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LABEL

CLEAN OCEAN ADVOCATE  
AUGUST 2023

**SAVE THE DATE**

Sea.Hear.Now  
September 16 & 17  
COA Surf Open  
September 23 or 24 (TBD)  
Cape May Student Summit  
October 5  
Island Beach State Park  
Student Summit  
October 12  
Beach Sweeps  
October 21  
SEAL 2023-2024 Kickoff  
October 26

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Clean Ocean Action  
49 Avenue Blvd.  
Long Branch, NJ 07740  
www.CleanOceanAction.org



# CLEAN OCEAN ADVOCATE

Defending the Sea Since 1984

August 2023

## POLICY

Kari Martin, Advocacy Campaign Manager, Citizens@CleanOceanAction.org

### More Offshore Wind Coming to NY/NJ Coast

New Jersey's Governor Murphy seeks to award up to 4,000 more megawatts (MW) of offshore wind (OSW), more than doubling the capacity already permitted. NJ already contracted three projects in its First (2018) and Second (2020) Solicitations, amounting to 3,750 MW of energy, **380** turbines, and **343,834** acres of ocean (nearly 12.5 times the size of Disney World, the largest amusement park in the world). Solicitations are calls for proposals from developers to deliver offshore wind energy to NJ, or any state. Applications to build four new OSW projects were submitted this year in NJ Board of Public Utilities' (NJBP) Third OSW Solicitation process. The four projects include: "Leading Light" (Invenergy/energyRE), "Community Offshore Wind" (RWE/National Grid), another Atlantic Shores' project (Shell New Energies US/EDF Renewables North America), and an unidentified project. COA submitted comments in March 2023 to NJBP opposing a third solicitation (see comments on our website, click "Issues & Campaigns," "Energy" and "Wind").

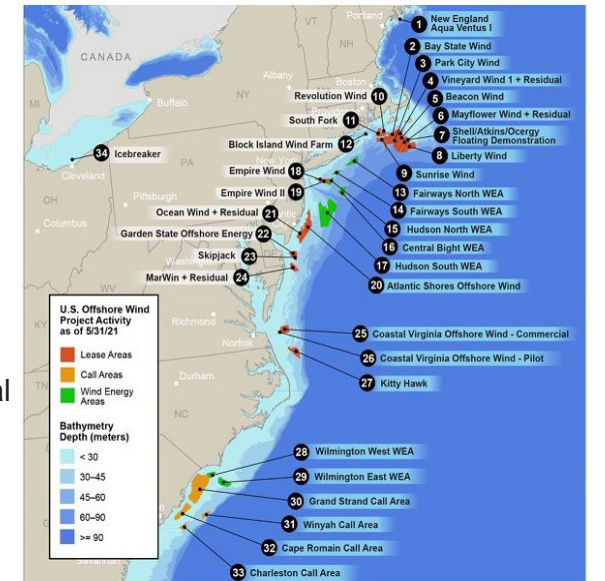


Photo Credit: National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL)  
Offshore Wind Projects from ME to SC

Similarly in New York, the state already contracted five projects amounting to 4,300 MW of energy, **408** turbines, and **392,382** acres of ocean (more than 14 times the size of Disney World and greater than twice the size of all 5 New York City boroughs combined) in its First (2018) and Second Solicitations (2020). Recently, six developers submitted more than 100 proposals for new projects in NY's Third OSW Solicitation. This time, developers were allowed to resubmit applications with updated pricing "to ensure the most competitive award group."

The rush to develop OSW is too much, too fast. Over 30 projects are in various stages of development in the Northeast alone, with more OSW projects from Delaware to South Carolina (see map). COA seeks a comprehensive and independently peer-reviewed pilot project to identify the impacts of OSW projects and to ensure the protection of marine resources.

### Shocking Truth: Offshore Wind Now Gateway to Oil and Gas Drilling

Buried deep in the federal 2022 Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) are a few paragraphs that turn renewable energy into a fossil fuel bonanza. Section 50265 of the IRA requires that before any offshore wind (OSW) leases are issued, 60 million acres of offshore oil and gas lease sales **MUST** first be offered. This requirement stands for the next 10 years for a **minimum** total of 600 million acres with no maximum cap amount. Yes, you read that correctly, offshore oil and gas leases must be offered **before** wind leases. Since OSW leases are roughly 100,000 acres each, this is at least a 600 to 1 oil to wind ratio.

Thus, OSW will be what the oil industry has long wanted—open access to the ocean—perhaps that is why oil companies own the OSW projects. Renewable energy will now do to the ocean what COA and others have fought for decades to stop.

Land areas are also not safe. Land-based wind and solar can only be offered after oil and gas leases are offered. Specifically, wind and solar can be offered right-of-way only if, in the previous 120 days, onshore oil and gas lease sales totaling at least 2 million acres or 50 percent of the acreage for which expressions of interest were submitted for that period (whichever is less) were held.

The hypocrisy of this wolf in sheep's clothing cannot be overstated. Learn more about the concerns surrounding OSW and actions you can take at [CleanOceanAction.org](http://CleanOceanAction.org).

## TRIBUTES

### In Memory of:

- Jenny Azzarello
- John Beebe
- Peter Cauterucci
- Billy Drury
- Walter L. Frattin (The Duke)
- Michele Ferro Jasionowski
- Carol Anne Ross
- George Royle
- Drew Thompson

### In Honor of:

- Rick Jones
- Margo Mindnich and Jeffrey Pearson
- Kacie Wallace



### Volunteer with Clean Ocean Action!

COA has a variety of SEA-rific and exciting opportunities to get involved from tabling at events to becoming a volunteer Community Scientist! Find the best fit for you and complete a volunteer form today at:

[CleanOceanAction.org/Help-Your-Ocean/Volunteer-Opportunities](http://CleanOceanAction.org/Help-Your-Ocean/Volunteer-Opportunities)

## The Heart of the Matter: EPA Plastic Reduction Strategy Disappoints

With a prestigious scientific journal recently documenting microplastics in a human heart during surgery, the latest plan from the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) on its “Draft National Strategy to Prevent Plastic Pollution,” was deeply disappointing, although well-intended. In reviewing the Strategy, COA finds it:



Plastic trash in landfill

- is not bold and fails to convey the urgency of the crisis (the Strategy is also voluntary).
- includes many of the same actions that were written years ago.
- contains no goals, no standards, no timelines, no enforcement measures, no oversight.
- fails to provide an interconnected framework of all federal agencies and their responsibilities and opportunities for plastic pollution reduction based on existing laws, regulation(s) and policies.
- includes options that can potentially increase/compound existing plastic waste problems such as composting and options for “disposal” which include plastic to fuel and incineration.
- is confusing and has no definition of plastic and meaning of “circularity” by mixing messages on disposal and chemical recycling.
- contains a few unclear financial commitments or recommendations.

Given the highly polluting, fossil fuel-connected life cycle of plastic, the public health threats resulting contamination of air, water, and land, as well as being a climate change accelerant, reducing plastic through elimination and use reduction must be a top priority. Bold, strong, enforceable actions are long overdue. In short, the Strategy fails to provide leadership needed to meet this challenge.

Learn more about EPA’s Draft National Strategy to Prevent Plastic Pollution at: [EPA.gov/CircularEconomy/Draft-National-Strategy-Prevent-Plastic-Pollution](https://www.epa.gov/circular-economy/draft-national-strategy-prevent-plastic-pollution)

For COA’s comments on EPA’s Draft Strategy: [CleanOceanAction.org](https://www.CleanOceanAction.org) and click “Issues & Campaigns” and “Marine Debris.”

## Questions About Offshore Wind Impacts Raise Bi-partisan Concern

In response to the New Jersey Board of Public Utilities’ (NJBP) August announcement that four companies have submitted proposals for up to 4,000 MW of additional offshore wind energy, NJ Senate President Nicholas Scutari and Assembly Speaker Craig Coughlin released a joint statement raising serious concerns for this massive expansion, which would more than double what New Jersey already has underway. They wrote:

“The legislature has concerns about the BPU’s approach on the offshore wind projects. There are still many unanswered questions about the economic impact these projects will have on ratepayers as well as potential impacts to one of our state’s largest economic drivers, tourism at the shore. The BPU should be able to share these impacts with the communities affected and the legislature before moving forward with these new offshore projects.” -Insider, NJ



NJ Senate President Nicholas Scutari (left) and Assembly Speaker Craig Coughlin (right)

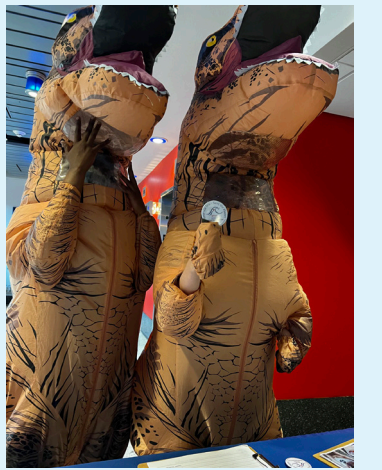
In response, NJ county and local leaders signed a joint letter to Senator Scutari and Assemblyman Coughlin welcoming their concerns. In part the letter states:

“You have identified the very serious and challenging issues that many of us have been raising for some time now. It is refreshing to see the leadership you have taken on the potential negative impacts of the build-as-fast-as-possible approach that the State of New Jersey is currently taking on offshore wind.”

COA is grateful and encouraged by these bipartisan questions and concerns being raised and urges citizens to continue raising their voices to elected officials to help build momentum to stop the reckless pace of offshore wind.

## COA at Liberty Science Center After Dark

Clean Ocean Action had a blast at Liberty Science Center’s (LSC) “After Dark” event on July 20th! As guests arrived, they were able to stop and chat with COA staff, tabled right in front of the entryway. It was an exciting opportunity to speak with the scientists and eco-enthusiasts who attended from across New Jersey, New York, and even Philadelphia. We even got a visit from a couple of human predecessors—dinosaurs! COA thanks LSC for the opportunity and looks forward to collaborating more closely in the future!



Dinosaurs visit the COA Crew at LSC

## EVENTS

Jocelyn Graham, Resource & Development Director, [Development@CleanOceanAction.org](mailto:Development@CleanOceanAction.org)

### Join Us for the Annual COA Surf Open

It’ll be a SWELL time at Seven Presidents Oceanfront Park in Long Branch, NJ, for this year’s Surf Open contest – September 23rd from dawn to dark! Surfers and spectators of all ages are invited to gather seaside for a day of activities surrounding and supporting a clean and healthy ocean! The contest is open to all ages and skill levels with divisions for Boys & Girls 12 & Under, Junior Women & Junior Men 13-17, Women & Men 18+, Open Longboard, and Legends. Visit [@CleanOceanAction\\_Open](https://www.instagram.com/CleanOceanAction_Open) on Instagram or [CleanOceanAction.org](https://www.CleanOceanAction.org) for the registration link.

Fun in the sun is also offered on the beach with environmentally-focused kids’ activities, including games, crafts, and more!

Opportunities abound for joining the COA Surf Team as a volunteer for the surfing event of the year! Contact COA’s Resource & Development Director, Jocelyn Graham for more information.

Special thanks to Contest Director Tyler Thompson for coordinating the contest for the 6th consecutive year!

### WAVES OF THANKS TO OUR FABULOUS SPONSORS!

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# DEFENDER

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#### Ground Swell Sponsors:



# SCIENCE

Swarna Muthukrishnan, Water Quality Research Director, [Science@CleanOceanAction.org](mailto:Science@CleanOceanAction.org)

## Volunteers Needed for Shrewsbury Water Sampling!

Progress of the Rally for the Two Rivers ambient bacteria water monitoring program is making a splash! Thanks to the dedication of our community scientists, COA has successfully conducted weekly water sampling within the Navesink Watershed since July 2023. Our primary objective is to identify and address non-point source pollution that contributes to high levels of bacteria in the Navesink and Shrewsbury Rivers, which has seen an uptick in pollution since the pandemic. The goal through these monitoring efforts is to eliminate sources of pathogen pollution, aka poo-llution. This will help ensure the preservation and health of the river and its surrounding ecosystem.

More volunteers are needed, especially for the Shrewsbury River water monitoring. Just answer these questions: Do you...

- care about the Navesink and Shrewsbury Rivers?
- like to (or are willing to) get up early in the morning?
- enjoy being outdoors in all weather?
- have an interest in being a part of a cool science project?

If you answered "YES," you can be a Community Scientist! If interested in attending a training or getting involved, please contact [Programs@CleanOceanAction.org](mailto:Programs@CleanOceanAction.org) or call 732-872-0111.

## U.S. Stockholm Junior Water Prize Winner Announced

Swarna Muthukrishnan, COA's Water Quality Research Director, was awarded a Certificate of Appreciation by Water Environment Federation (WEF) and Xylem, Inc. for her role serving as a National Judge at the U.S. Stockholm Junior Water Prize (SJWP) Competition held at Colorado School of Mines in June 2023! The U.S. SJWP was founded in 1997 by the Stockholm International Water Institute (SIWI) to complement the Stockholm Water Prize. The SJWP, conducted annually, is the world's most prestigious award presented to a high school student for a water-research project. The National Winner represents the country at the International Competition held in Stockholm in August. Naomi Park of Greenwich, CT, was named the 2023 national winner for her research on using Styrofoam debris collected from the ocean as a filter to reduce ocean carbon levels!

This year's competition has local relevance as COA has been spearheading grassroots campaigns in water quality and plastic issues for more than three decades. COA is encouraged as youth make waves to tackle these impacts, such as Grace Leavitt, a high school student from Marine Academy of Technology and Environmental Science (MATES), New Jersey.

The SJWP offers two additional awards: (i) Bjorn von Euler Innovation in Water Scholarship and (ii) James L. Condon Recognition for Environmental Stewardship. Grace received the James L. Condon Recognition for Environmental Stewardship for work in developing a bioplastic alternative to single-use plastics. Swarna looks forward to future SJWP competitions to continue lifting youth innovation in water quality research!

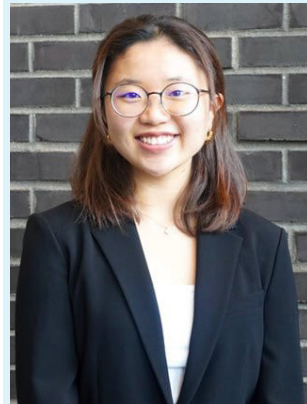


Photo: WEF

SJWP National Winner 2023, Naomi Park

Learn more at: [WEF.org/Publications/News/WEF-Press-Releases/Park-Wins-U.S.-Stockholm-Junior-Water-Prize/](https://www.wef.org/Publications/News/WEF-Press-Releases/Park-Wins-U.S.-Stockholm-Junior-Water-Prize/)

# EDUCATION

Kristen Grazioso, Education Coordinator, [Education@CleanOceanAction.org](mailto:Education@CleanOceanAction.org)  
Kira Cruz, Debris Free Sea Coordinator, [BeachSweeps@CleanOceanAction.org](mailto:BeachSweeps@CleanOceanAction.org)

## Attention all Monmouth County High School Students!

Are you a high school student in Monmouth County? Are you deeply concerned about the health of the planet? Are you seeking to learn leadership skills that can put you on a pathway to self-empowerment, uniting others, and improving the world around you? Do you want to learn how to make a difference and create a positive change in your community? Would you also like to earn volunteer hours by achieving these goals?

If you answered "YES," or even "MAYBE," to any of those questions, then consider joining Clean Ocean Action's Student Environmental Advocates and Leaders (S.E.A.L.) program!



Class of '22-'23 S.E.A.L. students at their bi-monthly meeting.

Clean Ocean Action is looking for the next group of extraordinary high school students to join our free leadership program.

To be considered for the program, eligible students must fill out the Student Interest Form by October 1st! For the Student Interest Form, go to: [CleanOceanAction.org/Education-Programs/Seal](https://CleanOceanAction.org/Education-Programs/Seal)

Please direct any interest or questions to Kristen Grazioso.

## FALLing for Student Summits in South Jersey

Back to school SEASON means planning for some exciting Student Summits! COA is thrilled to bring the Student Summit program back to the Nature Center of Cape May on October 5th and to Island Beach State Park on October 12th!

COA's Student Summit provides school students (grades 5-8) from eligible NJ counties a FREE opportunity to experience hands-on, marine environmental education at the shore. Designed to meet core curriculum standards and reinforce STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) concepts, the Student Summit is an opportunity for students to receive a unique, educational program that combines peer-to-peer learning with outdoor experiences emphasizing personal connections to the sea and environmental stewardship.



Students seining the water to learn more about different marine species!

Applications are available for interested middle schools to apply at: [CleanOceanAction.org/Education-Programs/Student-Summit](https://CleanOceanAction.org/Education-Programs/Student-Summit)

Teachers may apply to bring up to 30 students to attend either at Cape May or Island Beach State Park.

These programs are made possible thanks to the generous support from the John Ben Snow Foundation and Memorial Trust and Eloise and John Pound in honor of Anne Inman Webster.

Please direct any interest or questions to Kristen Grazioso.

## The Crew is Upping Their Zero-Waste Game: COA Crew Compost

August 2023

COA recently added an in-office compost bin as the newest edition to its never-ending Zero Waste Challenge. Fruit peels, vegetable stalks, and the like are collected in the bin during the weekly grind and then taken to Kula Urban Farms, otherwise known as, The Farm Without Borders, which is a program operated by Interfaith Neighbors of Asbury Park. The most amazing part about the farm is that the produce grown is then given away to local residents.



Kula Urban Farms

COA's Debris Free Sea Coordinator, Kira Cruz, who is the inspiration and creator of the initiative at COA, recently toured Kula Farms to learn more about how compost is used and how staff educate different groups that come to visit. Lisa Bagwell, farm manager, was also presented with a donation from COA to show their immense support and gratitude for the remarkable work of Kula Urban Farms. COA will continue to make waves in their efforts for a zero-waste office!



COA's Debris Free Sea Coordinator, Kira Cruz, touring the farm!

To learn more about Kula Urban Farms visit: [InterFaithNeighbors.org/Kula-Urban-Farm/](https://InterFaithNeighbors.org/Kula-Urban-Farm/)

## SEASons of Volunteers

Volunteers are essential to spreading the word and getting people involved with COA's campaigns and programs! The crew wants to highlight the fabulous volunteers who helped advocate for a clean and healthy ocean from July to August:

- Former SEAL students, Caleigh and Gabi, tabled at the 15th Annual FilmOneFest held on July 22nd!
- Mackenzie, tabled her first event at Sands Beach Club and helped with our summer Corporate Beach Sweeps program!
- Steven and Christina, also new to the crew, tabled at the Ocean City Green Fair on August 18th!



Mackenzie tabling at Sands Beach Club!



Kirk ready to inform Elberon Bathing Club members about COA's campaigns!

- Kirk shared information about COA's campaigns with Elberon Bathing Club members on August 12th and 13th!

We are so proud of these environmental advocates and look forward to continuing to work with them and other concerned citizens to protect the ocean!

If you are interested in volunteering with Clean Ocean Action, please contact Kristen Grazioso.



# BEACH SWEEPS

## Saturday, October 21, 2023 9 am - 12:30 pm (rain or shine)

Volunteers of all ages needed at 70+ NJ locations!

Beach Sweeps Checklist:

- Register at CleanOceanAction.org (**Available Sept 5!**)
- Bring your own bucket and work gloves for trash collection
- Dress for the weather and wear hard-soled shoes
- Invite family, friends, neighbors, & colleagues!



Statewide Sponsor:



Countywide Sponsor:



Additional support provided by Enterprise Holdings Foundation



#COABeachSweeps | CleanOceanAction.org

# CLEAN OCEAN ACTION



## RALLY FOR THE TWO RIVERS

# VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

**Clean Ocean Action is currently seeking volunteers for the Rally for the Two Rivers ambient bacteria monitoring project!**

Volunteers will be trained to become community scientists to help Clean Ocean Action (COA) collect water samples. This program is in partnership with the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) to help address and improve water quality within the watershed of the Navesink and Shrewsbury Rivers.

These watersheds have suffered profound degradation over the last decade. This monitoring program seeks to identify areas contributing to pathogen pollution. The goal is to "find-it,fix it" with an emphasis on a "no blame game" to encourage municipalities to work together to address and fix pollution issues so that everyone living in these watersheds and the environment can benefit. Our community scientists for this program will be in the field collecting water samples that will be then be analyzed for pathogens by NJDEP and COA's own in-house lab.

It is a great way for community members to participate directly in efforts to improve their local water quality and environment! We do have some requirements for volunteers; you must be over 18 years of age and attend a training session hosted by COA.

**Sampling occurs weekly in the Navesink watershed on Wednesdays from 7:30 - 9:30 am and biweekly in the Shrewsbury watershed on Tuesdays from 7:30 - 9:30 am. COA provides training for sampling methods, safety and background information and resources for volunteers so that they are successful community scientists!**

Email [programs@cleanoceanaction.org](mailto:programs@cleanoceanaction.org) or call us at 732-872-0111  
to help our rivers and ocean!