

Future City Inc.
Clean Water: A Citizen Fish Advisory Effort
August 29, 2013

Project Period: 1/1/2013 to 9/23/2013

Funds Provided: \$5000

Funds Matched: \$2400 In-Kind contribution including one room to be dedicated for the project in our organizational site, including a meeting table, phone, fax and laptop.

Goals: To develop a network of local Clean Water Citizen Scientists who are informed on fish consumption advisory issues and water pollution; to inform residents of the dangers of consuming fish, crabs and other aquatic life from these waters; and to gather information about fishing locations in our waterways.

Summary: Future City, Inc. (FCI) staff and interns worked closely with the NJ Department of Environmental Protection and the northern New Jersey AmeriCorps Watershed Ambassadors to enhance ongoing public education efforts targeted for residents of, and visitors to, the waterfront neighborhoods along the Newark Bay Complex and Arthur Kill Blueway through the cities of Elizabeth, Linden, Perth Amboy and any other areas selected by the AmeriCorps Hudson, Union and Middlesex Watershed Ambassadors. Project partners developed a long-term, aggressive public advocacy, education and information effort utilizing:

- Flyers and posters that were distributed by Watershed Ambassadors at targeted public events, with a focus on existing NJDEP outreach materials on fish consumption advisories.
- Multi-media tools: FCI engaged local bilingual civic leadership for public service spots on non-English radio and cable T.V.
- Direct communication: Watershed Ambassadors and FCI regularly visited area civic groups whose constituencies utilize Newark Bay Complex, the Arthur Kill Blueway and Elizabeth River in Elizabeth area. Presentations addressed and advocated for Fish Advisory/Clean Water issues at appropriate public forums.

Course of action: A working team was chosen and given the task of implementing the goals and actions required to carry out the promised results. An initial meeting with the AmeriCorps Watershed Ambassadors was held to review the project and goals, and the roles to be taken by all involved. Team members and the Ambassadors were assigned specific geographic areas to visit and document activities. Project partners developed Power Point presentations, and NJDEP produced a written Assessment Form to detail conditions, activities, water quality impacts, etc. on their site visits. This form was provided to all team members conducting field visits, as well as training and instructions on etiquette and safety considerations. Initial site visits took place during May and June along the Blueway. Photographs of fishing/crabbing/shell fishing locations along those sites were taken on the visits. Some of the photographs and narratives of the sites were uploaded to a Google Map of the Blueway. A bilingual flier on catching and releasing was created and distributed at the countywide BioBlitz environmental education event in June and to a waterfront block watcher association. An advisory tri-fold presentation was also created and presented at the BioBlitz. The teams met again in June to review their site visits and discuss observations.

Team members continued to visit possible fishing/crabbing/shellfishing sites along the Blueway and document activities. Team members engaged fishermen in conversations about their activities. Information on possible fishing activities was given by the fishermen. The maps produced with field information show both an overview of the fishing locations and information on each of the sites. The bilingual "Catch and Release" flier and advisory tri-fold were used at two Elizabeth community events in July. The fliers were also distributed at these events. Residents were engaged in conversations on fishing, crabbing and shellfishing in the Blueway. A mid-Summer presentation was given on July 22 that included advisory activities to a mixed group of interested persons. The advisory was provided to the local Community Access channel. 250 copies of the advisory were delivered to Elizabeth City Hall for presentation on their Information kiosk.

Accomplishments:

- Four Watershed Ambassadors trained in fish consumption advisory issues and communication, as well as in conducting field assessments.
- Residents educated and empowered by the information conveyed via power point presentations, displays, flyers, conversations, and PSAs. Beneficiaries are primarily residents, with local businesses, regional, county and city government benefiting secondarily.
- Research on new fishing locations and practices at multiple sites in five towns or cities along Newark Bay, Kill Van Kull, and the Raritan River.
- Five Google maps were created based on the field assessment results for [Bayonne](#), [Perth Amboy](#), [Highland Park](#), [Seawaren](#), and [Elizabeth](#). The maps document fishing activities and conditions at various waterfront sites and were shared with NJDEP to guide their future outreach efforts.
- Field guides produced to assess potential fishing locations.
- Catch-and-release flyers in English and Spanish were created and distributed.
- Additional materials and information were distributed, including NJDEP's fish consumption advisory outreach materials.
- Future City and the Watershed Ambassadors developed Power Point slides which were presented at July Fest and a neighborhood picnic both in Elizabeth NJ, reaching approximately 300-400 people.
- Public service announcements were developed and shown on the community access channel for the city of Elizabeth, NJ.

Project evaluation: Our metric for success was to serve the intended project beneficiaries, which are the multilingual, mostly Latino residents and related sectors, by bringing them together to facilitate a greater appreciation, knowledge of fish advisories, health concerns related to local fish consumption, practice of BMPs, and future stewardship of our Elizabeth Watershed waterways. We accomplished these goals by reaching out to and providing information to people fishing at the locations we visited, by presenting and distributing information at numerous events, by disseminating fish consumption advisory information via PSAs, and by creating maps that will assist NJDEP in planning future fish advisory outreach activities where they are most needed.

Lessons learned: The Ambassadors were at the end of their yearlong assignments and there was a lot of stress on all because of their limited time to devote to the project. Due to the other commitments of team members, it was difficult to schedule a time where all members were able to meet together. Communications by phone, e-mail and text were used to keep in contact. The key point is that we found Skype a consistent way to productively communicate positively and consistently on project-related

issues. A dedicated e-mail account and Dropbox folder were used to help organize communications and to overcome these problems.

Another problem that was encountered during this project was the attitude that some people had towards fishing in the affected areas. This [video](#) that has been uploaded to YouTube shows how many people who use the waterfront look at fishing in these waters. To work on this problem we made a point to talk to fisherman about fish consumption issues when conducting our waterfront visits.

Pictures



Fish advisory display at BioBlitz 2013 in Cranford, NJ. Credit: Future City.



People fishing at Brady's dock in Bayonne, NJ. Credit: Future City.



Crab cages inside boat at Donaldson's Park in Highland Park, NJ. Credit: Future City.



Fish caught at the marina in Perth Amboy, NJ.



Fishing at Carlsen Park in Sewaren, NJ. Credit: Future City.



People fishing at Marciante-Jackson-Millet Park in Elizabeth. Credit: Future City.

Materials produced with HEP funding:

- Blue map brochure
- Catch and release flyer
- Catch and release flyer (Spanish version)
- Blue Maps:
 - Bayonne: <http://bit.ly/17ozu5C>
 - Perth Amboy: <http://bit.ly/157B61i>
 - Highland Park: <http://bit.ly/142IEc4>
 - Seawaren: <http://bit.ly/187ds7s>
 - Elizabeth: <http://bit.ly/1du0MhV>

This project was funded by an agreement awarded by the Environmental Protection Agency to the New England Interstate Water Pollution Control Commission in partnership with the New York-New Jersey Harbor & Estuary Program.

Although the information in this document has been funded wholly or in part by the United States Environmental Protection Agency under agreement CE98272003 to NEIWPCC, it has not undergone the Agency's publications review process and therefore, may not necessarily reflect the views of the Agency, and no official endorsement should be inferred. The viewpoints expressed here do not necessarily represent those of the New York-New Jersey Harbor & Estuary Program, NEIWPCC, or U.S. EPA, nor does mention of trade names, commercial products, or causes constitute endorsement or recommendation for use.



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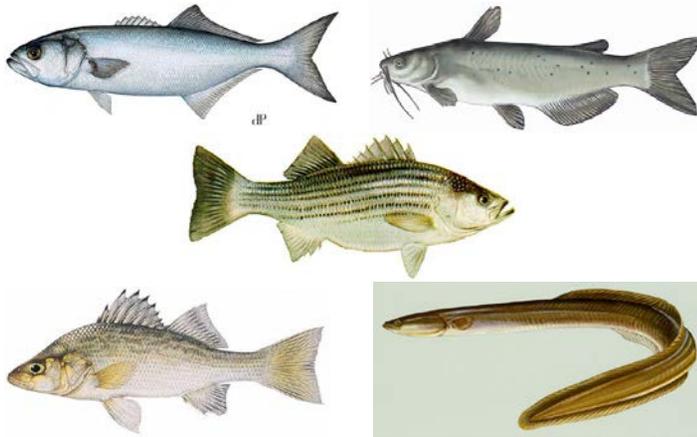


Accessing Our Blue Map

Our Interactive Blue Maps can be found by going to these links:

- Bayonne: <http://bit.ly/17ozu5C>
- Perth Amboy: <http://bit.ly/157B61i>
- Highland Park: <http://bit.ly/142IEc4>
- Seawaren: <http://bit.ly/187ds7s>
- Elizabeth: <http://bit.ly/1du0MhV>

*Fish Under Advisory:



Acknowledgements

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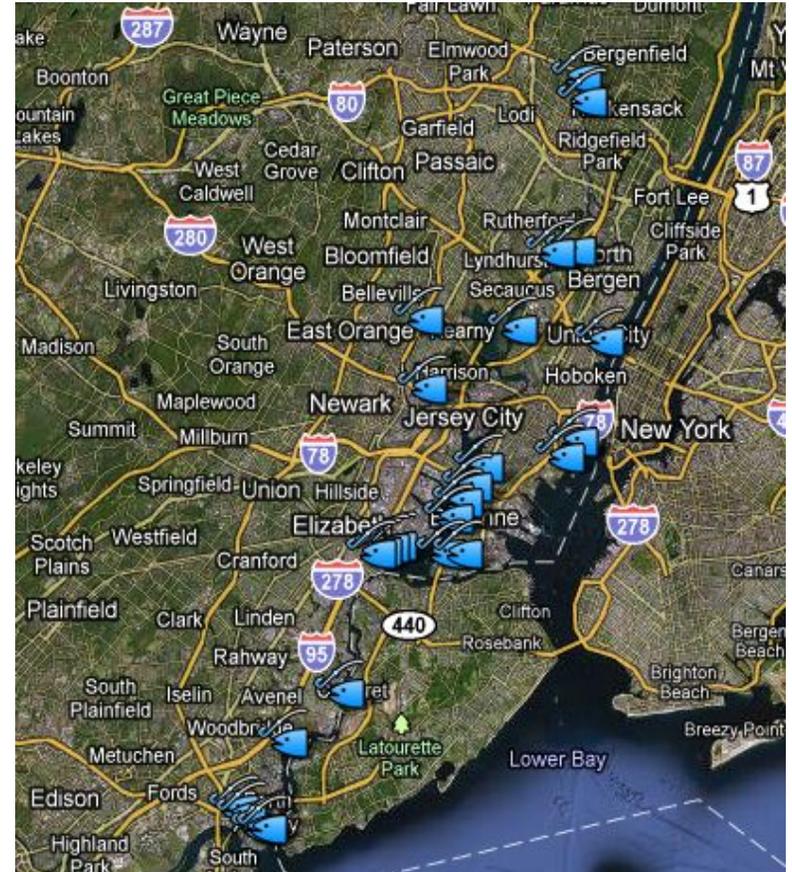
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OUR BLUE MAP



A mapping and citizen science project promoting awareness of health risks related to eating fish, shellfish and blue claw crabs caught in local contaminated waters.

FISHING IN NEWARK BAY COMPLEX / ARTHUR KILL BLUEWAY

People in the urban areas of NJ neighboring the Newark Bay Complex and our Arthur Kill Blueway such as Bayonne, Jersey City, Newark, Elizabeth, Carteret, and Perth Amboy enjoy fishing, shellfishing and crabbing. Some enjoy a relaxing day on the waterfront fishing for sport. Others rely on it as an important, free food source for their families to survive.

Unfortunately, the waters surrounding these urban and industrial areas are contaminated with toxic chemicals. These chemicals, described below, get into the fish, crabs and shellfish making them potentially dangerous to eat.



Fishing along the Newark Bay in Bayonne

*CHEMICAL CONTAMINANTS

There are different chemicals used by industrial plants and in everyday items which get into the waterways. Once in the water, the chemicals get into the fish, shellfish and crabs. These chemicals build up in the human body over time and are linked to cancer and birth defects. Although everyone is encouraged not to eat the fish, shellfish and crabs from our contaminated waters, children and pregnant or nursing women are most strongly urged. These chemicals are particularly dangerous because we can't see them, unlike garbage or oil spills.



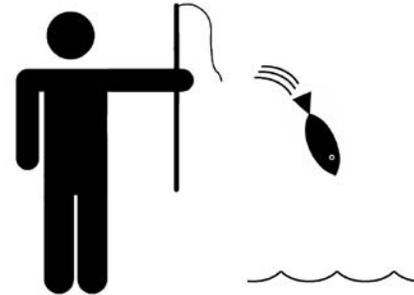
Different forms of mercury around us

- Dioxins: Burning things that contain chlorine like PVC (the white pipes under your sink) creates these chemicals.
- PCB's: Commonly found in dielectric fluid in transformers, capacitors, and coolants.
- Mercury: A heavy metal used in fluorescent light (CFL) bulbs, old-style thermometers, and silver tooth fillings.



Catch

and



Release



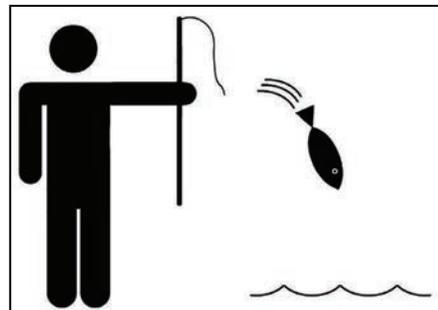
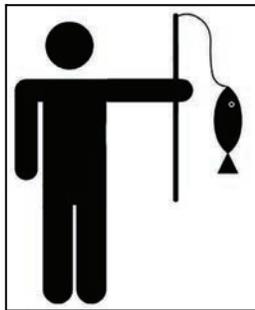
**Under
Advisory*
Eat With Caution**



**Do Not Eat
Locally Caught
Shellfish/Crabs**

FISHING/CRABBING/SHELLFISHING IN NEWARK BAY COMPLEX /ARTHUR KILL BLUEWAY

ENJOY FISHING – CATCH AND RELEASE YOUR FISH, CRABS AND SHELLFISH

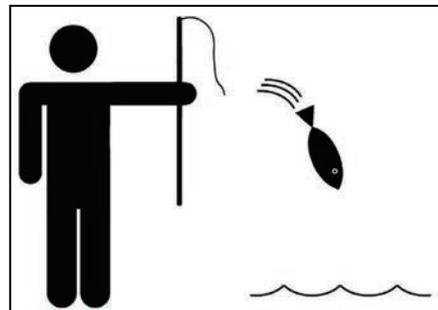
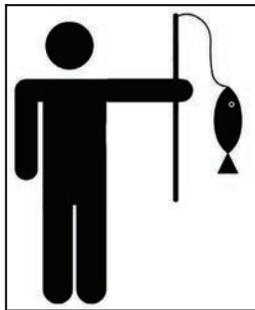


Catch and Release



PESCADOS/CANGREJOS/MARISCOS EN NEWARK BAY COMPLEX /ARTHUR KILL BLUEWAY

DISFRUTE DE LA PESCA – CAP- TURE Y LIBERE SUS PECES, CAN- GREJOS, Y MARISCOS



Captura y Libera

