

## **NEW ACTION ALERT**

**American Littoral Society \* Clean Ocean Action \* Save Barnegat Bay**

### **PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD EXTENDED 60-DAYS**

#### **HELP "CLOSE THE LOOP" SUPPORT NJDEP'S PLAN TO STOP THE DESTRUCTION OF MARINE LIFE FROM OYSTER CREEK'S NUCLEAR POWER PLANT**

**At the urging of citizens, the public comment period has been extended  
to November 6, 2005.**

After 35 years of exterminating marine life, Oyster Creek Nuclear Power Plant in Lacey Township, NJ, is being directed by the NJ Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) to implement technologies that will eliminate a major source of destruction to the Barnegat Bay ecosystem.

Exelon (parent company of AmerGen, which operates the facility) is seeking to renew their pollution discharge permit that regulates the cooling water system at the Oyster Creek Nuclear Power Plant. The current permit (a once-through cooling system) removes and destroys **1.4 billion gallons** of life-rich estuarine waters from Barnegat Bay and discharges **1.4 billion gallons** of chlorinated, super-heated, nearly lifeless wastewater **EACH DAY**.\*

**Relief at Long Last:** The NJDEP has recently issued a draft permit that calls for Oyster Creek Nuclear Power Plant to install a closed-cycle system and identified it as the "Preferred Alternative" - Alternative # 1. A closed-cycle system, also called a "closed-loop system," draws water into plants for cooling and re-circulates it, expelling the heat through cooling towers. Some water must be replaced, but closed-cycle cooling reduces water intake by 95% and dramatically decreases the number of fish, eggs, and larvae that are destroyed by once-through systems by being entrained (sucked into system), impinged (pinned on screens), or fatally scalded.

In the draft permit, NJDEP states "**closed-cycle cooling is the only cooling water intake structure technology available to the facility to reduce entrainment.**" NJDEP's decision sends a strong message to Oyster Creek Nuclear Power Plant that the State will no longer allow them to destroy the marine environment. Instead, Exelon must upgrade the facility to adequately protect, improve, and restore the health of Barnegat Bay. The installation of a closed-cycle cooling system will:

- Save trillions of animals -- including 13 million fish and shellfish PER YEAR such as: blue crabs, striped bass, winter flounder, bluefish, grass and sand shrimp, blackfish, bay anchovies, menhaden, spot, and spearing.
- Eliminate fish kills caused by thermal shock from the discharge.
- Stop the dumping of up to **365 tons** of toxic chlorine into the bay per year. Current allowable discharge levels are **20 times the lethal level** of many estuarine organisms including striped bass, bunker, and mummichogs (killis).
- Create hundreds of jobs building the new closed-loop system including cooling towers.

**Potential Roll-Back Option Looms:** Although NJDEP states that the closed-loop system is the #1 Preferred Alternative, if the facility can demonstrate that Alternative #1 is unavailable, the State allows for a fall-back option-- the use of "mitigation" measures. This option, called "Alternative #2," is unacceptable, as it will allow the continued destruction of marine life in Barnegat Bay.

**Exelon Has the Resources and Responsibility to Build a Closed-Loop System:** Exelon, the recent purchasers of Oyster Creek Power Plant, has the financial resources to install a closed-loop system. According to Exelon, it is "one of the nation's largest electric utilities with 5 million customers and \$15 billion in annual revenues." The company expects to "generate \$3.7 billion of cash between 2004-2006 after funding capital expenditures." Exelon made a decision to buy Oyster Creek Nuclear Power Plant, and has a responsibility to meet NJDEP's recommendations to protect the environment. Indeed, Exelon's recent brochure states, "We are a staunch protector of South Jersey wildlife and natural resources."

**\*\*\*\*PUBLIC COMMENT NEEDED\*\*\*\***

**HELP CLOSE THE LOOP  
TAKE ACTION TO SUPPORT THE BEST OPTION FOR THE BAY AND MARINE LIFE  
Send Comments by November 6, 2005**

NJDEP issued a draft New Jersey Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NJPDES) permit renewal to the Oyster Creek Nuclear Generating facility on July 19, 2005. Visit <http://www.nj.gov/dep/dwq/hot.htm> to view the official Public Notice and Fact Sheet.

Public comments are now **due November 6th, 2005**. **Send comments to:**

Howard B. Tompkins, Chief  
Attention: Comments on Public Notice NJ0005550  
Bureau of Point Source Permitting, Region 1  
P.O. Box 029  
Trenton, NJ 08625  
[Howard.Tompkins@DEP.state.nj.us](mailto:Howard.Tompkins@DEP.state.nj.us)

**Citizens are urged to attend the hearing and/or write comments. Be sure to include the following:**

- Request an additional public hearing (due to the first public hearing being held in late August at a time when many citizens are out-of-town).
- Thank the NJDEP for extending the comment period on this important issue.
- Support NJDEP's "Preferred Alternative" - Alternative # 1 - requiring a closed-cycle cooling system.
- Oppose NJDEP's Alternative # 2 allowing the Applicant to "select, install, properly operate and maintain a combination of design and construction technologies, operational measures, and/or restoration measures" since closed-cycle cooling is the "best available technology" and restoration measures have not been proven to be effective in offsetting the loss of marine life from once-through cooling systems.

This is a critical opportunity to finally stop the marine life-killing machine – the once through cooling water system at Oyster Creek Nuclear Power Plant. If you would like more information, contact these groups:

- American Littoral Society: 732-291-0055
- Clean Ocean Action: 732-872-0111, or visit [www.cleanoceanaction.org](http://www.cleanoceanaction.org) for a detailed position paper.
- Save Barnegat Bay: 732-830-3600

\* **Oyster Creek Nuclear Power Plant's current once-through cooling system operates at 1.4 billion gallons per day**. An earlier "action alert" included a typographical error stating that the system operated at 1.4 billion gallons *per year*.

*Prepared by Clean Ocean Action, September 6, 2005.*