



NEWS FROM NOAA

NATIONAL OCEANIC & ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION • US DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

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NOAA Awards Grants to Remove Marine Debris in California and Guam

NOAA has awarded \$1.17 million in grants nationally to 14 community-based marine debris prevention and removal projects – including about \$182,000 for projects in California and Guam. 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.”

The University of California-Davis *SeaDoc Society* was awarded \$85,000 to conduct underwater searches and collection of derelict fishing gear in the state’s coastal waters. The program will concentrate on recovering lost fishing gear from the Channel Islands and Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuaries. The San Diego Unified Port District received a grant of \$42,000 to remove up to 10,000 pounds of marine debris from San Diego Bay, including batteries, generators, engines and fuel tanks. Side-scan sonar was used to map the location of this debris in preparation for removal.

In the Pacific Islands, the Micronesians Divers Association, Inc. will work to reduce and remove marine debris in Guam. Volunteers will remove debris from coral reefs and coastal rivers on the west side of Guam, and two local organizations will develop an outreach campaign to educate the community about the prevention and removal of marine 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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