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**Governor Christie Kicks Off New Year by Signing Landmark Legislation To Protect the Shore
NJ to Now Lead the Nation in Protecting Bays from Fertilizer Pollution**

Waretown, NJ, January 5, 2011 – Today, Governor Christie signed three important pieces of environmental legislation into law—making New Jersey a leader in taking aggressive measures to protect its waters.

The package of bills were introduced and championed by Senator Bob Smith and Assemblyman John McKeon and address three problems that have plagued New Jersey’s water quality for years. A coalition of citizens and groups that care about marine environment drove the legislative campaign to success, proving that people power still works

The “Fertilizer Bill” (A2290) codifies best management processes for fertilizer for use on lawns throughout the State of NJ by regulating the content and application of fertilizer. This bill was initially conceptualized as a model local ordinance by Save Barnegat Bay before it gained momentum at the State level. Clean Ocean Action’s role in passage of this bill was to bring our science and legal team to help ensure the bill was ecologically sound and strong.

Additionally, the “Soil Health”(A2501) addresses the need for comprehensive soil care practices at a Statewide level. This new law will uses a common sense approach to soil management and sets best management processes for soil care throughout the State.

Lastly, the “NJDOT Stormwater Basin Bill” (A3606) speaks to a hidden need in our communities—that of our stormwater basins. This last piece of legislation will provide dedicated funding for the restoration and repair of DOT managed stormwater basins and mandates that the Department of Transportation annually review their stormwater basins and address any problems that are found.

“It is a good day for the Jersey Shore and a great start for the new year”, said Cindy Zipf, Executive Director of Clean Ocean Action. “These laws are the first wave of bills to bring water quality protection into the 21st century. We commend Governor Christie, Senator Smith, and Assemblyman McKeon for their leadership in passing these bills that in time will bring some long overdue relief to the beleaguered bays. Countless hours of citizen action has proved that the power of the people can bring about change. These initiatives, as well as Governor Christie’s Barnegat Bay package and his vow to oppose offshore drilling and liquefied natural gas facilities, are helping put New Jersey back as the national ocean leader. We in New Jersey know that protecting our greatest natural resource, the ocean, is the core of improving the economy”, she added.

“With the Governor’s signature, New Jersey enters a new era of common-sense environmental protection that protects the rights of localities and businesses while ensuring a greener future.”

“The environmental pressures we’re faced with in New Jersey call for new tactics and new ideas, and the Legislature, Governor, and stakeholders have come together to turn those ideas into laws.” echoed Sean Dixon, Coastal Policy Attorney for Clean Ocean Action.

Heather Saffert, Staff Scientist for Clean Ocean Action concluded that “How people and towns manage their lawns, soil and stormwater affects the health of NJ’s waters – especially Barnegat Bay. These laws help reduce pollution and increase the public’s awareness of these problems and importance of our natural resources.”

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