



Clean Ocean Action

Ocean Advocacy Since 1984
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*Sometimes in the waves of change, we find our true direction.
– unknown*

Winter 2021

Dear <Donor>,

Greetings from the grand shared waters of the New Jersey/New York Coasts—one of the last remaining wild and industry-free ocean realms in the nation. Rich and teeming with marine life, it is a wonder and essential to our beachy quality of life.

However, it was not always so. In the not so distant past these waters were a national disgrace due to ocean dumping, medical waste, and raw sewage. While we have come a long way, thanks to your support, looming and ever-increasing industrialization, pollution, and plastics put the ocean at risk.

Ever ask where would you be without the sea?

By providing joy, solace, food, jobs, fun, mystery, life, and the very air we breathe, the ocean is what makes this region special. In fact, one under-appreciated gift of the sea is the buffering of impacts from climate change by absorbing heat and carbon dioxide. Indeed, our fish would likely already be poached were it not for the ocean.

Considering all it provides to our ecosystem, economy, and soul, perhaps the better question is,

What can you do for the sea?

By supporting Clean Ocean Action (COA), you know these to be true:

- 1) Protecting the ocean is our only priority. All that we do links to improving the health of the ocean, which helps protect us from climate change.
- 2) You are the essential element for success, providing us with the power and sustainability to succeed.

Whether with your dollars, time, voices, and/or dedication, your support is at the heart of our extraordinary success. You acknowledge that you not only value the ocean and its many remarkable gifts, but you trust Clean Ocean Action's unique ocean-first, alliance-based, no-blame game approach to meet challenges and opportunities. This time-tested successful strategy is implemented by our mighty team, including a PhD, an attorney, and professionals in science, policy, and education for maximum impact.

Significant challenges faced our ocean this year, which also highlight future formidable threats:

- 👉 Significant beach closures due to garbage wash-ups, including syringes and poo-llution.
- 👉 Offshore fossil fuel projects, such as enormous methane gas pipelines.
- 👉 Massive die-offs and washups of menhaden due to a fish-pandemic called *Vibrio anguillarum*.
- 👉 Single-use plastic use is surging due to the pandemic, threatening ocean life and public health.
- 👉 Fast-tracking the ocean privatization of 1.2 million acres (size of the Grand Canyon National Park) for massive offshore wind facilities without protections and safeguards for marine life, and the enactment of a NJ law prohibiting towns from protecting their coastal environments from associated onshore infrastructure development.

COA is proactively confronting these challenges and more:

- 💧 **Reducing Poo-llution** to make waterways safe for families and fish with our model “Find-it and Fix-it” programs, which includes completing an in-house lab to quickly and efficiently engage citizen science monitoring programs to track down and eliminate sources of poo-llution by uniting communities.

- ◆ **Reducing Plastic Pollution** by using Beach Sweeps data painstakingly collected by thousands of volunteers to drive laws and policies to reduce the use of single-use items, including straws, bags, and Styrofoam, as well as to support recycling programs.
- ◆ **Supporting Responsible and Reasonable Offshore Wind** by working with a network to ensure the race to industrialize the ocean does not harm marine life and the ocean's ability to reduce climate change.
- ◆ **Blocking Fossil Fuel** projects using watch-dog techniques and maintaining an ever-ready coalition to oppose efforts for expansion of offshore oil and gas drilling or pipelines.
- ◆ **Reducing Polluted Runoff** by supporting and implementing programs for reducing pavement and land-based chemical use, such as fertilizers, pesticides, oil, salt, and dirt which make waterways unhealthy.

While the threats to the ocean and planet are daunting, we have the power to solve these problems.

Educating, empowering, and motivating the small and the tall are key. COA's new and enduring programs continue to make waves in the hearts of those willing to listen and believe they can make a difference.

Teach a student to read and you open the world, teach a student to lead and you change the world.

The next generation is keenly aware of our planet's crisis and eager to help. COA hosts many programs from Beach Sweeps and Student Summits to online video tools and in-school educational experiences for thousands of volunteers and students. These programs receive high marks from citizens, teachers, and students and provide transformative experiences that motivate long-term commitments to environmental stewardship.

Most recently, thanks to Impact 100 Jersey Coast, COA launched an inaugural program called **SEAL – Student Environmental Advocates and Leaders (SEAL)**. Twelve students volunteered and dove into the unexpectedly virtual program, conquering their fears and using the training and tools to make positive environmental changes in their communities. Their experiences were profound and priceless. Here are just two examples:

“It was really exciting officially getting something done and seeing that I could actually make some kind of difference.”
Jackie, inaugural SEAL student

“You don't need to be on national news to make a difference.”
Anonymous SEAL response to a survey question

In short, Clean Ocean Action is not just our name, it is our mission. These above highlights just skim the surface of COA's many issues, programs, and actions.

However, the path forward is formidable. Only your true-blue support and dedication empowers and sustains COA's intense and complex work to ensure a healthy vibrant ocean for today and tomorrow.

Please answer the call of the ocean and support Clean Ocean Action.

Together, ever onward,



Cindy Zipf
Executive Director

*P.S. Your support is in good hands. Clean Ocean Action is proud to have the **highest ratings** from the nation's largest, most respected nonprofit assessment organizations, specifically:*

- *Charity Navigator: a four-star rating for seven consecutive cycles with a most recent rank of 99.95/100.*
- *Candid (previously called GuideStar): Platinum Level.*