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Just in time for the holidays! Success for the Sea! Liquefied Natural Gas Proposals Move Forward -Congress: Protect our Beaches!

January 2011 Highlights

SEASONS GREETINGS
from the COA
Crew!

Clean Ocean Action
18 Hartshorne Drive, Suite 2
Highlands, NJ 07732
732-872-0111
www.CleanOceanAction.org
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COA is a 501(c)(3) organization and contributions are tax deductible.

Our COAlition

Featuring...

The Belford Seafood Cooperative

The Belford Seafood Cooperative is the last commercial fishing operation located in NY/NJ Harbor and it's one of the most active fishermen's cooperatives on the Atlantic Coast. Established in 1953, many of its fishermen are third and fourth generation. Twenty-eight local fishermen and owners sell their catches at the Co-op.

The Co-op maintains a fleet of approximately 50 boats and has a retail market and seafood restaurant, "Pirate's Cove," that provides a rotating cycle of freshly caught seafood to surrounding communities. Species change from season to season because fishing grounds in the New York Bight are highly migratory. Right now, the Co-op is bringing in blue claw crabs, bluefish, whiting, ling, butterfish, squid, and dogfish from the Hudson Canyon, Raritan and Sandy Hook Bays.

Fishermen's livelihoods depend on healthy seafood and it is essential to keep our waters clean to produce this. Over the years, Clean Ocean Action (COA) and the Co-op have worked together to improve the region's waters, and more recently, to keep the ocean free from harmful Liquefied Natural Gas facilities. Joe Brennen, Manager of the Belford Fishing Co-op, said, "I hope that with Clean Ocean Action's efforts, the Clean Ocean Zone bill stops big money and big industry from coming in and ruining the ocean."

Belford Fishing Co-op President Roy Diehl said that if New Jersey allows facilities proposed by the LNG industry to be built, it would be the "final nail in the coffin" for the state's commercial fishing industry. "I don't want it, and nobody wants it," he concluded.

The Co-op is located at 901 Port Monmouth Road, Belford, New Jersey, 07718. For more information and hours, call (732)787-6500.

Three for the Sea: Holiday Victories for the Coast!

Fertilizer Bill Passes: Victory!

On December 13, the New Jersey legislature passed landmark legislation known as the Fertilizer Bill, which will help reduce the polluted runoff from fertilizers that harm marine waters. It now goes to Governor Christie's desk for his signature. This bill was the creation and vision of Save Barnegat Bay, and started out as a municipal ordinance. Once signed, New Jersey will become the first state to mandate limits on the nitrogen and phosphorous contents of all fertilizer products sold at retail, and used on lawns and that regulates the use of fertilizer by consumers and professionals. From the outset, the bill was sponsored by State Senator Bob Smith, Senator Jennifer Beck, and Assemblymen John F. McKeon, and we are grateful for their leadership.

Many environmental groups worked together and collaborated with lawn care companies to pass the legislation. The bill will:

- Limit the amount of nitrogen consumers can apply to their lawns to 3.2 pounds of nitrogen per year;

(cont. on page 2)

A Reprieve from drilling in the Atlantic Ocean!

Recently, President Barack Obama announced that the newly-restructured Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM), Regulation and Enforcement would not be opening the Atlantic Ocean for oil and gas drilling operations for the 2012-2017 planning period. This announcement reversed a decision made in April of this year (just weeks before the Deepwater Horizon disaster) that would have allowed drilling in these waters. The result of this decision protects the entire Atlantic Ocean from drilling or pre-drilling exploration through 2017.

In New Jersey, Assemblyman John McKeon (D), one of the first NJ State Legislators to welcome this reversal, strongly urged the President to put a permanent moratorium in place. "This ban will help protect the Jersey shore from the risk of oil spills that would put our coastal economies in peril and endanger scores of precious marine life," declared Assemblyman McKeon. "We cannot risk a possible oil spill in the Jersey shore that is the lifeblood of tourism, one of our state's most lucrative industries. We cannot risk further contamination of our oceans."

This time-out for drilling is an important opportunity to gain momentum for permanent protection through the Clean Ocean Zone legislation.

Governor provides help to Barnegat Bay!

On December 9th, NJ Governor Chris Christie released his Comprehensive Plan of Action for restoring and protecting the Barnegat Bay. This ten-point plan described the actions the Governor and DEP will be taking to prevent further degradation and to bring about some restoration. Included on the Governor's list of priorities are the 2019 closure of the Oyster Creek nuclear power plant, the implementation of the recently-passed fertilizer and soil compaction bills, \$10 million in funding for stormwater basin repairs and renovations, and many actions to enhance water quality, promote new research initiatives, and keep the public well-educated and well-informed. Clean Ocean Action is looking forward to working with the Governor and the DEP to ensure that these goals become a reality. More to come!

Fertilizer (cont.)

- Mandate that all fertilizers sold at retail stores in the state must contain 20% slow release nitrogen, a form of nitrogen that reduces leaching through soils and into waterways;
- Prohibits the application of fertilizer to lawns outside of the growing season (from November 15th – April 1) and prohibits the application of fertilizer onto frozen ground, within 25 feet of a water body, and on driveways, sidewalks, and other impermeable surfaces
- Require that all professional fertilizer applicators participate in DEP-organized training sessions and become state-certified professionals.

This bill was featured by Governor Christie in his December, 2010 “Comprehensive Plan of Action” for Barnegat Bay and was a key component of Clean Ocean Action’s “Four for the Shore” initiative in conjunction with many of the state’s other environmental groups including the American Littoral Society, Environment NJ, NJ Environmental Federation, Sierra Club of NJ, the NJ Environmental Lobby, and of course, Save Barnegat Bay.

ExxonMobil Pulls the Plug on Experimental Offshore LNG Project: 2 Down, 1 to Go!

ExxonMobil has joined the Atlantic Sea Island Group (ASIG) in the “Withdrawn Application” category for their proposed LNG import facility destined to be sited off the coast of Spring Lake/Sea Girt. As with ASIG, Exxon cited economic reasons for putting their project on the back shelf. According to a spokesman, the decline of the international LNG markets, coupled with the increasing US domestic supply of natural gas, meant that it was simply uneconomical for the energy giant to invest in a multi-billion-dollar facility (not to mention the Governor’s commitment to veto it). However, Exxon did say they may bring the project back in the future. For now, however, celebrate booting out the most giant of all industrialists from invading our ocean.

Unfortunately, Liberty Natural Gas has heated up their efforts to move forward and build the facility. As reported in last month’s Ocean Advocate, Liberty Natural Gas has finalized its applications to the Maritime Administration for its buoy-based LNG facility to be sited 16 miles off the coast of Asbury Park and they applied to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission for an onshore pipeline through downtown Perth Amboy, Woodbridge, and Carteret to the Linden natural gas hub. COA and several other environmental groups, with the legal assistance of the Eastern Environmental Law Clinic, filed for intervening-party status for the onshore pipeline, and the State of New Jersey was granted “adjacent coastal state” status for the offshore portion.

ExxonMobil (Cont.)

Fortunately, Governor Christie is steadfast in his opposition to the facility and has veto authority to stop it. Opposition to the onshore pipeline is also growing in Middlesex County. For information on how you can get involved, contact Meg Gardener at the COA office or email her at citizens@cleanoceanaction.org.

Clean Water up to Lamé Duck

Since 2000, the cleanliness of our recreational beaches (swimming) has been governed by the BEACH Act. That Act, based primarily upon water-quality guidelines developed in the 1980s and 1990s by the New Jersey DEP, protects public health by requiring that beaches be tested for contamination issues and that beachgoers be warned about any potential contaminations (among other things).

Over the course of the past decade, techniques for testing beaches have become more advanced and now allow for rapid-testing that returns results in a few hours rather than a few days, but the law has remained unchanged. For six years, New Jersey’s delegation has led the fight for the Clean Coastal Environment and Public Health Act (CCEPHA). The House of Representatives passed this legislation in 2009. It would update guidance and funding for state agencies to use in the management of swimming beaches. This piece of legislation must be passed by the Senate in the lame duck session of 2010 or it “dies.” If no action is taken, a new bill must be drafted and the entire process must be started again.

At press time, the bill had yet to be posted for a vote.

SEA SCENES



Clean Ocean Action’s partnership with The Grove and Brook 35 & West began in 2005 with their support of our Eco-Guide and since then has flourished into a community-based partnership, including the plastic cap recycling campaign, Beach Sweeps

support, COA volunteer recruitment, Earth Month fashion shows, block-parties, and more! Metrovation has built upon their commitment to the communities where they do business and have supported a myriad of organizations and nonprofits across the country.

Brook 35 Plaza in Sea Girt is an open-air center anchored by 10,000 square foot Gap/Gap Kids/Baby Gap, an award-winning Talbots, and Talbots Petites. Other significant tenants include Banana Republic, Coach, Ann Taylor, and Williams Sonoma. The Grove at Shrewsbury is the nation’s first center to be coined a “lifestyle center.” The mix of the best local specialty retailers and outstanding regional and national stores draws shoppers from throughout New Jersey.

For more information on the corporation and specific shops at each location, you can visit the following websites: www.metrovation.com, www.brook35plaza.com and www.thegroveatshrewsbury.com.

Sea Scenes appears every other month in the *Clean Ocean Advocate*.

Student Advocates Name Priority Issues

Student Ocean Advocates (SOA) are up and running again in Monmouth and Ocean Counties. In each county, Clean Ocean Action invites high school student representatives to participate in bi-monthly meetings to discuss current and local environmental threats to our marine environment. Most importantly the students learn key advocacy techniques and tools that will empower them to make a difference today as well as in the future. We thank Monmouth University and the Urban Coast Institute for hosting the Monmouth County meetings and we thank Ocean County College and the Barnegat Bay Partnership for hosting the Ocean County meetings this year.

Each county decides on a particular issue and goal on which to focus their efforts for the SOA year. Finally, each high school will develop and implement a project or campaign into their “home high schools” and communities to accomplish their goal. This year, Ocean County Student Ocean Advocates voted to address nitrogen pollution in Barnegat Bay and solutions to overcome the problem. In Monmouth County, SOA members voted to focus their efforts on non-point source pollution and are in the process of formulating a specific goal. The SOA program runs from November through March each year. For more information, please contact Tavia Danch (Ocean County Advisor) and Meg Gardner (Monmouth County Advisor).

COA Brings Curriculum to Teachers

On November 4, COA’s Tavia Danch presented a workshop at the New Jersey Education Association (NJEA) Convention in Atlantic City, NJ.

During the workshop, teachers learned how to integrate current ocean threats into their classroom through activities and lessons.

Teachers were enthusiastic and engaged as they learned about the importance of the coastal environment, how to make model watersheds and other fun hands-on activities, and various ways to promote ocean stewardship.

All activities and lessons reference New Jersey’s Core Curriculum Content Standards and can be found in COA’s “You are the Solution to Pointless Pollution” K-12 education kit which is free and can be ordered or can be downloaded from our website.

