

COA POLICY NEWS

Dave Byer, Policy@CleanOceanAction.org

NJ Voters Overwhelmingly Support Environmental Protections, But Does Trenton?

According to a recent Monmouth University/Gannett NJ Poll, NJ voters would strongly oppose any weakening of environmental regulations by Governor Chris Christie. Among registered voters, 42% would be very upset if environmental regulations are relaxed, 37% would be somewhat upset, 15% would be not too upset, and just 4% would be not at all upset. With 79% of voters clearly in favor of protecting the environment and only 4% having no interest in upholding standards, this is perhaps one of the clearest mandates to our elected officials in Trenton.

Unfortunately, many officials still haven't received the message. Legislators in Trenton are trying again to weaken environmental regulations by allowing developers to continue ignoring NJ's Water Quality Management Planning Rules. Bills A2070 and S1337 from Assemblyman Jerry Green and Senator Paul Sarlo, respectively, would undermine the Department of Environmental Protection's authority to prohibit the extension of sewer lines, with resulting sprawl, into environmentally sensitive areas, wetlands and rare species habitats. Governor Corzine vetoed a similar bill before leaving office and COA urges Governor Christie to do the same. COA demands more leadership in the legislature, following the lead of those who voted "No" last session, including Senator Buono and Assembly members Gove, Holzapfel, Rumpf, and McKeon.

COA is concerned with recent Executive Orders from Governor Christie that could undermine environmental protections. Executive Order 2 in particular sets standards that could favor industry and weaken current standards. COA is watching closely to make sure the Executive Orders do not lead to the undermining of our environmental protections.

Smoke Free Beaches

On February 18, COA's Executive Director Cindy Zipf testified before the NJ Senate's Health Committee in favor of three bills that would limit cigarette smoking in certain settings. The bills were from Senators Barbara Buono and Loretta Weinberg (S669), Andrew Ciesla (S889), and Shirley Turner (S443).

Cigarette butts are the first or second most common piece of litter picked up by COA volunteers during our Beach Sweeps. In 2009, volunteers collected 30,784 cigarette butts during the bi-annual Sweeps. Cigarette butts can contain chemicals including lead, benzene and arsenic which are harmful to the environment and are often ingested by wildlife mistaking them for food. Cigarette butts persist as a pollutant in the marine environment, breaking into smaller pieces that can bio-accumulate in the seafood we eat. They also contain plastic elements that do not biodegrade.

Banning smoking on public beaches is an important first step in reducing this source of pollution. We must also work to reduce upland sources of pollution through enforcement of litter laws, as many pieces of pollution start inland, wash down storm drains to rivers and oceans and then back to our beaches. COA applauds these leaders in their efforts to "go green" to save our big blue.



EDUCATION

TaviaDanch, Education@CleanOceanAction.org

Spring into Action for Clean Water!

Just when you think this stormy winter will never end, spring emerges along with the quest for a green lawn, which often results in the improper use of fertilizer. Current fertilizer application rates are overwhelming and far exceed the amounts absorbed by plants and lawns. Excessive nutrients find their way to the nearest water body and have the potential to destroy its fragile ecosystem. The following tips can help you maintain a healthy and "ecofriendly" yard:

- Reduce the size of your lawn by adding ground cover and gardens. Lawns are high maintenance, expensive and add to runoff problems.
- Use native plants to increase water filtering and create a wildlife habitat.
- Don't fertilize your lawn or garden until you test the soil. Soil-testing kits are available at garden centers.
- If needed, use slow release, water insoluble and/or organic fertilizers. For a list of these see www.nitrogenfree.com.
- Aerate your soil and remove dead organics by raking.
- Install rain barrels at your downspouts to reuse rain water and prevent runoff.
- Mow high and often. Leave clippings to fertilize naturally.

For more tips on lawn care, visit www.CleanOceanAction.org and follow the links for "10 Tips."

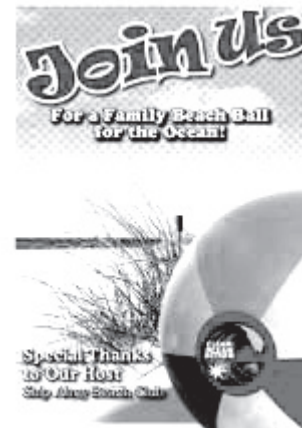
Attention Middle School Teachers! Join COA for a Day of Science & Advocacy at the Beach

Middle Schools (grades 5-8) in Northern & Central Counties (Sussex, Warren, Hunterdon, Mercer, Monmouth, Middlesex, Somerset, Union, Essex, Hudson, Bergen, Passaic and Morris) are invited to participate in the **23rd Annual Spring Student Summit at Sandy Hook May 13 or 14 from 9am to 12:30pm**. Students enjoy a day of field trips and hands-on learning that focuses on the marine ecosystem, protecting the ocean environment and reducing marine debris. For information and the required application see www.cleanoceanaction.org or contact Meg at citizens@cleanoceanaction.org or 732-872-0111.

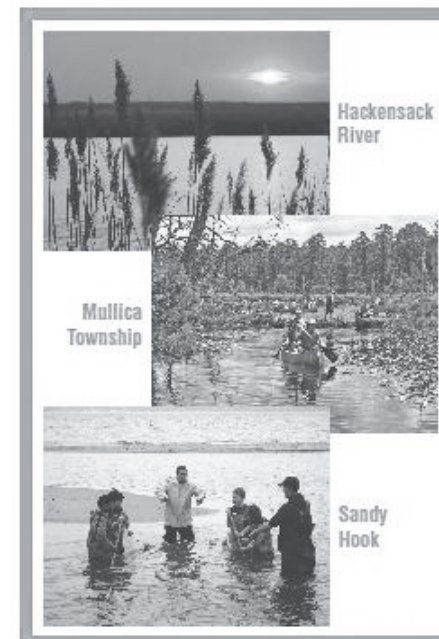
EVENTS

Jennifer Smiga, Events@CleanOceanAction.org
Emily Hackett, Programs@CleanOceanAction.org

Beach Ball



SAVE THE DAY FOR... "BEACHY" FUN IN MAY!
Family Beach Ball for the Ocean
May 23, 2009, 3-7pm
Ship Ahoy Beach Club, Sea Bright



EarthShare Celebrates New Jersey

Fine Wine—Wonderful Food—Great Art

Exclusive Experience New Jersey
Naturally Auctions

March 26, 2010
Laurita Winery 6:30 PM

Tickets and information available online

EarthShareNJ.org
Or call 609-989-1160

EarthShare New Jersey makes a difference for your health and our water, air and land.
Become a partner today!

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One environment. One simple way to care for it.

COA SCIENCE NEWS

Heather Saffert, PhD, Science@CleanOceanAction.org

Army Dismisses Public's Call for Environmental Impact Statement at Fort Monmouth

The Army has determined that the closure of Fort Monmouth, planned for September 2011, will have "no significant adverse effects on the quality of the human or natural environment." The decision was based on an Environmental Assessment (EA) of Fort Monmouth released last spring and public comments on the EA. Several environmental investigations were not completed or even included in the EA. COA and others found the EA to be inadequate and concluded that further investigation in the form of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) was needed. The towns surrounding Fort Monmouth also called for an EIS. However, since the Army determined no significant impacts will occur, an EIS will not be done.

In addition, although further investigations are on-going or intended, the Army said that they could not wait for their completion. Despite the many public comments criticizing the EA, the Army still maintained that the EA was sufficient. The Army's determination can be downloaded from the following link: <http://www.monmouth.army.mil/C4ISR/brac/oed/FinalFNSIsignedFeb10.pdf>.

SEA SCENES

LUSH Cosmetics Supports COA's Fight Against Ocean Industrialization

As Clean Ocean Action's first international business supporter opposed to Liquefied Natural Gas, LUSH Fresh Handmade Cosmetics has made a generous donation to support COA's efforts against ocean industrialization.

"LUSH Cosmetics stands firmly behind supporting Clean Ocean Action's efforts against the proposed LNG projects. We have always held strong beliefs that the well-being of the environment, wildlife, and people should always come before profit," stated Erika Edwards, LUSH Cosmetics.

This is a critical time for outreach and education on the looming off-shore projects since the determination about whether or not to industrialize the Atlantic Ocean will be decided within the next couple of years. Support from LUSH Cosmetics and like-minded businesses will help our coalition and our supporters hold elected officials accountable. Special thanks to LUSH for their tremendous support! For more information on LUSH Fresh Handmade Cosmetics and their core beliefs visit <http://www.lushusa.com/shop/>.



Get Involved! Volunteer Opportunities:

Volunteer to staff information and action tables at the following events:

March 25: Enviropalooza 6:30-9pm

Rumson-Fair Haven High School

March 26-28: Paddlesport Presented by Jersey Paddler

3/26, 12pm-9pm; 3/27, 9am-6pm; 3/28, 10am-4:30pm

Garden State Exhibit Center, Somerset

April 7: Earth Celebration 10am-3pm

William Paterson University, Wayne

Get ready for **Earth Month April 2010!** We have multiple events scheduled every weekend in April and need your help to cover all of them.

Find our volunteer form online at cleanoceanaction.org under "Help Your Ocean." If you are interested and available to volunteer, contact Meg at citizens@cleanoceanaction.org or 732-872-0111.