



NEWS FROM NOAA

NATIONAL OCEANIC & ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION • US DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

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NOAA Awards Grants to Remove Marine Debris in Alaska

NOAA has awarded \$1.17 million in grants nationally to 14 community-based marine debris prevention and removal projects – including \$170,000 to projects in Alaska. These grants, awarded in 2007, provide financial and technical assistance to local groups to clean up and prevent marine debris such as fishing gear, fuel tanks, and other discarded material in coastal areas.

“These projects will remove tons of marine debris, helping to prevent unnecessary harm to important fish species and their habitats,” said retired Navy Vice Admiral Conrad Lautenbacher, Ph.D., undersecretary of commerce for oceans and atmosphere and NOAA administrator. “Each project relies on cooperative conservation, which brings together the skills, expertise and knowledge of state, local and private partners.”

Nuniwarmiut Piciryarata Tamaryalkuti, Inc., a non-profit organization that works to protect the cultural resources of the Cup’ig Eskimo people, received \$55,000 to remove debris on Nunivak Island in the Bering Sea. The project will improve the beaches, major stream mouths and marine estuaries near the traditional summer fish camps around the island. The camps are used to fish for food that sustains the Cup’ig throughout the winter months. The Gulf of Alaska Keeper received \$115,000 for beach cleanups and marine debris removal conducted on approximately 70 miles of shoreline on the central Prince William Sound Islands and Gore Point peninsula. Both of these areas are littered with plastic foam debris, which has broken into small fragments and is difficult to remove. Volunteers will use gas-powered vacuums to remove the debris.

NOAA is currently reviewing grant proposals for 2008 that were submitted by the Oct. 31, 2007 deadline. Grants are funded by the NOAA Marine Debris Program and administered by the NOAA Restoration Center. More information on the NOAA Marine Debris Program and future funding opportunities can be found at www.marinedebris.noaa.gov.

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, an agency of the U.S. Commerce Department, is dedicated to enhancing economic security and national safety through the prediction and research of weather and climate-related events and information service delivery for transportation, and by providing environmental stewardship of our nation's coastal and marine resources. Through the emerging Global Earth Observation System of Systems (GEOSS), NOAA is working with its federal partners, more than 70 countries and the European Commission to develop a global monitoring network that is as integrated as the planet it observes, predicts and protects.

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