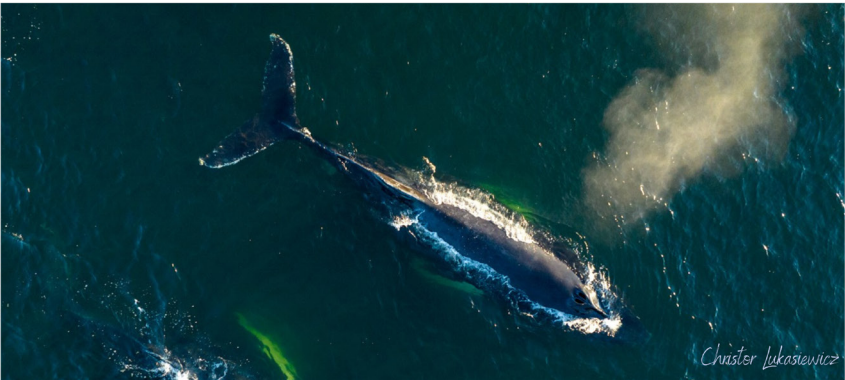




DEFENDING THE GIFT



THAT KEEPS ON GIVING

Dear Friend of the Ocean,

What is your favorite gift from the sea?

Your answer is a celebration of what you value about the ocean and tells your unique sea story.

Whether you enjoy the solace of the shore, the thrill of the surf, or the multitude of sea life, the marvel of the ocean enriches the soul and sustains a clean ocean economy benefiting millions of people. She is the original source of all life, provides most of the oxygen we breathe, and protects the planet from climate change. She is the gift that keeps on giving.

**The most stunning fact of all is that these gifts are free.
All that is required is to do no harm and leave her be.**

Upon reflection, as Clean Ocean Action approaches its 40th anniversary, we know this is true. In the 1980s, the ocean and economy were on the brink of collapse due to dumping all manner of harmful wastes. Together, we ended these abuses—the ocean revived, and now thrives.

However, after years of progress, the tide is again turning against the sea. Always open and voiceless, the ocean is an easy target for exploitation. Today, there is an unprecedented wave of industrial development—massive offshore wind power plants, confined fish farming factories, ocean mining, carbon sequestration, oil and gas drilling and more.

“Those that fail to learn
from history are
doomed to repeat it.”
-Winston Churchill

Amid all this, record numbers of whales and dolphins are dying, and we don't know why. Plastics continue to threaten marine life and people, and waterways are at risk from pollution.

With your support, we are constantly on the case using research, education, and advocacy to track down and eliminate sources of pollution, while also challenging harmful, reckless, and unsustainable industrialization. Of note, COA is not opposed to the concept of offshore wind and has spent years urging a responsible approach. Unfortunately, the current scope, scale, and speed is irresponsible due to the lack of due diligence, good governance, and science.

This is a pivotal time for the health of the ocean upon which our quality of life and livelihoods depend.

Together, we can ensure that the ocean remains a source of wonder, sustenance, and inspiration for all.

Ever onward, together, for the ocean,



Cindy Zipf
Executive Director

P.S. Your funds are in good hands!



Highly rated: In 2023, COA's Charity Navigator rating grew from 99.95% to 100%! Also, Candid (formerly GuideStar) awarded COA their highest ranking, platinum. COA is the only marine protection nonprofit to have held these top honors for an extended period.

2023 HIGHLIGHTS

RESEARCH



Beach Sweeps: NJ's largest, longest running environmental event. The 2022 Beach Sweeps Report highlighted 8,148 volunteers who removed and tallied 376,969 items showing plastic bags, foam, and straws were down more than 35% thanks to NJ's Get Past Plastic Law.



Rally for the Waterways: A unique no-blame game watershed mindfulness approach to track down poo-lution in marine waters with trained volunteers using COA's new in-house lab. Currently, COA is testing Barnegat Bay, Deal Lake, Navesink River, and Shrewsbury River.

EDUCATION



COA launched a new K-12 educational program, **Seaside Education Academy (SEA)**, with 1,300 students in its 1st year. The program provides hands-on educational field trips for students to learn about the marine environment.



For the first time, COA hosted five **Student Summits**. In NJ at Sandy Hook, Island Beach State Park and Cape May. In NY at Great Kills Park. The Summits provided oceanside education to 1,174 students from 49 middle schools.



SEALs visit the NJ State House Senate Chamber

The **Student Environmental Advocates and Leaders (SEAL)** Program empowers teenagers to make a difference through civic and community engagement. The 2023-2024 class commenced with a record class of 28 new and 19 returning students.

ADVOCACY



*Whale #11 stranded in Manasquan, NJ
Photo by: Current Media Company*

Led campaigns with thousands of people for responsible, reasonable, and accountable protections of the ocean and marine life. COA's petition for a federal investigation into the unprecedented deaths of 38 whales and 60 dolphins/porpoises in NY/NJ Bight supported by nearly 400,000 people.



Press conference announcing new petition to stop NJ's expansion of reckless ocean industrialization

COA joined as plaintiff in a legal case against Orsted's offshore wind projects, Ocean Wind 1 & 2; Orsted then promptly, and without notice, cancelled the projects.



To **reduce plastic pollution**, COA led grassroots campaigns, chaired the NJ Plastic Advisory Council (PAC), as well as testified on proposed legislation and regulations at state and federal levels.



COA Press Conference in Atlantic City, NJ on 1/9/23 following the 5th whale death



Listening to shell phone at Eco-Fest



Informed by a local fisherman and surfers, COA alerted federal and state agencies to respond to a beach wash-up of tar balls and oil blobs from Asbury Park to Monmouth Beach



*Surf Open Pro Division Contest Winner, Garrett Servis
Photo by: Ryan Struck Photography*



Thirty SEAL students and their families gathered at COA HQ to share their final projects and graduate



*COA gifts "Triumphant Return" painting to the LoBiondo family
(Left to Right) Artist- Alexis Herman, James LoBiondo, and Cindy Zipf*



*Families spend Mother's Day at the Run the Hook race to keep Mother Ocean pollution free
Photo by: John Vitollo*



Students learn about microplastics while collecting them at Sandy Hook Student Summit



Ocean advocates gather at COA's World Ocean Day event in Seaside Park, NJ, to protect the ocean from reckless industrialization



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