

# Marine Debris



NOAA Marine Debris Program | Office of Response and Restoration | NOAA National Ocean Service

## NOAA Marine Debris Program

The NOAA Marine Debris Program (MDP) supports national and international efforts to research, prevent, and reduce the impacts of marine debris. The MDP serves as a centralized capability within NOAA, coordinating and supporting activities within NOAA and with other federal agencies, as well as using partnerships to support projects carried out by state and local agencies, tribes, non-governmental organizations, academia, and industry.

### Vision

The NOAA Marine Debris Program envisions the global ocean and its coasts, users, and inhabitants free from the impacts of marine debris.

### Mission

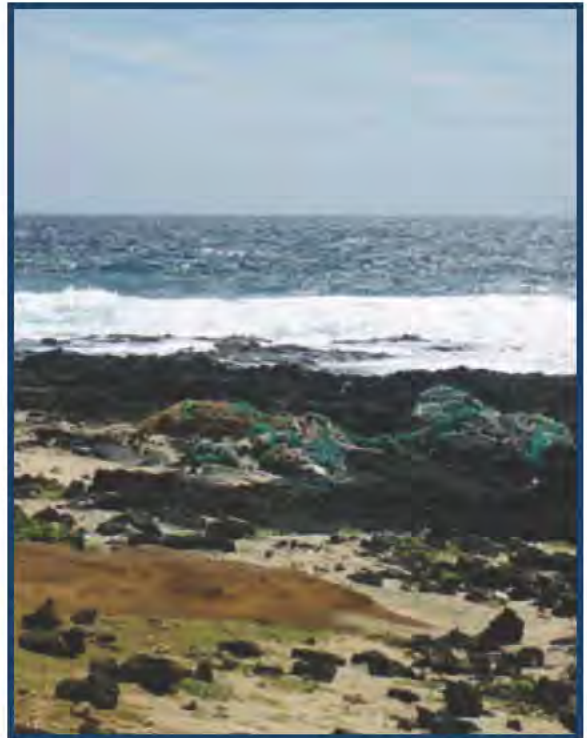
The mission of the NOAA Marine Debris Program is to investigate and solve the problems that stem from marine debris through research, prevention, and reduction activities, in order to protect and conserve our nation's marine environment and ensure navigation safety.

### MDP Staff and Locations

The MDP has headquarters in Silver Spring, MD and has regional staff members positioned around the country to support regional coordination efforts, track progress of projects, review performance measures, and conduct regional marine debris outreach to local audiences.

### Program Components and Grant Programs

The Marine Debris Research, Prevention, and Reduction Act of 2006 outlines three central program components for the MDP to undertake: 1) mapping, identification, impact assessment, removal, and prevention; 2) reducing and preventing gear loss; and 3) outreach. To address these components, the MDP has developed capacity within the program and the agency to conduct projects addressing these areas as well as established two competitive grant programs that provide Federal funding to non-Federal applicants nationwide.



Derelict fishing nets (*ghostnets*), even on shore, are entanglement hazards to marine animals such as the endangered Hawaiian monk seal. Photo taken near South Point, Island of Hawaii.

### Marine debris is

any persistent solid material that is manufactured or processed and directly or indirectly, intentionally or unintentionally, disposed of or abandoned into the marine environment or the Great Lakes.



The MDP is a partner in "Fishing for Energy" a program that provides fishermen a no-cost disposal service for old or derelict fishing gear and covers it into energy. *Photo courtesy of T. Barry, NFWF.*

American Chemistry Council, BoatUS, University of Washington-Tacoma. The MDP continues to seek new and productive partnerships to address the issue of marine debris around our nation's coasts.

## Interagency Coordination

The passing of the Marine Debris Research, Prevention, and Reduction Act re-established the Interagency Marine Debris Coordinating Committee, which includes 10 Federal agencies (NOAA serves as chair) responsible for developing and recommending comprehensive and multi-disciplinary approaches to reduce the sources and impacts of marine debris to the nation's marine environment, natural resources, public safety, and economy. The Committee also ensures the coordination of Federal agency marine debris activities both nationally and internationally and works with states and NGOs to support regional activities.

## External Partnerships

The MDP appreciates the opportunities that are presented through partnerships with external organizations and entities such as Ocean Conservancy, National Geographic,

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[www.MarineDebris.noaa.gov/about](http://www.MarineDebris.noaa.gov/about)



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## Marine debris is

a problem we can solve together. Reduce, reuse, recycle, and participate in local beach or stream cleanups. If we each do a little, together we can make a big difference.



Diver assisting in the removal of derelict lobster traps (aka *casitas*) in Florida. *Photo courtesy of Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary.*