN OCEAN ZONE” CAMPAIGN LAUNCHED TO STOP OCEAN POLLUTION

*Nearly 40 Organizations Gather and Support the COZ
Citizens Mark 20 Years of Ocean Protection, Say More Must Be Done*

Belmar – Today, organizations, businesses, and citizens united and announced a new grassroots campaign to permanently protect the waters off the coast of New York and New Jersey from polluting and habitat destructive activities. At the Belmar Fishing Club in Belmar, NJ, representatives from fishing, surfing, conservation, environmental, realty, faith-based, and community groups, along with local elected officials, joined together to launch the Clean Ocean Zone or “COZ.” A new website, www.CleanOceanZone.org, was also launched to keep coalition members and the public informed of the new initiative, related actions, and steps to support it.

“Thanks to the vigilance of thousands of citizens over the years, ocean water quality has improved, yet threats remain and the ocean is still vulnerable,” said **Cindy Zipf, Executive Director of Clean Ocean Action**. “The permit-by-permit battles against proposals that threaten the ocean are unsustainable. It is time for a new campaign to lock-in the tremendous path of progress in ocean protection and lock-out environmentally harmful activities. The COZ is a unique tool that will achieve this, protecting these waters for today and future generations.”

A project of Clean Ocean Action, the COZ is a cooperative initiative among organizations and citizens who want to improve and protect the NY/NJ Bight. The legislation to establish the COZ will reduce pollution, protect marine ecosystems, and support marine resources. Of the many issues the COZ will encompass, specifically, it will prohibit new ocean dumpsites, oil and gas exploration and drilling, and the permanent extraction of natural non-renewable resources, including sand and gravel. (See www.cleanoceanzone.org for a list of COZ actions.)

“The key to healthier fish is a clean ocean,” said **James Lovgren, Fishermen’s Dock Cooperative of Pt. Pleasant**. “Ocean water quality has come a long way in the past 20 years and now we need to take steps – like the Clean Ocean Zone – to ensure the health of fish in the future and to safeguard the commercial fishing industry.”

Why the COZ?

The New York/New Jersey Bight is an ecologically rich area and is host to many industries and activities that depend on clean and healthy waters. The NY/NJ Bight is defined as the waters from Montauk Point, New York, to Cape May, New Jersey, offshore to the outer edge of the Continental Shelf (out to 100 miles), and consists of over 19,000 square miles of Atlantic Ocean.

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“Our coastal ocean supports an amazingly rich and diverse ecology. Just like the folks on land, whales, fish, turtles, birds, and other sea life depend on having a home that is healthy and secure,” said **Tim Dillingham, Executive Director of American Littoral Society**. “We have a treasure in our backyards that enriches our lives. We have an obligation to seek its protection, for our families and our future.”

The physical, hydrodynamic, and biological characteristics of the NY/NJ Bight are unique in the world as more than 300 species of fish, nearly 350 species of birds, 7 species of sea turtles, and many marine mammals, such as 10 species of whales and several species of seals and porpoises, frequent this region.

“The waters of the NY/NJ Bight feed the souls of millions of residents and visitors,” said **Suzanne Golas, csjp, of Waterspirit**, a faith-based group in Long Branch.

The NY/NJ Bight also sustains the economy of the region through its bounty of natural resources and intrinsic values for millions of people through tourism.

“Keeping the zone clean will also benefit those who go to the beach and those who make a living from the tourism and fishing industries” according to **Dr. Bill Rosenblatt, Jersey Shore chapter co-founder and national Surfrider Foundation board member**.

“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 Clean Ocean Action for the past 20 years and we are pleased to join with them in the Clean Ocean Zone.”

Unfortunately, the NY/NJ Bight has suffered from decades of ocean dumping and pollution from a number of sources. As recent as the 1980s and 1990s, the waters off the New York and New Jersey coasts were known as the “Ocean Dumping Capitol of the World” due to eight ocean dumpsites, including an area called the “dead sea” (a 20-mile area created by excessive sewage and toxic muck dumping); had beaches littered with garbage, medical waste, and sludge balls; and suffered from water quality so poor that it was unsafe for swimming. These activities all caused an ecological and economic crisis.

Organizations, businesses, and citizens rallied to defend the resources and worked to improve and protect the waters of the Bight. In 1997, this unprecedented action resulted in an end to ocean dumping and dramatically improved water quality.

“Unfortunately, some people have the ‘out of sight, out of mind’ mentality when it comes to the ocean,” said **Gil Hawkins, Secretary for the Hudson River Fishermen’s Association**. “As technology in the world is getting smarter, pollution is not going to go away. That is why we need the COZ to protect this last frontier.”

The NY/NJ Bight continues to be vulnerable to sources of pollution and threats to habitat on a permit-by-permit basis. These destructive activities undermine the ecological and economic potentialities for living marine resources in the NY/NJ Bight and must be prohibited. Current laws and regulations are insufficient to protect the vast value of this ocean region and its living marine resources from polluting and habitat destructive activities. The Bight needs a new effort to justify the progress made in ocean protection the past two decades.

Next Steps for the COZ Campaign

First, the COZ will continue to gather support from concerned citizens, organizations and student groups, environmental commissions, and municipalities. In turn, these groups will take actions to support the COZ and help move the campaign forward. These actions range from municipalities and organizations passing “Statements of Support”, to citizens distributing and signing “Citizen Action Cards” and petitions in support of the COZ. To date, nearly 40 organizations have signed on to support the COZ.

“The wave of support for the Clean Ocean Zone is rolling in. The COZ needs all hands on deck,” said **Kari Jermansen, Outreach Director for Clean Ocean Action**. “There is only one ocean and we are all stewards of it. The COZ is an opportunity for all ocean enthusiasts to get informed about ocean issues and involved in ocean protection.”

Next, organizations will prepare documents and support materials to further describe and lay out a blueprint for the action points of the COZ campaign. These materials will be presented to legislators in the summer, followed by meetings and briefings to discuss legislative opportunities to codify the Clean Ocean Zone. The COZ will need legislation on the federal and bi-state levels (New York and New Jersey), since the COZ includes pollution issues in state and federal waters.

“The COZ will serve as a model for the rest of the country, if not the world, about how to stop pollution and harmful activities in an ecologically and economically significant area,” said **Dery Bennett, President of Clean Ocean Action**.

For more information, graphics, and a list of groups supporting the COZ, visit www.CleanOceanZone.org.

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