



## Help Make Ocean Plan Better

We have a plan for the Mid-Atlantic Ocean, but need your help to make it better. Please [sign our petition](#), which calls for changes to the Plan that will ensure it protects the ocean and coast.

The Mid-Atlantic Regional Planning Body has been working since 2013 to develop an Ocean Action Plan that will help federal agencies, state governments and tribal nations work together toward ensuring our ocean and coasts are healthy for future generations.

At the American Littoral Society, we have been working along side this group, tracking their progress and advocating that the Plan focus on sustainable use of the ocean and include conservation measures to identify and protect ecologically special places.

On July 5, the Mid-Atlantic RPB released the draft Ocean Action Plan for a 60-day public review. We applaud the work that led up to the Draft Plan and appreciate that they listened and included some of our recommendations. However, the Plan must contain stronger commitments in three key areas if we are to protect the long-term health of our ocean and coastal ecosystem, as well as our coastal communities and economies.

The Final Plan must:

\* **Develop a robust and effective process for getting everyone involved in implementing the Plan.** Right now the Draft Plan's public involvement strategies are vague and variable. Stakeholders, project proponents and agencies will all benefit through a consistent, uniform engagement strategy.

\* **Set a short, definitive deadline** - ideally by the end of this year - to identify and post on the Mid-Atlantic Ocean Data Portal those offshore areas that are important for the health of marine life (also known as ecologically rich areas or ERAs).

\* **Strengthen Federal agency commitments to the Plan's tools for coordinating agency decisions.** It is unacceptable that any actions outlined in the draft Plan do not have either a lead federal agency or the entire RPB assigned to oversee implementation.

Help us take this message to the RPB by [signing our petition](#).

Or write your own letter and send it to:

Robert P. LaBelle  
MidA RPB Federal Co-Lead BOEM  
45600 Woodland Road  
Mailstop: VAM-BOEM DIR  
Sterling, VA 20166

We also encourage you to learn more about Mid-Atlantic ocean planning and the Draft Ocean Action Plan in a relaxed gathering on Wednesday, Aug. 10 in Belmar, NJ.

The American Littoral Society and Association of New Jersey Environmental Commissions (ANJEC) invite you to join us at the Beach Haus Brewery, 801 Main Street, Belmar, NJ for a free information session on the draft Mid-Atlantic Ocean Action Plan. The event will run from 7-8:30 p.m. Light refreshments and sign-in starts at 6:30 p.m. Seating is limited and reservations are required.

[RSVP here](#) by August 8.

For more information, contact Sarah Winter Whelan at [sarah@littoralsociety.org](mailto:sarah@littoralsociety.org) or Helen Henderson at [Helen@littoralsociety.org](mailto:Helen@littoralsociety.org).



[www.littoralsociety.org](http://www.littoralsociety.org)

*Leaders in coastal conservation since 1961, the American Littoral Society, a 501 (c)3 non-profit organization, promotes the study and conservation of marine life and habitat, protects the coast from harm, and empowers others to do the same.*

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