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September 2016 E-Newsletter

From the Baykeeper

While the water quality in our rivers and bays has been steadily improving over the last few decades, it only takes one incident to remind us that we still need to keep vigilant! This was no more apparent when millions of peanut bunker died along the Raritan Bayshore and small tributaries a few weeks ago due to low dissolved oxygen in the water. This was caused, part, because of warm water temperatures, but also because of excess nutrients in the water (from us!). Please read our full newsletter to find out how you can help!

Debbie Mans

NY/NJ Baykeeper

Upcoming Events

September 11
Seine the Bay Day
Volunteers needed!

[Click here](#) for times and locations.

September 17, 2016

Our First of its Kind Living Shoreline is Now Installed!



As a bi-state restoration leader, we're excited to have begun constructing our 0.91 acre first of its kind urban living shoreline at Naval Weapons Station Earle! We're thankful for all the help the Navy has provided over the years through our unique partnership. Protecting our vulnerable urban coasts using natural mechanisms is critical to address shoreline erosion and improve coastal resiliency. The living shoreline will consist of an artificial reef using live oysters and concrete structures, known as oyster castles, to fortify and protect the coast along the Raritan Bayshore. The oyster castles will provide the necessary hard surface that oysters can attach and grow on. This project is one of the first times groundbreaking oyster castles will be used in New Jersey. We expect the living shoreline to provide data to tackle the impending threats of climate change and shoreline erosion. The project will determine if a living shoreline can stabilize the mouth of Ware Creek, protect the surrounding environment, improve water quality, and create aquatic habitat in the urban NY-NJ Harbor Estuary. This project is funded, in part, by the Marta Heflin Foundation. [Click here](#) to learn more.

Raritan River Sojourn, a paddle from Edison to Perth Amboy, NJ, 7:00am. [Click here](#) for details.

September 18, 2016
Boats and Bridges Eco Cruise
[Click here](#) for tickets.
Space is limited!

September 24, 2016
Woodbridge National Public Lands Day
Free kayaking, food, music, and more. [Click here](#) for details.

September 25, 2016
Raritan River Festival
New Brunswick, NJ
[Click here](#) for details.

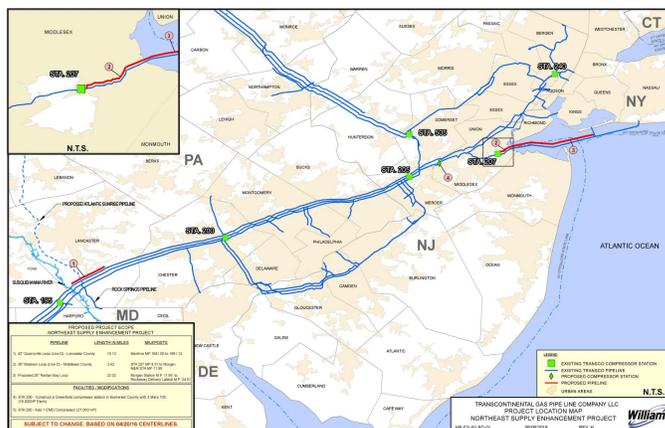
September 30 - October 1, 2016
ANJEC Annual Environmental Congress
[Click here](#) for details.

Save the Date
NY/NJ Baykeeper's Annual Awards Reception
Wednesday, November 2, 2016, 7:00 - 9:00pm
Keyport Yacht Club
115 First Ave. Keyport, NJ 07735
Formal invitation to follow.

How to Use Less Plastic This Back to School Season

Single-use throwaway plastic products wreak havoc on our NY-NJ Harbor Estuary. Simple changes you can make in your daily life can make a big difference! This back to school season, try

Protect Your Waterways - Say NO to Williams Pipeline



Williams has proposed a pipeline project to expand its existing Transco transmission system to transport natural gas from the Marcellus Shale region through central New Jersey to New York. The proposed project includes a new 23.4 mile, 26-inch diameter pipeline through Raritan Bay, from Old Bridge, NJ to Rockaway Point, NY. If built, the pipeline will disrupt and impact recreational activities, anchorage areas, and habitat for clams, horseshoe crabs, fish, and other marine animals.

An Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) will be prepared by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) after a scoping process is conducted to gather the public's input of topics of concern. Make your voice heard before September 23, 2016. [Click here](#) to learn how! Text PIPE to 732-416-7332 to stay in the know.

Peanut Bunker Can't Hang

From clinging jellyfish in the Navesink River to fecal bacteria off the shores of Perth Amboy, it's been a whirlwind of a summer for water quality! Most visible of all this summer was the Raritan Bay fish kill in which millions of dead peanut bunker bobbed in Lentze Marina in Keansburg, Brown's Point Marina in Keyport, Natco Lake, and Atlantic Highlands Marina. Peanut bunker are primarily used as bait fish. While fish kills are a natural phenomenon, after testing water levels, we can point to low dissolved oxygen (DO) as the cause of death for the fish, the most common cause. Fish need oxygen to breathe and if oxygen levels are too low, the fish suffocate. Low DO is the result of warm water temperatures, nutrients, and organic material. The problem can be worsened by polluted stormwater runoff that can contain nutrients from common lawn fertilizers. To help, use green infrastructure strategies around your home (plant a tree, install a rain cistern, or plant a rain garden to absorb more stormwater), use environmentally friendly fertilizers, and always pick up after your pets. Here's to cleaner waterways this fall!

We Want YOU to Join our EcoVolunteer Team!

saying no to plastic [straws](#), use [reusable water bottles](#) at soccer and football games, and bag snacks in [reusable baggies](#) instead of the pesky, single use plastic ones. Be the solution to plastic pollution! For more tips, [click here](#).

Save Braddock Park!

NY/NJ Baykeeper requested that NJDEP Green Acres deny North Bergen's request to divert more than an acre of the popular and historic Braddock Park to construct 17 permanent trailers to be used for lack of classroom space. This proposal screams terrible city planning at the expense of an urban, heavily used park. [Click here](#) to read our letter to NJDEP and learn more.

Before You Winterize Your Boat...



Give us a call for a free pumpout! We're committed to preventing sewage from entering our waterways one pumpout at a time! Raw sewage can lead to high bacteria counts which can cause

Learn about oyster biology and habitat up close and personal by joining us at our reef near Soundview Park in Bronx, NY, or volunteering at our salt marsh restoration project in Staten Island! Check out our new EcoVolunteer website [here](#) where you can learn more. At Soundview, we will be monitoring the spat we saw in August for growth and conducting a survey of the loose shell to check for more spat!

Our Soundview reef monitoring is scheduled for:

Friday, September 16, 4:00pm

Wednesday, September 28, 4:00pm

Friday, October 14, 4:00pm

[Email Dr. Allie](#) for details.

Few Seats Left on Our Boats and Bridges Eco Cruise!

Join us on our rescheduled Boats and Bridges Eco Cruise Sunday, September 18! We'll be aboard the Captain John embarking from Keyport at 3:30pm and returning at 7:00pm. We'll be cruising under the Verrazano Bridge, the Outerbridge Crossing, the Bayonne Bridge, and the Goethal's Bridge for views only available on the water! The highlight of the trip is seeing the Arthur Kill ship graveyard! [Click here](#) for tickets. A limited number of seats are available!

Oyster Reef Biodiversity

The past two field seasons, NY/NJ Baykeeper has been conducting a biodiversity study of our 1/4 acre oyster reef at Naval Weapons Station Earle. Three different fish trap treatments are used to assess the species in and around the reef. Traps are designed to mimic no reef (empty), some habitat but not a living reef (clam shell only), and oyster reef (clumps of spat on shell). Traps are left out for 24 hours and are then retrieved and processed., making sure all animals are returned to the water. Data suggests that species, especially fish, prefer the treatment containing spat on shell. Many different species have been found in the study area including adult and juvenile fish such as black sea bass, tautog, American eel, and oyster toadfish. Blue claw crabs, spider crabs, mud crabs, hermit crabs, whelk species, shrimp, barnacles, encrusting and fouling organisms, and red beard sponge are also common.

When Pathogen Tests are off the Charts

We've been monitoring Bayshore waters for pathogens all summer. Pathogens are derived from fecal bacteria and can cause illness to humans and changes to our

illness or changes in the marine environment. To schedule a FREE boat pumpout in the Navesink and Shrewsbury Rivers, contact the Royal Flush at 732-890-6142 or on VHF Channel 9. The Royal Flush is in service Fridays and Saturdays until Oct 1. For Bayshore pumpouts contact the Head Mistress at 732-832-1499. For Jamaica Bay pumpouts call 732-337-9262. For more information, [click here](#). [Check out this great article](#) from the Two River Times about our pumpout program!

Become a Member Today!

[Click here](#) for details.

In the News

[Planting Oyster Castles in the Bay](#)

[DEP Proposal Could Reignite Battle over Beach, Shoreline Access](#)

[27 Years Later \\$2.1B Harbor Dredging Project Complete](#)

[Eight Individuals and Groups Recognized for Raritan River Stewardship](#)

[Fish Kills: Why Is This Happening](#)

[Bewildering Beach Access Rule Leave State Ripe for Big Problem](#)

[Beaches for Free: DEP Not on Board with Beach Access](#)

marine ecosystem. Our sites include Perth Amboy, the Raritan Yacht Club, Fisherman's Beach in South Amboy, Paul's Beach in Old Bridge Township and Cedar Street in Keyport. So far, we've noticed after heavy rain, our Perth Amboy samples are off the charts testing positive for pathogens due to the combined sewer overflow (CSO) pipes in the area. We advise you not to swim or fish in that area after rainfall. To learn more and to check out our results,, [click here](#). To check out water quality at other beaches nationwide, download the Swim Guide app [here](#) to stay up to date and in the know!

NJDEP's Combined Sewer Overflow Permit Update

With NJDEP's combined sewer overflow permit (CSO) individual permits in effect for officially more than one year, we've been tracking what New Jersey CSO communities have accomplished thus far to reduce raw sewage discharge. It can take just 0.2 inches of rain to trigger a CSO discharge event! [Click here](#) to check out what else we learned and our suggestions for permit improvement.

NY/NJ Baykeeper and Hackensack Riverkeeper Question the Legality of NJDEP's New Proposal Regarding Public Access

[Click here](#) to learn more and read our letter to the sponsors of the public access consensus bill and Assembly Environment and Solid Waste Committee Chairman.

[Sewage Pumpout Boat
Cleans Bay for Free](#)



Protecting, preserving, and restoring the NY/NJ Harbor Estuary since 1989.

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