



NFWF

Fishing for Energy

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FUNDING PARTNERS

Major funding for the Fishing for Energy partnership is provided by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and Covanta Corporation. Additional in-kind support is provided by Schnitzer Steel Industries, Inc.



ABOUT NFWF

The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) protects and restores our nation's fish and wildlife and their habitats. Created by Congress in 1984, NFWF directs public conservation dollars to the most pressing environmental needs and matches those investments with private funds.

Learn more at www.nfwf.org

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An abandoned crab pot in Florida

A PRODUCTIVE PARTNERSHIP TO REDUCE MARINE DEBRIS

Fishing for Energy launched in 2008 through a partnership between Covanta, the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF), the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Marine Debris Program, and Schnitzer Steel Industries, Inc. to provide a solution to fishermen to dispose of old, derelict (lost in the marine environment) or unusable fishing gear and to reduce the amount of derelict fishing gear in and around coastal waterways.

OUR STRATEGY

Fishing for Energy supports four strategic initiatives that restore the quality of marine and coastal habitats and support the communities and industries that rely on these resources:

- **Disposal Opportunities:** Provide collection bins at high volume ports for commercial fishermen to unload gear
- **Regional Management:** Collaborate with state managers across key regions to address common drivers of gear loss and to remove barriers to removal efforts
- **Technological Innovation:** Identify, test, and deploy innovations to reduce accidental introduction of derelict fishing gear into the marine environment and to reduce the impact of gear if lost
- **Community Awareness:** Increase public awareness about the environmental and economic harm of derelict fishing gear and how initiatives like Fishing for Energy can make measurable improvements for coastal environments and communities.



FISHING FOR ENERGY

More than 3 million pounds (1,531 tons) of fishing gear has been collected at bins placed in 44 communities.

www.nfwf.org/fishingforenergy



HELPING FISHING AND MARINE COMMUNITIES

The NOAA Marine Debris Program has identified derelict fishing gear as one of the major types of debris impacting the marine environment. Derelict gear can have significant environmental and economic impacts and can even hinder navigational safety. Studies show that inactive or derelict fishing gear continues to “fish” commercially valuable species targeted by fishermen and can snag on active fishing gear, creating high costs to fishermen in both time and money.

Derelict gear also catches non-target species, including species that may be listed as endangered or threatened such as marine mammals and sea turtles. Marine habitats, which are smothered when derelict nets sink from the weight of their catch, are further damaged when nets scour the ocean floor as they shift during storms.

GENERATING NEW ENERGY FROM OLD GEAR

Fishing for Energy partners work closely with state and local agencies, community groups, and local ports to install bins at convenient and strategic locations where fishermen can dispose of gear. When these bins fill up, the gear is collected and transported to a nearby Schnitzer Steel facility where the metal (i.e. crab pots, gear rigging) is pulled for recycling, and rope or nets are sheared for easier handling for disposal. From there, the gear is brought to a Covanta Energy-from-Waste facility where the gear is used in the production of electricity for local communities. The partnership has invested more than \$2.5 million to address the issue of derelict fishing gear across the United States to remove debris in 10 states, and to generate enough electricity to power more than 2,200 homes for one month.

RESULTS TO DATE

Thanks to the Fishing for Energy partnership, a national understanding of the problems associated with derelict fishing gear is better known. More importantly, Fishing for Energy demonstrates that creative partnerships can craft solutions for problems that once appeared insurmountable.

- Over \$1.3 million in grant funding has resulted in the removal of 250 tons of derelict fishing gear beyond what is collected passively through the bin program, established a new technology that makes crabs five times more likely to escape derelict crab pots than other release mechanisms, and has engaged more than 1,000 fishermen as environmental stewards.
- State resource managers from New England states have collaborated with counterparts across the United States to reevaluate outdated regulations and implement new policies to reduce gear loss and streamline removal efforts. This has resulted in new programs to evaluate changes in gear to reduce impacts and educate recreational fishers and boaters to avoid gear interactions.
- Partnership with the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA)-accredited institutions has increased visibility on the impacts of derelict fishing gear and marine debris through support of new exhibits, web-based games and interactive educational programs in the communities, reaching thousands of people each year.
- More than 3 million pounds (1,531 tons) of fishing gear has been collected at bins placed in 44 communities.

As a public-private partnership, Fishing for Energy seeks to improve the lives of fishermen and coastal communities as well as the health of the marine environment.