

MEDIA ALERT AND EVENT ANNOUNCEMENT

****For Immediate Release****

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www.StopRutgersOceanBlasting.org

Stop Ocean Blasting - Emergency Meeting 5pm, July 2nd

Barnegat Fire Hall - 10 W. 10th Street, Barnegat Light, NJ 08006

WHAT: Hundreds of citizens, the NJDEP, Members of Congress, commercial and recreational fishing leaders, scientists, divers, elected officials, marine mammal protectors—those who care and depend on healthy marine life—will gather at an emergency meeting to learn about the harm and risks of ocean blasting and ask Governor Christie and Members of Congress to back up the NJDEP's recent comments about Rutgers' imminent seismic testing.

WHO:

- US Representative Frank LoBiondo
- Mayor Kirk Larson, Barnegat Light
- Representative from NJDEP
- Cindy Zipf, Executive Director, Clean Ocean Action
- Bob Schoelkopf, Director, Marine Mammal Stranding Center
- Raymond Bogan, Esq., Board Secretary, Marine Trades Association of New Jersey
- Captain Kevin Wark, Captain of the fishing vessel "Dana Christine" - Barnegat Light

MEETING SPONSORS: Anglers Conservation Network; Berkeley Striper Club; Clean Ocean Action; CWA Local 1075; Captain Paul Eidman - Reel Therapy Fly and Light Tackle Charters; Mayor Kirk Larson - Barnegat Light; Jersey Coast Anglers Association; New Jersey Beach Buggy Association; New Jersey Council of Divers; New Jersey Outdoor Alliance; New Jersey State Federation of Sportsmen's Clubs; Point Pleasant Fishermen's Dock Cooperative; Recreational Fishing Alliance; Save Barnegat Bay; Surfriider Foundation Mid-Atlantic Region; Captain Eddie Yates - United Boatmen of New Jersey; and Viking Village

Photo-Op: Large Crowd, Signs, Banner w/Message to Governor Christie

BACKGROUND: The Rutgers University led study will be conducted off Barnegat Light to examine 60 million-year-old sediments for historical sea level changes; however, despite Rutgers' claims, the study is being conducted during the peak migration and/or breeding period of whales, dolphins, turtles, fish, and shellfish. Divers are also at risk.

"The study would send seismic blasts of up to 250 decibels into the water every 5 seconds, 24 hours a day for 30 days, interfering with marine animal communication and movement. By way of comparison, impairment of human hearing begins after 30 seconds of exposure at 115 decibels. Marine animals are much more sensitive to sound than people are," said Cassandra Ornell, Staff Scientist at Clean Ocean Action.

Marine life at risk includes:

- 26 marine mammal species, including 6 endangered whale species and other whales, dolphins, and seals, may be located in or moving through the study area. Seismic blasting can interfere with marine mammal movement, breathing, communication, and feeding, and can even cause hearing damage.
- Nine of the 16 most important offshore commercial fisheries are at their peaks in the summer months. Seismic blasts can cause fish and squid to scatter and impact catch rates.
- New Jersey's offshore waters are host to five threatened or endangered sea turtle species. Sea turtles exposed to much lower sound levels than proposed in this study have shown significant behavioral impacts.

Clean Ocean Action is a non-profit, broad-based coalition of 135 conservation, environmental, fishing, boating, diving, student, surfing, women's, business, service, and community groups, with a mission to improve the degraded water quality of the marine waters off the New Jersey/New York coast. COA has a decades-long history of science- and law-based advocacy for a clean, industry-free Atlantic Ocean.

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