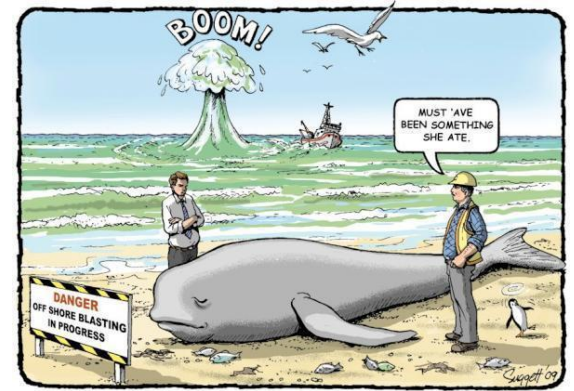


# **STOP Ocean Blasting Off Barnegat Bay – ALL MARINE LIFE AT RISK!**

While many have been fighting to stop seismic testing for oil and gas exploration in the waters south of New Jersey, the public learned on March 17th that a comparable seismic study is proposed off New Jersey's coast this summer.

**A vast region** off the Jersey Shore will be exposed to seismic airgun blasts (like those for oil and gas research) and in addition, three other acoustic blast technologies that may have harmful effects.

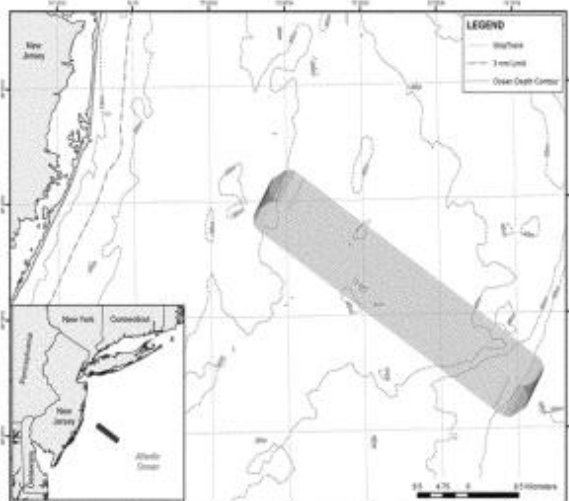
**The purpose of the study** is to assess to deep sea sediments from 60 million years ago to present to better understand climate change and historical changes in sea level. However, the data gathered will be public information and there is no doubt that the oil and gas industry could use the data to look for gas deposits—especially methane hydrates, frozen natural gas, also known as fire ice. These can be found well within the 11,500 foot depth range of the study.



**Who is conducting the study?** Researchers at **Columbia University's Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory (L-DEO)**, in collaboration with the **National Science Foundation (NSF)**, **University of Texas**, and **Rutgers University**.

**Location and duration:** Just 15 miles off the Barnegat Inlet, NJ, in a 230 square mile area. The study will blast sound waves that are orders of magnitude louder than a jet plane at takeoff every 5 seconds continuously 24/7 for 30 days from July through August. These astonishingly loud blasts will be emitted from up to 8 guns firing at once. The impact also will wreak havoc on marine life up and down the Jersey Shore.

Figure 1. Proposed location of the seismic survey in the Atlantic Ocean off the coast of New Jersey during June through July 2014.



**Harmful to marine fish:** A 2003 study in the Journal of the Acoustical Society of America confirmed that seismic airguns used in underwater oil exploration damage the auditory organs of fish. More studies are finding impacts of seismic testing and other acoustic technology range from harassment to death. The Environmental Assessment prepared for this study scarcely considers the serious threats to fish and shellfish. It devotes less than 250 words to marine invertebrates (crustaceans and cephalopods), fish and their fisheries, and it does not mention impacts to bivalves such as surf clams and scallops.

**Harmful to marine mammals and turtles:** Seismic blasts have documented effects on marine mammals. Over 25 species of mammals will be harassed, including 6 endangered whale species. Of grave concern is that bottlenose dolphins in the area will have recently given birth, and last year more than 1000 dolphins in the Atlantic coastal area were killed by a virus. This population is already impaired. Moreover, another device proposed for use in the study, the

multibeam echosounder, is also harmful-- particularly to marine mammals. It has been implicated in a mass stranding of whales off Madagascar. Also concerning is that five sea turtle species, all of which are either threatened or endangered, could be present in the survey area.

**Science should not get a pass.** The study still requires compliance with laws protecting marine life, and the NJ Department of Environmental Protection is opposed to the harassment proposed by the study. NJEP has also requested that the State of New Jersey have the right to fully review the study, which could stop it.

**This is the worst time for the study.** The summer is the most critical time for marine life along the Jersey shore. Untold numbers of animals will be affected and livelihoods that depend on fishing, whale-watching, and tourism will be harmed.

## **You can help!**

**Sign the Petition: [STOPRUTGERSOCEANBLASTING.ORG](http://STOPRUTGERSOCEANBLASTING.ORG)**

**Spread the word, or post the petition on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and your blogs!**

**To learn more: [CleanOceanAction.org](http://CleanOceanAction.org) or call 732-872-0111**