

**For Immediate Release**  
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**Contact:**  
Melissa Danko, Executive Director  
Email: [mdanko@mtanj.org](mailto:mdanko@mtanj.org)  
Phone: 732-292-1051

## **Attention Boaters: Summer is almost here! Let's Go Boating**

**Manasquan, New Jersey** – The Marine Trades Association of New Jersey (MTA/NJ) is pleased to announce the launch of a new initiative, Go Boating NJ. The objective of this new campaign is to provide boaters throughout the region with current information on the condition of New Jersey's waterways and popular boating areas.

Since Hurricane Sandy came ashore in late October, reports of unprecedented destruction to the shoreline, homes and marine facilities have left boaters wondering if there will be a boating season in 2013. This initiative was launched to address those concerns by providing coverage of the restoration efforts taking place each day by state, federal and municipal agencies as well as scores of volunteers and organizations. More importantly, the Go Boating NJ campaign will highlight, through on the water videos and photos, some of NJ's most popular boating areas to give boaters firsthand knowledge and visuals that these waterways are open and ready for them this season.

### **Where are we six months after Sandy?**

The question most boaters and visitors to the Jersey Shore have been asking is "What is being done to ensure there will be a boating season this year?" Given the importance of the Boating Industry to New Jersey's economy\* and quality of life, the Christie Administration wasted no time in mobilizing an unprecedented effort aimed at identifying and removing storm-related debris from the State's navigable waterways.

Since early March, contractors hired by the State have been on the water seven days per week (weather permitting) removing storm-related debris from channels throughout the eleven Waterway Debris Removal Zones designated by New Jersey's Department of Environmental Protection. The State awarded three contracts to firms experienced in providing disaster recovery, debris removal and coastal restoration services. Each of the three firms was assigned specific areas of responsibility. To make certain work proceeded on schedule, and to ensure that all debris being removed was eligible for FEMA reimbursement, the State also hired an independent Project Manager.

The New Jersey Department of Transportation has been doing sonar surveys and marking areas where debris and sediment is to be removed from state navigation channels. The Army Corps of Engineers has also been clearing the Intracoastal Waterway of debris.

“Governor Christie and I are committed to ensuring that our coastal communities are open for tourism and recreation this season,” said DEP Commissioner Bob Martin. “We have come a long way. Marinas and charter fishing operations are gearing up for the season, and water quality is excellent. We want everyone to know that New Jersey’s waterways are open for all to enjoy. We just ask boaters to use common sense and caution as clean-up continues.”

The DEP recently lifted the recreational fishing and boating advisory for Raritan Bay that had been in place since Hurricane Sandy. With that, all recreational use advisories have now been lifted across the State. Updates on waterway debris efforts can be found online at: [state.nj.us/dep/special/hurricane-sandy/wwdebris.htm](http://state.nj.us/dep/special/hurricane-sandy/wwdebris.htm)

## **On The Water**

Work for Go Boating NJ began in March when members of the MTA/NJ headed out on the water to begin filming videos for the new campaign with the help of Wahoo Internet Marketing. Video and photos from that first day included areas of Barnegat Bay, Toms River, Silver Bay, Cattus Island, and the Metedeconk and Manasquan Rivers to name a few. The second video shoot was of the southern areas of Barnegat Bay, Barnegat Inlet, Forked River, Oyster Creek, Double Creek and Tices Shoal. The third day of filming was focused on the Northern areas, including the Navesink River, Shrewsbury River and the Northern Bays. Plans are in the works now to continuing filming other boating areas and waterways of the state to promote boating in NJ all over, year round.

“It was great to be out on the water, even in the cold in March, taking video and photos,” stated Melissa Danko, MTA/NJ Executive Director. “All three days of filming went really well and we didn’t see debris or any issues at all in the areas that we boated in and around. We know how important it is to not only tell boaters that the waterways are accessible and navigable but to show them firsthand that we were out there and the waterways look great.”

## **Marinas are busy launching boats and getting ready**

According to Melissa Danko, “Most of the marina owners and operators that I have spoken with recently have been busy getting ready for the season and are open for business. Within days of the hurricane, marina operators had begun restoration efforts with the goal of being fully operational by the time their customers were ready to launch their boats. That time has arrived, and we’re pleased to report that our industry is ready for the 2013 boating season.”

The Waterway Guide, along with BoatUS and Association of Marina Industries, has a Superstorm Sandy Update Page where they have contacted and updated hundreds of marinas to get current conditions in and around their facilities. Anyone interested in finding out the status of a marina can visit: [waterwayguide.com/superstorm-sandy/](http://waterwayguide.com/superstorm-sandy/).

## **Waterway updates and much more available online**

As part of the Go Boating NJ initiative, a new website has been launched; [GoBoatingNJ.org](http://GoBoatingNJ.org). The site will include a wealth of information for boaters including videos, photos, waterway debris removal updates from the state, information on marinas and businesses that are open and ready for the season as well as links to boating regulations, weather and much more. This new campaign will continue throughout the year with updates and new information posted regularly.

## About the MTA/NJ

The Marine Trades Association of New Jersey (MTA/NJ), established in 1972, is a non-profit organization dedicated to promoting, advancing and protecting the recreational marine industry and waterways in the State of New Jersey. The MTA/NJ is dedicated to the interests of the industry as a whole for the benefit of its individual members and the consumers whom they serve. The MTA/NJ produces two boat shows, the Jersey Shore Boat Sale & Expo held in September at FirstEnergy Park in Lakewood and the New Jersey Boat Sale & Expo held in February at the New Jersey Convention & Expo Center in Edison. In addition, the MTA/NJ proudly endorses the Progressive Insurance Atlantic City Boat Show held in February.

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\*The Marine Trades Association of New Jersey (MTA/NJ) released the results of An Economic Impact Analysis of Recreational Boating in New Jersey. The study, the first of its kind, directly measured expenditures related to recreational boating and their impact on the state's economy. The economic impact of New Jersey's boating industry supports approximately 18,000 jobs and \$2.1 billion in spending.

New Jersey boasts 127 miles of coastal shoreline, 1,792 miles of tidal shoreline and 4,000 lakes, rivers and bays.

There are 163,000 registered boats in New Jersey, of which 25% are in Monmouth and Ocean Counties – those counties hardest hit on October 29, 2012.

Reference: [www.mtanj.org/ecoimpact.html](http://www.mtanj.org/ecoimpact.html)

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Marina Owners that participated in the video filming on the water and are available for interviews:

- Fred Brueggemann, Key Harbor Marina, Waretown/ 609-693-9355
- Karen Davidson, Green Cove Marina, Brick / 732-840-9090
- Don Ditzel, Comstock Yacht Sales & Marina, Brick/ 732-899-2500
- Jim Cerruti, Fair Haven Yacht Works, Fair Haven / 732-747-3010
- Skip or Ed Harrison, Baywood Marina, Brick / 732-477-3322
- Tom Leaming, Leamings Marina, Waretown / 609-971-1514
- Ed McCarthy, McCarthy's Marine Sales, Brielle / 732-528-8200
- Michael Yachnik, Horizon Marine Group, Toms River / 732-929-1700