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## Restoration Work Continues on NJ'S Delaware Bayshore Third of Five Oyster Reefs Going In at Dyers Cove

**Dyers Cove, Downe Township, New Jersey** - Conservation organizations leading the efforts to restore New Jersey's Delaware Bay beaches will be building an oyster reef on Saturday, Oct. 1, 2016 from 2-6 p.m. at Dyers Cove. The cove can be found at the end of Dyers Creek Road.

Volunteers are welcome; no previous reef-building experience is required. Food will be provided by Spanky's BBQ, thanks to a donation from the Red Bank, NJ law firm of Betancourt, Van Hemmen, Greco & Kenyon to support CFC Loud N Clear's program and to assist the society in its work to restore the bay.

CFC Loud N Clear is an organization based in Farmingdale, NJ that supports people and families during addiction recovery through efforts that include support services, education, and work with community organizations.

Volunteers should dress to get wet and bring a change of clothes as the work is a bit dirty. Volunteers should also wear closed-toed shoes that they don't mind getting wet. Gloves, beverages and food will be provided.

At the Oct. 1 event dedicated volunteers and young people from the CFC program will work alongside staff from American Littoral Society and Conserve Wildlife Foundation of New Jersey to establish a near-shore shell bar at Dyers Cove Beach in Downe Township along New Jersey's Delaware Bayshore. The reef will be built to prevent sand loss from wind-driven waves.

"Originally, this event was a bare bones volunteer effort of placing shell bags off the Dyers Cove eastern beach," said Capt. Al Modjeski, Habitat Restoration Director for the American Littoral Society. "But, thanks to a donation from Betancourt, Van Hemmen, Greco & Kenyon we will have a "Shell-a-Bration" that celebrates the

ecology and community of the Delaware Bayshore."

Delaware Bay beaches naturally erode and rebuild over time. The process of erosion has accelerated in recent years, very likely an impact of increased storm frequency, climate change and sea level rise.

The American Littoral Society helped restore Delaware Bay beaches at a number of locations following Hurricane Sandy and is now working to establish near-shore shell bars at those sites. Last Spring, the Society replaced approximately 10,000 cubic yards of sand on the beach at Dyers Cove as part of their ongoing restoration work.

An approximately 200-foot reef was previously constructed offshore at Dyers to test whether the reef bars help reduce beach erosion and create calmer water for spawning horseshoe crabs.

"There are many strategies to defend our Delaware Bayshore, but one of the best and most productive are these oyster reefs," stated Dr. Larry Niles, a biologist with the American Littoral Society and Conserve Wildlife Foundation of New Jersey. "They not only replicate a lost but important habitat on Delaware Bay - reefs once covered much of the bayshore - but they provide just enough protection to make a difference in how long our beaches persist against the unrelenting forces of nature. In a way, we are fighting nature with nature."

The bayshore beaches need restoration and protection so that horseshoe crabs have proper breeding grounds. Crab eggs feed shorebirds, like the Red Knot, which stops in New Jersey each spring on its long journey from South America to the arctic circle. The Red Knot and other shorebirds help bring \$11 million in tourist dollars to the New Jersey bayshore region each year.

"New Jersey's Delaware Bayshore hosts an annual wildlife spectacle of global significance - the time-honored migration of Red Knots to reach the eggs of these ancient horseshoe crabs," said David Wheeler, Conserve Wildlife Foundation of New Jersey Executive Director. "Volunteer projects like this help connect the people of New Jersey with these endangered shorebirds and the largest population of horseshoe crabs in the world.

In 2015, over 130 volunteers and veterans built an oyster reef at South Reeds Beach in the first annual Shell-a-Bration. That same year, Veterans Day on the Bay dedicated the reef to all veterans and highlighted veteran involvement in the effort to restore New Jersey's Delaware Bayshore. The Second Annual Shell-a-Bration, held in April 2016, saw a handful of dedicated volunteers brave a blizzard to build a reef at Moore's Beach. The third annual Shell-Bration will be held this coming Spring.

The projects are being funded by National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) through their Hurricane Sandy Coastal Resiliency Grants Program, and are being developed in partnership with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and New Jersey Division of Fish and Wildlife.

To learn more about the restoration work taking place in Delaware Bay, visit [www.RestoreNJBayshore.org](http://www.RestoreNJBayshore.org).

Event photos available upon request.

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*The American Littoral Society is a member-supported, coastal conservation non-profit that promotes the study and conservation of marine life and habitat, protects the coast from harm and engages communities to do the same through work in education, advocacy, and conservation. Founded in 1961, the American Littoral Society has regional offices in New Jersey, New York and Florida. For more information, visit [www.LittoralSociety.org](http://www.LittoralSociety.org).*

*The Conserve Wildlife Foundation of New Jersey (CWF) is a private, non-profit organization dedicated to the protection and preservation of New Jersey's endangered and threatened wildlife and the habitats they depend on. CWF utilizes science, research, wildlife management, habitat restoration, education and volunteer stewardship to help conserve and protect a variety of at-risk species of wildlife in New Jersey, the most densely populated state in the nation. For more information, visit [www.ConserveWildlifeNJ.org](http://www.ConserveWildlifeNJ.org).*

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