



A.C.T. To Preserve Our Coastal
Bays

Assateague Coastal Trust
P.O. Box 731 • Berlin, MD 21811
(410) 629-1538
Fax (410) 629-1059
staff@actforbays.org
www.actforbays.org



coastkeeper@actforbays.org



President Barack Obama
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20500

11/15/2016

Dear President Obama,

As an organization that advocates for the protection of the Delmarva Peninsula's Atlantic Coast, please accept Assateague Coastal Trust's and our over twelve hundred member's gratitude for removing the Atlantic Ocean from the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management's 2017-2022 Outer Continental Shelf Oil and Gas Leasing Program.

Here on the Delmarva Peninsula, 11 coastal municipalities, representing the entirety of our Atlantic Coast from Lewes, Delaware to Northampton County, Virginia passed resolutions opposing not only offshore drilling, but also seismic airgun surveys in the Atlantic. These resolutions joined no fewer than 120 other municipalities in East Coast states in formally opposed oil and gas development in the Atlantic. In fact, 90% of the coastline that would be at direct risk from seismic airgun blasting, from Cape May, New Jersey to Cape Canaveral, Florida have passed resolutions formally opposing oil and gas development off their coast. These resolutions have been joined by over 1,100 business interests and over 1,200 federal, state and local legislators in voicing opposition to oil and gas exploration or development in the Atlantic.

In today's political climate, it is often difficult to find issues people can come together around, but I can personally testify to the unifying force this issue has had here on the Delmarva Peninsula. Citizens of all political, economic, and social stripes have joined forces to advocate for the protection of our coast from offshore drilling. The grassroots opposition not only here on the Delmarva Peninsula, but up and down the Atlantic coast makes it abundantly clear that citizens and local leaders do not want offshore oil and gas in the Atlantic and will never support a plan that would put their ocean, economies, and way of life at risk.



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Atlantic oil and gas development off the Delmarva Coast would put more than economies and communities at risk. With the largest stretch of undeveloped coast line anywhere from Maine to Florida, the barrier islands along Delmarva's Atlantic Coast are a global ecological treasure and recognized as such by the United Nations. These barrier islands are used by thousands of migratory bird species and any harm done to this fragile ecosystem could have dramatic ripple effects to environments from Canada south to South America.

Please know that we are grateful that the Atlantic is no longer being considered for offshore drilling in the upcoming five-year program. However, our ocean is priceless and our coastal assets are far too valuable to ever put at risk of oil and gas development. ACT urges you to use your presidential authority to permanently protect the Atlantic Ocean and our communities from offshore drilling and seismic airgun blasting.

Sincerely,

Kathy Phillips

Executive Director/Assateague COASTKEEPER



coastkeeper@actforbays.org

