

PRESS RELEASE



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Thousands Hit the Shore for “Waves of Action” and the President’s National Day of Service

Resounding Success for Sandy Recovery across New York and New Jersey

Saturday, January 19 (New Jersey and New York) – In continued response to Super-storm Sandy, Clean Ocean Action held the first 2013 event of its yearlong volunteer program, [Waves of Action “For The Shore”](#) to help the communities and millions of citizens left devastated in the wake of the storm. Clean Ocean Action (COA) connected coastal community needs throughout the NJ/NY region with thousands of volunteers willing to help on President Obama’s National Day of Service, to honor the life and legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Today, over 2,500 registered volunteers and 22 organizations, including Presidential Inaugural Committee, Clinton Global Initiative, and state agencies from New Jersey and New York, helped to clean out neighborhoods, parks, beaches, and waterways or rebuild dunes at 30 locations throughout New York and New Jersey, including Hudson, Monmouth, Ocean, Atlantic, and Cape May Counties in New Jersey, and Staten Island and Jones Beach, in New York.

The Presidential Inaugural Committee will be participating in Waves of Action in Atlantic City, Ocean Gate, Middletown, Asbury Park, Highlands and Sandy Hook, New Jersey. The Presidential Inaugural Committee will also be at the Jones Beach Clean Up, where U.S. Secretary for Housing and Urban Development, Shaun Donovan, will be joining over 500 volunteers. Secretary Donovan was appointed by President Obama as Chair of the Hurricane Sandy Rebuilding Task Force.

2013 “Waves of Action” program, monthly days of service, is responding to the impacts of Super-storm Sandy and helping improve and protect the marine environment. COA is engaging its network of organizations, businesses, citizens, and municipalities to help coastal communities throughout New Jersey and New York in need over the long term with volunteer action.

“Coastal communities are overwhelmed by the impacts from Super-storm Sandy and the road to recovery will be long and will require long term support. It is inspiring to kick-off 2013 Waves of Action with over 2500 volunteers and support of the White House, New York and New Jersey, and scores of organizations, leaders, and citizen activists from around the nation. United together we can keep the

momentum building to restore our shore with resiliency and environmental stewardship,” said **Cindy Zipf, Clean Ocean Action Executive Director**, “Today is just the beginning, going forward we hope to encourage communities to go green to save big blue with gardens, green spaces and improved infrastructure,” she added.

“As a member of Keansburg's Volunteer Beach Clean Up Committee, I was so happy to hear about the Waves of Action Day. We are just starting to see progress in town which was devastated by Sandy and now it's time to focus on our most beautiful asset, Keansburg's Beach,” said **Ann Commarato, Keansburg Beach Clean Up Project Leader**. “It means so much to us to see how amazing people are in a time of need and how people are willing to give of their time to help others. Personally, I have seen Sandy bring out the best in people,” Commarato added.

“Since the storm, we have had such an outpouring of support from volunteers all across the country. Folks who signed up to help on December 8th to clean out homes, are offering to clean beaches this time around,” stated **Zach McCue, COA Citizen Action Coordinator**. “What’s most important is that we have heard from so many volunteers that they are committed to participating each month as we go forward because they recognize the long term need to help restore coastal communities,” he noted.

Many organizations and municipalities have been involved in not only the planning of, but are also participated in, COA’s Wave of Action today. These groups include: Presidential Inaugural Committee, Clinton Global Initiative, National Park Service, Bayshore Waterfront Park Affiliation, Monmouth County Park System, HOPE worldwide, Borough of Sea Bright, New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, Wall High School Environmental Club, AmeriCorps Watershed Ambassadors, Red Bank Friends of Maple Cove, United Methodist Committee of Relief, Alliance for a Living Ocean, Beach Haven West Community Association, Surfrider Foundation, South Jersey Chapter, Borough of Ocean Gate, Whale Pond Brook Watershed Association, Monmouth County Clean Communities, Hackensack Riverkeeper, Sailors for Sandy and Natural Resource Protective Association.

“Waves of Action has given Alliance for a Living Ocean the ability to reach out to a broader audience for our environmental cleanup, allowing for better recruitment of volunteers,” said **Chris Huch, Executive Director of Alliance for a Living Ocean**. “The task of cleaning up Long Beach Island remains a large one but the continued support of our volunteers and new ones attracted by Waves of Action will allow us to complete the important task at hand,” he added.

“From my service with the AmeriCorps NJ Watershed Ambassador Program, I was able to learn about COA’s wonderful day of service. It is heartening to see that our communities are still responding and coming together by showing such widespread support,” explained **Melanie Jackson, AmeriCorps NJ Watershed Ambassador with Hackensack Riverkeeper and 16th Street Park Bayonne Clean Up Project Leader**. “There is a lot of work that still needs to be done on our shores, and the Waves of Action program certainly makes a difference,” she noted.

What Super-storm Sandy destroyed in only 36 hours will take months and years to restore. Sustaining and supporting these communities over the long term is important. COA will call on its network of organizations, businesses, citizens and municipalities from Cape May to Montauk - along the Jersey Shore and the South Shore of Long Island for help. Future “Waves of Action” days in 2013 will progress with the needs of communities and will keep the momentum going for continued improvement of the shore through debris clean ups, sustainable development plans, and projects to improve water quality.

January 19 Highlights

- Over 300 volunteers at Sandy Hook were joined by the **Presidential Inaugural Committee**. Volunteers filled over 600 garbage bags in 3 hours and then enjoyed a free cup of New England Clam Chowder at **Bahr's Landing Restaurant** in Highlands, New Jersey.
- Over 50 volunteers, including AmeriCorps volunteers, at Normandy Beach recovered scrapbooks, photo albums and x-rays.
- **Congressman Frank Pallone, Jr. (D)** joined volunteers to clean the beach in front of Keansburg Library and in Asbury Park New Jersey.
- At Jones Beach, 400 people came to clean the beach. Volunteers came from all over, including Alaska! **Secretary Donovan** was joined by **Nassau County Executive Ed Mangano**, **New York State Parks Commissioner Rose Harvey**, and **Jones Beach Director of Operations Hank Leggio**.
- Volunteers in New Dorp, Staten Island, NY found a painting of a toddler, a toy piano, and lots of tires and plastic.
- Over 100 volunteers at Island Beach State Park were transported by **New Jersey Beach Buggy Association**.

For photos, please visit [COA's Facebook Page](#).

For more information visit fortheshore.org or contact COA at (732) 872-0111.

For a complete list of projects and meeting locations visit [click here](#).

[Clean Ocean Action](#) is a regional, broad-based coalition of 135 conservation, environmental, fishing, boating, diving, student, surfing, women's, business, service, and community groups with a mission to improve and protect coastal and ocean water quality. For over 25 years, COA has been actively engaged in ocean management to ensure a vibrant, diverse, economically robust ecosystem through citizen education, advocacy, and public involvement.

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