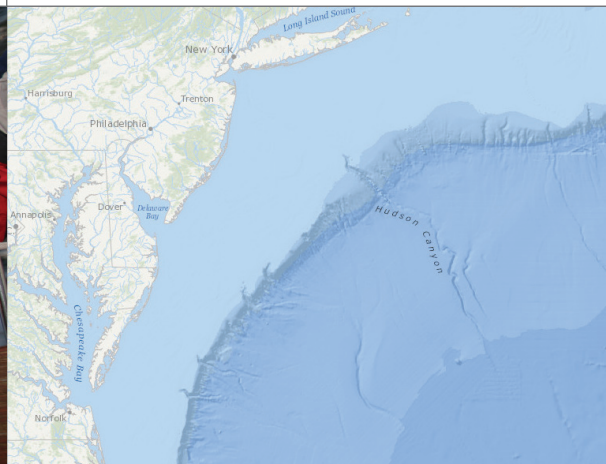




MID-ATLANTIC OCEAN DATA PORTAL

RESOURCES FOR REGIONAL OCEAN PLANNING



With competing demands for ocean use at an all-time high, recreation interests need a voice in ocean planning now more than ever to protect coastal resources for recreation users and businesses.

Recreational boating, commercial and recreational fishing, offshore alternative energy, ports, commercial shipping, and marine life are just a few of the demands that must be addressed in regional ocean planning today.

We need accurate data and information of where, when, and how stakeholders use the ocean to inform priorities for regional ocean planning and to provide ocean managers with the best decision support tools for maintaining and improving the health of the ocean, coastal resources, and coastal economies.

MARCO and the Mid-Atlantic Ocean Data Portal

The Mid-Atlantic Regional Council on the Ocean (MARCO) is committed to providing the tools and resources necessary for an accessible, scientifically-informed, and adaptive approach to ocean management.

The MARCO Portal, an online toolkit and resource center, consolidates the best available data and enables stakeholders to visualize and analyze ocean resources and human use information such as fishing grounds, recreational areas, shipping lanes, habitat areas, and energy sites. The Portal serves as a platform to engage all stakeholders in ocean planning from the five-state Mid-Atlantic region—putting all of the essential data and state-of-the art mapping and visualization technology into the hands of the agencies, industry, and community leaders engaged in ocean planning.

DID YOU KNOW?

- Snorkeling, boating, surfing, and related tourism provide \$25.1 billion in gross domestic product and 641,910 jobs for the Mid-Atlantic region (Center for American Progress 2012).
- The tourism and recreation sector is the largest industry in the Mid-Atlantic ocean-based economy. In 2009, it employed 80% of all ocean workers in the Mid-Atlantic and produced 62% of the Mid-Atlantic ocean economy's gross domestic product (NOAA Coastal Services Center 2012).

ABOUT MARCO

The Mid-Atlantic Regional Council on the Ocean (MARCO) is a regional ocean partnership established by the Governors of New York, New Jersey, Delaware, Maryland, and Virginia for shared action to improve ocean health and contribute to the high quality of life and economic vitality in the region.

ABOUT THE PORTAL

The MARCO Portal is an online toolkit and resource center to engage stakeholders in ocean planning in the five-state Mid-Atlantic region. Learn more at portal.midatlanticocean.org.

“The Mid-Atlantic region supports a highly diverse array of commercial and recreational fishing activity, and other human uses. The MARCO Portal is an ideal tool to facilitate the important planning discussions associated with ocean uses and development within the region.” *Rick Robins, Chairman, Mid-Atlantic Fisheries Management Council*



Coastal recreation and tourism is big business

Recreational boating, snorkeling, surfing and related coastal tourism provide \$25.1 billion in gross domestic product for the Mid-Atlantic region. Coastal recreation and tourism also provide 641,910 jobs for the region and \$20.1 billion in wages.

In New Jersey, about \$2.1 billion was spent on recreational boat expenses in 2006, providing around 18,000 jobs to people in New Jersey.

Similarly, New York found that recreational boaters spent \$2.4 billion annually, creating 19,000 jobs.

Your voice matters

In order to protect recreation opportunities and the coastal tourism economy, we need input from recreational and tourism stakeholders like you.

Whether reviewing existing information or contributing new data to fill critical gaps, your participation in the MARCO Portal project will help set the stage for future management decisions that balance diverse goals and provide lasting benefits for our region.

Through interactive meetings, web forums, and one-on-one communications from various stakeholder groups, you can join us in developing the Portal and successful ocean planning in our region.

By engaging with the Portal project, you will:

- Vet our existing data and information to ensure accuracy and relevance
- Fill data gaps, through contributions of local and scientific knowledge
- Learn how to use the digital visualization tool and improve its usability
- Build inclusive and comprehensive ocean management criteria

To participate in the Portal Project, please contact:

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PROJECT MANAGEMENT TEAM

Monmouth University's Urban Coast Institute, Rutgers University's Edward J. Bloustein School and Center for Remote Sensing and Spatial Analysis, The Nature Conservancy, The University of Delaware's Gerald J. Mangone Center for Marine Policy, and Ecotrust. The Project Team collaborates closely with a Steering Committee, which includes MARCO representatives from the states of New York, New Jersey, Delaware, Maryland, and Virginia, as well as federal agency representatives.

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WHO WE ARE: The MARCO Portal Project team is represented by Monmouth University Urban Coast Institute, Rutgers University's Edward J. Bloustein School and Center for Remote Sensing and Spatial Analysis, The Nature Conservancy, The University of Delaware's Gerald J. Mangone Center for Marine Policy, and Ecotrust.