



# Hurricane Response Marine Debris Removal

## NFWF CONTACT

**Michelle Pico**

Program Director, Marine  
Conservation  
michelle.pico@nfwf.org  
262-567-0601

## FUNDING PARTNER



## 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](http://www.nfwf.org)

## NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS

1133 15th Street, NW  
Suite 1000  
Washington, DC 20005  
202-857-0166



Boats destroyed by Hurricane Michael in Panama City, Florida

## BACKGROUND

The Hurricane Response Marine Debris Removal Fund, a partnership between NFWF and the NOAA Marine Debris Program, supports efforts to assess, remove and dispose of marine debris caused by severe storms. Launched in 2019, the fund awards grants based on the potential impact of existing debris to coastal communities and resources, as well as the potential to prevent further harm to sensitive marine habitats and species listed under the Endangered Species Act.

Severe storms can create significant marine debris, from capsized vessels and lost fishing gear to logs and other terrestrial objects washed out to sea. Such debris can harm coastal communities by negatively affecting navigation, industrial operations, tourism, and human safety and health. Marine debris also generates immediate and prolonged damage to wildlife populations, including through entanglements and ingestion, as well as to marine habitats through scouring and smothering.

In its first year, the program awarded more than \$8.2 million in grant funding to six projects that will assess and remove debris and provide for proper disposal.

## GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The program employs an expedited grants process to solicit and deploy rapid-response projects to remove and dispose of marine debris that resulted from severe storms.

The Hurricane Response Marine Debris Removal Fund focuses on marine debris generated by hurricanes Michael and Florence and typhoon Yutu. The competitive grant program is made possible through directed funding from the Supplemental Appropriations Act of 2019 (P.L. 116-20).