

Protect the New York – New Jersey Bight

Support the *CLEAN OCEAN ZONE*

What is a Bight?

Bight (bīt) *n.* – a curve or bend in a shoreline.

New York/New Jersey Bight – waters from Montauk Point, NY to Cape May, NJ and offshore to the outer edge of the Continental Shelf (to 100 miles); over 19,000 square miles of the Atlantic Ocean.

Why is the NY/NJ Bight important?

- ◆ Diverse marine life: 300+ species of fish, 350 species of birds, 5 species of sea turtles, 20 species of whales and dolphins, 4 species of seals, and 1 porpoise frequent this region.
- ◆ Economic-driver: The Ocean supports a multi-billion dollar tourism industry, billion dollar recreational and commercial fishing industry, and enormous natural value and eco-services.



The US Fish and Wildlife Service states that “the NY/NJ Bight has one of the highest diversities of marine mammals and sea turtles reported anywhere in the US and supports many threatened and endangered species.”

Past and Present Dangers to the NY/NJ Bight

Eight ocean dumpsites once plagued the Bight – including those for dredged material, cellar dirt, sewage sludge, acid wastes, wood incineration, and industrial wastes. Companies continue to look to the Bight for polluting and industrializing activities (including liquefied natural gas importation, offshore oil and gas drilling, and mining). Polluters view this living resource as a cheap disposal ground, the next industrial park, and ripe for exploitation.

It’s time to lock-in the progress

Current Laws and regulations are insufficient to protect the vast value of this ocean region and its living marine resources from polluting and habitat-destructive activities. **The Clean Ocean Zone campaign seeks federal legislation to permanently protect the waters of the NY/NJ Bight; locking out the bad and locking in the good progress for a healthy ocean. The COZ legislation would:**

Reduce Pollution:

1. Prohibit new ocean dumpsites.
2. Ensure implementation of environmentally sound alternatives for managing dredged material to help keep harbor channels safe for navigation.
3. Prohibit new point sources of pollution and increases of discharge capacity (e.g., wastewater discharge outfalls, industrial discharges). Encourage environmentally protective beneficial reuse of wastewater.

Protect Marine Ecosystems:

4. Prohibit the permanent extraction (e.g. strip-mining) of non-renewable natural resources, including sand and gravel, but allowing beach replenishment activities.
5. Prohibit industrial and non-renewable energy facilities and infrastructure, such as liquefied natural gas complexes and oil and gas exploration, development, and drilling.
6. Require the development of responsible regulations for renewable energy sources.

Support Marine Resources:

7. Support recreational and commercial fishing by acknowledging that federal and state laws for fisheries exist. Prohibit the COZ legislation from being used to adopt or enact fisheries management actions. The COZ legislation shall not be used to restrict or limit recreational or commercial fishing.
8. Support federal and state approved artificial reefs, and allow underwater research and exploration, but not projects that will adversely affect the ecosystem.
9. Support, celebrate, and sustain maritime activities that depend on a healthy and clean ocean, such as: boating, underwater diving, fishing, surfing, swimming, and the enjoyment of the sea. The COZ legislation will not be used to restrict or limit these activities.