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- 7-Mile Garbage Slick Hits Beaches
- Fast Track Permitting Law Coming to a Town Near You
- Seaweed Rebellion Unleashed

August 2004 Highlights

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Institute of Coastal Education
Wildwood, NJ 609-729-9262

Clean Ocean Action
PO Box 505
Sandy Hook, NJ 07732-0505
732-872-0111
www.CleanOceanAction.org



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Clean Ocean Action, PO Box 505, Highlands, NJ 07732

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August 2004

August 2, 9, 16, 23, Mondays
- Young Scientists Programs, call Margate Community Education and Recreation Department (609-823-6658). See inside.

August 7-8, 14-15, Sat. & Sun.
- 2004 Clean Ocean Action Shore Tips (COAST) Campaign, beaches and beach clubs in Monmouth & Ocean Counties. To volunteer at sites, see inside.

August 21-22, Sat. & Sun.
- Monmouth County Friends of Clearwater Festival, 11:30AM-7PM, Sunset Park, Asbury Park.

SAVE THE DATE

September 17, Friday
- Sunset at Sandy Hook, 6PM, Sea Gulls' Nest, Sandy Hook. Check your mail for an invite, or call COA.

September 30, Thursday
- Ocean Golf Classic, 10:30 Registration, Rumson Country Club, Rumson. Call COA to register.

COA PARTICIPATING ORGANIZATIONS Featuring...Monmouth County Friends of Clearwater

Each summer, environmental advocates and music fans look forward to the popular "Clearwater Festival." Do you know the history of the group that organizes the event?

Monmouth County Friends of Clearwater (MCFC) is a nonprofit, grassroots organization staffed and run by volunteers. MCFC has been active in pollution issues since 1975 in Raritan Bay and along the Jersey Shore. The origin of MCFC was inspired by Pete Seeger, who formed the Hudson River Sloop Clearwater organization 26 years ago. Seeger and his friends built a replica of a 19th century sloop, the "Clearwater," and sailed from town to town on the Hudson River to build awareness about pollution, spreading the word for a cleaner environment by word, music, and action.



Locally, popular folksinger Bob Killian, formerly of Atlantic Highlands, NJ, founded MCFC two decades ago based on the efforts along the Hudson. Today, the Hudson River Sloop Clearwater and MCFC are over 8000 strong and have a record of successful lawsuits against polluters and promotes many educational programs for students of all ages.

Clearwater also organizes and participates in clean-ups, environmental watches, political action, and education programs, which includes an exciting, hands-on Traveling Environmental Festival for schools and youth groups. MCFC works with other organizations on environmental issues. For example, Ben Forest of the MCFC Environmental Policy committee is Treasurer of COA's Board of Trustees.

The huge volunteer-run event, the "Clearwater Festival," is MCFC's annual open-air music and arts festival celebrating the spirit of people working and singing together for the environment. The finest in music and dance combines with environmental activism to celebrate our waterways. See what MCFC is all about:

29th Annual MCFC Festival
August 21 and 22
11:30AM - 7:00PM
Sunset Park, Asbury Park, NJ
Rain or shine
Call (732)872-9644, or
visit www.clearwatermc.org.

Adapted from MCFC website.

7-MILE GARBAGE SLICK HITS BEACHES

Northern Monmouth County Awash in Debris
Plan to Prevent Slicks Fails; Elected Officials Call for Action



Syringes and medical waste found in latest wash-up.

The afternoon of July 7, COA received a telephone call from an outraged Fair Haven, NJ, citizen, who was exercising on the public beach in Sea Bright and observed large amounts of plastics and lumber on the beach and floating in the water, and one syringe. COA reported the incident to the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) and went to the scene to investigate. Indeed, debris, including plastic tampon applicators, condoms, and grease balls, lined the tide line as far as the eye could see, north and south. Within two hours, nine syringes, some with needles attached, were picked up on a half-mile of the Sea Bright beach, among other debris.

According to conversations with NJDEP that evening, the department knew about a 7-mile garbage slick offshore that afternoon and was monitoring it. The slick washed ashore after a wind shift to the east-southeast.

This incident follows many other similar wash-ups on NJ's beaches this year and in 2003. The source of this wash-up was determined by officials to be the combined sewers of north Jersey and New York City. The heavy rains earlier that week, combined with the increased activity in and around the region on 4th of July weekend, flushed the combined sewers (which includes sanitary waste and stormwater runoff) into New York Harbor and out into the ocean.

Plan Breaks Down

A NY/NJ Floatables Action Plan, an inter-agency effort to prevent floatables or debris from getting into the open ocean from the Hudson-Raritan Estuary (including the Harbor), was developed and implemented in 1989. This wash-up, in addition to the previous incidents, is evidence that the Plan failed or has broken down.

US Representative Frank Pallone (D-6) sent a letter to the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the US Army Corps of Engineers (ACE), two of the several agencies party to the plan, stating, "I am greatly disturbed that your agencies did not immediately spring into action...to ensure that the garbage was contained and removed from the New York/New Jersey harbor before it reached the Atlantic Ocean."

In response, EPA and ACE officials revisited the plan to determine ways to improve it. The plan now has renewed communication procedures between agencies and scheduled daily coverage with vessels. The agencies plan to review surveillance and response efforts.

NJ Assemblyman Sean Kean (R-11) also raised questions about the response and lack of clear information from NJDEP about the known slick. To date, the State of NJ has not responded to his request for clarification and information.

Attention Citizens -- If You See It, Report It

This incident is a reminder that citizens should report spills or slicks by calling the appropriate agency or organization. For information on how to report incidents and the emergency telephone numbers, visit www.CleanOceanAction.org, or contact COA for the handy "If You See It, Report It," tip card.



A syringe with needle attached is nearly camouflaged with seaweed.

DON'T MISS THIS GREAT OPPORTUNITY!

You are invited to view, enjoy, and purchase Ross Whitaker's photographic artistry of the seashore.

Photographs are displayed at Ship Ahoy Beach Club, Sea Bright, and available to the public for purchase until Labor Day.

Thanks to Ross' care for the ocean and his generosity, proceeds will benefit COA. To purchase by check, Visa, or MasterCard, call 732-872-0111.

CONTAMINATED SEDIMENTS

Kristen Milligan, Ph.D., 732-872-0111, Science@cleanoceanaction.org
For more information or to review comments, visit [Action Alerts at www.CleanOceanAction.org](http://www.CleanOceanAction.org)

Scientific Review Panel for HARS Meets

On June 30, COA attended the Scientific Review Panel (SRP) meeting in New York City for the Historic Area Remediation Site (HARS). The SRP is a collection of technical representatives from agencies, interest groups, and academia. This group is kept informed about monitoring activities at HARS and is expected to provide feedback about the studies. Meetings are supposed to be held annually. However, there has been some delay in this timeline.

All the monitoring reports from HARS are on the US Army Corps of Engineer's website: <http://www.nan.usace.army.mil/business/prjlinks/dmmp/benefic/hars.htm>. Monitoring that has been completed includes detailed tracking of barges placing material at HARS, success of sand caps that were placed over dioxin-laden mounds in the mid-90s, fish tagging studies in progress to evaluate the use of HARS by fish, and contaminant levels in sediments and bottom-dwelling worms.

Of particular interest, the contaminant studies have not been fully completed and COA anticipates the results. Preliminary data for toxin levels in worms show that levels of contamination of polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) and hydrocarbons within un-remediated areas of HARS have not appreciably decreased. However, there were not enough worms that could be collected in the newly capped areas to find out if those areas were less contaminated. The data also show that levels of background (outside HARS but in the NY Bight Apex) PCB contamination in the worms have not decreased over the past decade. This last finding, although preliminary, is illustration of the persistence of PCBs in the coastal environment.

COASTAL WATER QUALITY ISSUES**Fast Track Permitting Law Coming to a Town Near You**

The "EZ Pass for Polluters" or "Fast Track" bill (S1368), signed into law by NJ Governor McGreevey on July 9, 2004, sets back the state's environmental and public health protections 30 years. The law restricts our public agencies' review of proposals, gives industries' paid consultants broad powers to govern activities, eliminates or severely limits citizens' review and comment on proposals, and establishes an "Ombudsman," recently appointed Susan Bass Levin, who has the power to require that any new rules or regulations expedite growth, putting growth ahead of the environment.

A coalition of environmental, labor, housing, and religious groups, including COA, called the "Save NJ Coalition," is spearheading the fight against this bill. The Save NJ Coalition is calling on Governor McGreevey and state legislators to:

- 1) Adopt rules and laws that minimize the damage this law does to the environment and public health;
- 2) Adopt rules and laws that advance environmental and public health protections (i.e., threatened/endangered species, sewer/septic, surface water quality standards, water allocation, and Category 1 rules; and
- 3) Repeal the law and pass real "smart growth" legislation.

Two public meetings, in Trenton and Manahawkin, NJ, were organized by Save NJ and held in late July to explain the law's implications and to provide public recommendations to the State of NJ. For a list of specific Save NJ recommendations, visit www.savenj.net or contact COA.

OUTREACH

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

**Seaweed Rebellion Unleashed**

Last month, 250 seaweed rebels, citizen activists, and educators, representing 170 organizations from more than 25 states and territories gathered to build a strong network of bottom-up seaweed (marine grassroots) activists and groups to promote comprehensive coastal and ocean protection legislation and policies. The Blue Vision conference, organized by the Blue Frontier Campaign, included appearances by marine conservationist and Jaws author, **Peter Benchley**, and **Philippe Cousteau**, grandson of the great Jacques Cousteau. **Jim Connaughton**, Chair of the White House Council on Environmental Quality, and **Roger Ballentine**, Presidential Candidate John Kerry's senior advisor on energy and the environment, presented their positions on coastal and ocean issues. Representatives from the US Commission on Ocean Policy and the Pew Oceans Commission reviewed findings of their comprehensive report on the ocean. Numerous panel-led discussions focused on issues including pollution reduction, ocean governance, and action at the local, "seaweed" level.

On the last conference day, seaweed rebels met with US Senators and Representatives from their respected states on Capital Hill. The groups from New Jersey, including COA, Waterspirit, and the Shark Research Institute, met with **Senator Lautenberg (D-NJ)** and staff, **Senator Corzine's (D-NJ)** staff, **Representative Holt (D-12)** and staff, and staff from the offices of Representatives **Andrews (D-1)**, **LoBiondo (R-2)**, **Saxton (R-3)**, **Smith (R-4)**, and **Pallone (D-6)**. The topics discussed with these elected officials included ratifying the Law of the Sea, restoring funding for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and a law to properly establish NOAA, and locally, the Clean Ocean Zone.

To recognize leaders in the blue movement, six citizens from academia, the media, and groups received the first annual Blue Frontier Awards. In particular, the "Hero of the Seas" Award, was given to seaweed rebel **Dery Bennett**, president of COA's Board of Trustees. COA's Cindy Zipf presented the award using photographs of Dery and his invaluable contributions to a seaweed movement.



For more information about the conference, participants, award recipients, photographs, or about Blue Frontier, visit www.bluefront.org.

COA To Be Cool & Dry

Cabelas outdoor outfitters donated two "EZ-Up Sierra Instant Shelters" with accessories for use at festivals and C.O.A.S.T. events. We are grateful for their support of our outreach programs. Our volunteers will now be better protected from the sun and rain that often accompanies outdoor events.

Coastal Creature Feature

American Lobster
Homarus americanus

June's creature feature was the **American Lobster**. Because of their hard outer shell and jointed legs, the lobster is related to shrimp, crabs, barnacles, and insects. Lobsters crawl rather than swim and aggressively compete for shelters in rocky areas. They eat mainly live food such as fish, small crustaceans, and mollusks. Lobsters have a fascinating life cycle, with part of its young life floating in the water to disperse. Have you ever wondered why lobsters turn red when cooked? Live American lobsters are usually olive green or greenish brown, though dusky orange and even bright blue lobsters are sometimes found. The major pigment in a lobster's shell is called "astaxanthin." When chemically bound to proteins such as in the lobster's shell, astaxanthin changes its red color to greenish or bluish. When lobsters are cooked, the heat breaks down the chemical bonds between astaxanthin pigment and the proteins, so that the pigment's true color red is revealed. For more information, check out <http://seagrant.gso.uri.edu/factsheets/fslobster.htm>. Congratulations to **Pam Semmel** of **Highlands** for correctly identifying the Lobster.

This month's creature feature has been found at many beaches this summer along the NJ coast. This clear, grape-like species resembles a jellyfish, but in fact is not. It is also incorrectly identified as fish eggs. To enter for a chance to win a COA T-shirt, send your guess by mail, fax, or e-mail (PO Box 505, Sandy Hook, NJ 07732; fax 732-872-8041, SandyHook@CleanOceanAction.org).



August Coastal Creature

(What's Cool at Ice and Coastal Creature Feature will appear every other month.)

C.O.A.S.T.

Kate Tatem, 732-872-0111, Coast@cleanoceanaction.org



Kate displays T-shirt at COAST press conference.

Continuing to COAST Along the NJ Coast

After a successful kick-off of the 2004 COAST Campaign and four weekends, volunteers continue to spread the word about the latest ocean protection issues and pollution prevention. In just one month, COAST volunteers visited 11 sites and raised \$2,125!

COAST was underway after a successful press conference on July 1. Thanks to **Rich Held of Bradley Beach Environmental Commission** for hosting the event, and to **Ed Lippincott of Chef Ed's in Belmar** who represented coastal businesses. Special thanks to **NJ Assemblyman Joe Azzolina (R-13)**, who also supports COAST. Thanks to **Tim Dillingham of American Littoral Society**, **Suzanne Golas of Waterspirit**, **Brian Hegarty of Shark River Cleanup Coalition**, **Jeff Tittel of Sierra Club-NJ**, **Jenny Vickers of NJ Environmental Federation**, and **Marie Curtis of NJ Environmental Lobby**, for attending the press conference and protesting the Fast Track Bill (see related story), also the focus of the COAST campaign. Together, these speakers showed how COAST encourages elected officials, environmental advocates, local leaders, coastal businesses, and the community to work together in environmental protection.

Volunteers are still needed for some locations: August 7 & 8 at Ortle Beach, Lavallette, Island Beach State Park, Seaside Park, and Ocean Grove. Also, contact COA to find out about rain dates for several Sea Bright locations. Help end the season with a bang by volunteering at the Clearwater Festival on August 21 & 22 in Asbury Park! Please contact Kate to offer a helping hand. All ages are welcome!

Also, remember to stop by any COAST table, say hello to our volunteer, show your support for the Clean Ocean Zone (COZ), sign a petition, learn ways you can help be the solution to ocean pollution, and don't forget to buy a T-shirt.

Welcome, Julia

Julia Brodbeck joins the COA team as South Jersey COAST Intern for the summer. Julia is coordinating COAST tables in Cape May, Atlantic, and Cumberland Counties and is working on COZ initiatives. Julia is also assisting with education programs at the Institute of Coastal Education. Entering her junior year at Vanderbilt University in Nashville, TN, Julia is working toward a Bachelor of Science degree in Biological Sciences, with a focus on Ecology, Evolution, and Organismal Biology.

EDUCATION

Julie Hajdusek, 732-872-0111, Education@cleanoceanaction.org
Tony Totah, 609-729-9262, Wildwood@cleanoceanaction.org

COA's New Anti-Pollution Educational Tool

As a 20th Anniversary gift to COA, **ShopRite of the Wakefern Foods Corporation** donated a **Coastal EnviroScape** watershed model to be used in our education programs. The model is a three-dimensional landscape map that represents typical sites found in a coastal area, including a dredged channel, resort community, treatment plant, gasoline station, marina, residence with septic tank, and an urban community. This interactive watershed model demonstrates point source and non-point source pollution.



COA thanks ShopRite for their continued support and looks forward to educating students of all ages with this exciting new tool. To schedule a program, call Julie.

Young Scientist Programs

Summer marine science programs for kids continue in Margate with: Critter Encounter (Aug. 2), Shells by the Shore (Aug. 9), World of Whales (Aug. 16), and Time to Hit the Beach (Aug. 23). Call the Margate Community Education & Recreation Department at (609) 823-6658.