



# NEWS FROM NOAA

NATIONAL OCEANIC & ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION • US DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **NOAA Awards Grants to Remove Marine Debris in Washington**

NOAA has awarded \$1.17 million in grants nationally to 14 community-based marine debris prevention and removal projects – including \$200,000 to projects in Washington. These grants, awarded in 2007, provide financial and technical assistance to local groups to clean up and prevent marine debris such as fishing gear, pilings, 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.”

In northern Washington, the Stillaguamish Tribe of Indians and the Northwest Straits Marine Conservation Foundation received \$100,000 to remove derelict fishing gear from Puget Sound. The Northwest Straits Marine Conservation Foundation will work in multiple locations throughout the area. The Stillaguamish Tribe will work in Port Susan, using a remote operating vehicle to find and remove derelict fishing gear in deep water. In southern Washington, the Lower Columbia River Estuary Partnership received \$100,000 to remove 200 to 300 derelict pilings soaked with creosote and two abandoned vessels from Coal Creek Slough, part of the Columbia River estuary.

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](http://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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On the Web:

NOAA: [www.noaa.gov](http://www.noaa.gov)

NOAA's Fisheries Service: [www.nmfs.noaa.gov](http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov)