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- Seismic testing off Barnegat Bay slated for this June
- Port Ambrose proposal on hold again
- EPA Beach Act funding at risk

April 2014 Highlights

- TAKE ACTION TO HELP YOUR OCEAN:**
1. Come volunteer for Beach Sweeps on Saturday, April 26, register now at cleanoceanaction.org
 2. Form your own Crowdraise FUNdraising team for Beach Sweeps and support your community
 3. Become a Beach Sweeps Captain! See page two for details.

LABEL

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Happy Earth Month!

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

- 4/10/14** Novartis Community Partnership Day Resource Fair, East Hanover 11:30am-1:30pm
- 4/24/14** Fifth Annual Madison Green Fair, Madison 3:30pm-6:30pm
- 4/27/14** 21st Annual Environmental Expo, Colts Neck 8:45am-1:30pm
- 4/27/14** ACUA Earth Day Festival, Egg Harbor 10:00am-4:00pm
- 5/4/14** Holmdel Earth Day Festival, Holmdel 12:00pm-5:00pm

TRIBUTES



In Honor Of
COA's 30th Anniversary
Craig Wigginton's Birthday

In Memory Of
J Randy Appleby
Joseph Davidson
Adrian DeVeau
Samuel Karinja
Tommy Kraemer
Minnie Shrem
William Whitman

COA Questions New York's Ocean Outfall "Solution"



Photo: Steve Spring

The Bay Park Sewer Treatment Plant (STP) in Nassau County, Long Island has long been in need of upgrades to its aging infrastructure. In addition, the Bay Park STP has been implicated as a significant contributor to nitrogen loading of the Western Bays, the discharge point for plant effluent. Superstorm Sandy added insult to injury by flooding the STP and causing a massive release of untreated and partially treated sewage into the bays and surrounding area. It is clear that upgrades to the plant are critical; however, in recent months environmental activists and politicians have called for the construction of an ocean outfall pipe as a cure-all for the nutrient loading problems facing the bays. The price tag for the pipe: \$600 million.

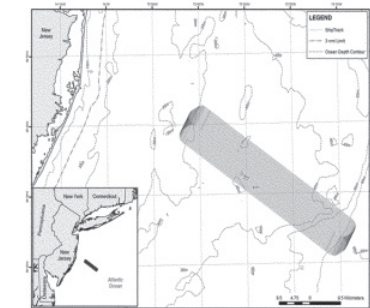
Freshwater is scarce on Long Island, so it seems wasteful to discharge over 50 million gallons of treated freshwater to the ocean each day. COA is seeking answers to several questions about this proposal from regulators, scientists, and the environmental community.

Has a study been done to determine whether the money could be used to build a treatment system that could provide potable water for Long Island? Since nitrogen loading is the major problem plaguing the Western Bays, once this nutrient has been removed, why would the ocean outfall be necessary? What will be done to ensure that the expansion of the Bay Park STP will not increase sprawl and further aquifer depletion?

As the discussion continues, it is essential that we all recognize this as a dilemma. Though cleaner than in the past, the New York Bight is still suffering too; it's downstream of the most densely populated region in the US, at the receiving end of billions of gallons of wastewater, and has been weakened by the adverse effects of climate change. It is painful to hear about "rallying for ocean dumping," especially from environmentalists. Two wrongs don't make a right.

Ocean Area off Barnegat Bay Targeted for Seismic Blast Testing This June

Figure 1. Proposed location of the seismic survey in the Atlantic Ocean off the coast of New Jersey during June through July 2014.



Targeting the National Marine Fisheries Service's (NMFS) proposed authorization permitting marine mammal "takes" during an oceanic seismic study 15 miles off Barnegat Bay this June, Clean Ocean Action (COA) and partner groups have requested a 60-day extension to the comment period and a public hearing in order to question the need for the study as well as NMFS's decision to authorize harassment. The authorization allows over 25 marine mammal species, six of which are endangered, to be subjected to noise created from seismic airguns and three other acoustic blast technologies, all with known potential to harm marine life.

The study, conducted by Columbia University's Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory (L-DEO) and National Science Foundation (NSF), in collaboration with the University of Texas and Rutgers University, proposes seismic testing of ocean sediment to expand scientific understanding of historical changes in sea level rise. COA, along with over 20 businesses, organizations and tribal groups requested the extension to the public comment period to evaluate research deficiencies and data gaps in the NMFS authorization. The proposed area of study off Barnegat Bay will directly blast 240 square miles and cause reverberations for miles further.

"Squid and summer flounder are very important fisheries and this is a key habitat area for them. It has been documented that marine life is impacted by seismic testing," said Captain Jim Lovgren, Director at the Fisherman's Dock Cooperative, Point Pleasant and fourth generation commercial fisherman. "What is the point of this study compared to the risks involved," asked Lovgren.

The multibeam echosounder (MBES), one of four sound producing technologies proposed for use in this study, has been implicated in a massive stranding of 100 melon-headed whales off Madagascar. A scientific panel investigation of the mass stranding determined the use of MBES was the most likely trigger. The investigation report concluded that future assessments and regulatory decisions should consider potential marine mammal behavioral responses from the use of similar MBES systems.

"Neither the NMFS proposed authorization nor the Environmental Assessment upon which the authorization is based discusses potential risks to marine life from multibeam echosounder use," stated Cassandra Ornell, Staff Scientist at Clean Ocean Action.

Community organizations and concerned citizens can find details on how to get involved at cleanoceanaction.org.

EDUCATIONCatie Tobin, Education@cleanoceanaction.org**Captains Meetings for Beach Sweeps**

Spring is officially here and so is our Beach Sweeps! In preparation, COA will host four Beach Captain meetings. These are a great opportunity for new captains to meet veteran captains and for all captains to find out about new procedures and COA issues. The following are the dates and locations:

- Wednesday, April 2nd, 6:00 -7:30 pm, Jenkinson's Aquarium
- Tuesday, April 8th, 6:00 -7:30 pm, Bloom Pavilion in Margate
- Monday, April 14th, 6:00 -7:30 pm, the Cape May Nature Center
- Wednesday, April 23rd, 6:00 -7:30 pm, COA Building on Sandy Hook

Call for New Beach Captains

Contact COA if you are interested in being a Beach Captain at any of these sites - Avalon: 32nd Street, Ocean City: 9th and Boardwalk, Atlantic City: Missouri Avenue Beach, Brigantine: 17th Street Beach, Egg Harbor Township: Longport Dog/Malibu Beach, Longport: 33rd & Atlantic Avenue Beach, Seaside Park: Second Avenue, Brick: F Cove, Brick: Baywood Marsh, Manahawkin: Mallard Island Yacht Club, Pt. Pleasant Beach: Lake Lot.

2013 Annual Beach Sweeps Report

COA will be introducing our 2013 Annual Beach Sweep Report during a press conference on April 10th. The time and location will be released later this month, check the COA website for updates!

Education Ambassadors

Do you love the ocean? Are you a teacher or are you comfortable doing presentations in front of groups? If so, then the Clean Ocean Action Education Ambassador is the program for you! Ambassadors will assist Clean Ocean Action's education program by conducting presentations about ocean pollution issues to school and community groups across the state of New Jersey. Ambassadors will be compensated for their time. For more information, please contact Catie Tobin.

SUPPORTING COA'S WORKDiana Reinhardt Paradis, Development@cleanoceanaction.org**Supporter Spotlight: Bank of America**

Bank of America has been a supporter of COA's Beach Sweeps for five years. Initially a site sponsor, Bank of America has increased their support of this impactful program – serving as a statewide sponsor of the event.

"Every year, Bank of America volunteers gather to help collect, tally and remove hundreds of thousands of pounds of garbage and debris from our beaches, lakes, rivers and streams," said Bob Doherty, New Jersey president, Bank of America. "Beach Sweeps is a simple but powerful way we can positively impact our environment and improve our communities."

Serving individual clients, commercial businesses and institutional investors, Bank of America devotes substantial efforts to reduce the amount of natural resources used at its offices and increase diversion of waste from landfill and the percentage of our occupied space that is LEED certified, in addition to the support of programs like Beach Sweeps.

Supporting Beach Sweeps means supporting our shore communities and a clean ocean economy. For more information, please contact Diana Reinhardt Paradis at development@cleanoceanaction.org.

Bank of America**SCIENCE AND POLICY**Cassandra Ornell, Science@cleanoceanaction.org**Port Ambrose Remains on Hold, Federal Government Frustrated**

Under the federal Deepwater Port Act, applications for LNG facilities in the ocean (like Port Ambrose) must be processed, from application submission to final agency approval, within 356 calendar days. All public input, environmental review, and economic analyses of proposals happen within that timeframe in a 240-day "clock."

On October 21, 2013, the United States Coast Guard (USCG) and the Maritime Administration (MARAD), the two federal agencies responsible for reviewing Liberty's application, officially "stopped the clock" on reviewing and processing the application for 90 days, with the intent to provide Liberty with more time to address over 250 critical data gaps identified during the scoping period by federal agencies and members of the public, including Clean Ocean Action.

The public was kept in the dark about whether or not the clock resumed ticking. On January 19th, 2014, the 90-day suspension concluded; but the public was kept in the dark about whether or not the clock resumed ticking. Finally on March 7, 2014, the USCG sent a letter to Liberty, which stated that the timeline for processing Liberty's application had been retroactively re-suspended effective January 19, 2014. The clock will remain stopped indefinitely, until Liberty finishes addressing the aforementioned 250 data gaps identified by Clean Ocean Action and others during the project scoping process and can provide a complete draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for review and public comment.

One of the major data gap concerns is where onshore infrastructure will be located during the port's construction, something that Liberty has been silent about throughout the application process. The letter contains a list of specific data requests and a strong warning to Liberty: "Our team expects timely responses to the below list [of data requests] and any further requests for necessary information. If, in our collective opinion, your responses are unreasonably delayed, we will take the appropriate action we deem necessary to further the application process."

A risk assessment workshop was recently completed, which identified potential hazards associated with the construction and operation of Port Ambrose. The letter states that a report of the workshop's findings is in production, and shall be included as an appendix to the DEIS once finalized. This, coupled with Liberty's ongoing filling of data gaps, could further delay completion of the DEIS, which may not become available for public review and comment for several months.

Clean Ocean Action continues to call on Governors Christie and Cuomo to exercise their legal right to veto this proposal. Such a veto, under the law, can be transmitted to the Coast Guard and the Maritime Administration, at any time. Call your governor today and ask him to veto Port Ambrose!

Governor Christie: (609) 292-6000. Governor Cuomo: (518) 474-8390.



April is Earth Month! COA is pleased to once again partner with AVEDA salons. Show your support for green cosmetics by visiting AVEDA Salons across the tri-state area. See insert for fun activities and more information. Check the AVEDA website to see if your local salon is an Earth Month Leader! <http://www.aveda.com/>

CITIZEN ACTIONCara Muscio, Coastal@cleanoceanaction.org**A Third Strike for EPA Beach Act Funding?**

For the third year running, the federal budget has attempted to zero out funding for the BEACH Act grant program, which helps fund state water testing programs at swimming beaches. The \$9.5 million in funding had been restored in the budget passed just last month, but has been eliminated again in the proposal for fiscal year 2015. Funding in the program is divided among coastal and Great Lakes states - in 2012, New Jersey received \$274,000, and New York \$341,000. Without this funding, beach monitoring may be reduced in scope or eliminated in some places, and could place beach-goers at increased risk from waterborne pathogens. To the rescue are US Senators Bob Menendez (NJ), Bill Nelson (FL), and Jeff Merkley (OR) who are leading the effort to restore funding (refer to call-to-action below).

The EPA is facing a 3.8 percent overall cut, which amounts to nearly \$310 million dollars. Of the proposed \$7.89 billion budget, \$1 billion is proposed for climate change resilience and increases in other categorical grant funds, while eliminating programs that have "served their purpose or accomplished their mission", according to Administrator Gina McCarthy. Interestingly, the budget document also acknowledges that America's waters are still only fair on average, and that "the rate at which new waters are listed for water quality impairments exceeds the pace at which restored waters are removed from the list".

Also missing from the FY 2015 budget is \$581 million from the State Revolving Funds program, which lends money to states to maintain and improve drinking water, sewage and stormwater infrastructure. Municipalities receive grants from the state, and then repay the principal and interest, which are reinvested back into the program. Reductions in this program come on the heels of post-Sandy assessments that estimate \$2.6 billion in water and wastewater infrastructure repair and resiliency measures needed in New Jersey alone.

Call the Capitol Hill Switchboard at 202-224-3121 and ask your legislators not to eliminate the BEACH Act grant and State Revolving Funds programs in 2015.

A Day for Educators To Learn

The Ocean County Soil Conservation District will host the 17th Annual Barnegat Bay Educators Roundtable on April 30th at the Lighthouse Center for Natural Resource Education in Waretown. This successful program allows local environmental experts to share their resources with teachers and other outreach educators. COA's Catie Tobin and Cara Muscio will present area teachers with information on pointless pollution, Beach Sweeps, marine debris and plastics, and recent information about microplastics. The event runs from 3:30 -7:30pm, and includes a light meal.

See the link below for more information or to register for this FREE event.

<http://www.soildistrict.org/educational-programs/roundtable/>