



WATERSPIRIT MISSION

WATERSPIRIT is a center committed to informing, inspiring and enabling people to:

- * Recognize the connection between ecology and spirituality
- * Appreciate the interdependence and sacredness of all creation
- * Become more aware of the significance of water and watersheds in the wider context of the story of the Universe and the life of planet Earth
- * Grow in knowledge of ecological issues related to oceans, rivers, lakes, coastlines and wetlands
- * Embrace life style changes necessary to protect and preserve creation
- * Commit to joining efforts with others in confronting ecological issues

WATERSPIRIT collaborates with other groups locally, regionally, nationally and internationally in promoting informed concern and action

A Ministry of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Peace

Clean Ocean Zone: A Gift for Future Generations

The beaches along the coasts of New Jersey and New York are more than vacation spots for millions. These coastal waters are ecologically rich, and the region is also an economic mainstay for multi-billion dollar industries. This summer while some relaxed in beach chairs or engaged in water sports, other individuals, municipalities, and environmental groups were actively involved in restoring, protecting, and preserving the area along the Atlantic coast called the New York/New Jersey Bight (NY/NJ Bight). **WATERSPIRIT** first informed you about issues involving the NY/NJ Bight in an August 2003 newsletter article, "Our Little Sea in the Big Ocean."

The Clean Ocean Zone campaign is Clean Ocean Action's continuing effort to protect this part of the ocean. During the 1980's The NY/NJ Bight was the "Ocean Dumping Capital of the World" with eight ocean dumpsites. Clean Ocean Action

succeeded in convincing authorities to close the dumpsites. The campaign now plans to present to congress proposed legislation, "The New York/New Jersey Clean Ocean Zone Act of 2005." This law is needed since ocean pollution battles are fought permit by permit which is time consuming and unsustainable. The law would lock-in the progress made in ocean protection and lock-out environmentally harmful activities in the bight area that would be designated by law as "The New York/New Jersey Clean Ocean Zone."

The law will reduce pollution permanently by prohibiting new ocean dumpsites and the discharge of pollutants into the ocean and protect

marine ecosystems by prohibiting permanent extraction of natural non-renewable resources and prohibiting industrial and non-renewable energy facilities. The law supports marine resources, not restricting or limiting beach replenishment, flood control, or habitat restoration activities along the shores of the zone. Additionally, the law does not restrict or limit fisheries management, commercial and recreational fishing, boating, underwater diving, surfing, swimming and other such recreational activities to the extent that these activities do not violate any other applicable law or regulation.

As of September 13, 2005, supporters of Clean Ocean Zone include: New Jersey Governor Richard Codey, who listed the Clean Ocean Zone as a priority in the New Jersey "2005 Coast Initiative"; seventy three organizations from New Jersey and New York (including **WATERSPIRIT**); twenty three New Jersey municipalities; six New Jersey environmental commissions, and over thirteen thousand

individual citizens. Several federal and state legislators have expressed interest in the proposed legislation drafted by a team of experts including scientists, environmentalists, and attorneys.

The campaign for Clean Ocean Zone continues to seek support from individuals, organizations, student groups, environmental commissions and municipalities. Get your municipality or organizations to pass a "Statement of Support." Citizens can sign petitions and send postcards to elected officials to make them aware of your support. Copies of the Statement of Support and a list of the groups who

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The NY/NJ Bight includes waters from Montauk Point, New York, to Cape May, New Jersey, and offshore to the outer edge of the Continental Shelf, over 1900 square miles of the Atlantic Ocean. More than 300 species of fish, nearly 350 species of birds, 7 species of sea turtles, and many marine mammals, such as 10 species of whales and several species of seals and porpoises, frequent this region.



Clean Ocean Zone

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have signed Statements of Support; the Petition for individuals to sign, and additional information the about Clean Ocean Zone Campaign including how to order postcards can be found on the Internet at <http://www.cleanoceanzone.org> or call Clean Ocean Action at 732-872-0111.

Summer is over and it's time to move into sustainable action that will keep the beach clean for next year when the beach chairs and surf boards come out of storage. With your organizing and advocacy, the "New York/New Jersey Clean Ocean Zone Act 2005" will be introduced and soon become law. A Clean Ocean Zone would be a great holiday gift for your children and the generations that follow!

—by Joan Carey, ssj

For more information about WATERSPIRIT, please visit our website at www.waterspirit.org

