



NOAA Marine Debris Program Innovative Removal

Derelict Fishing Net Removal in the Puget Sound

Photo: Northwest Straits Foundation

Project Description

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, in collaboration with the Northwest Straits Initiative, developed Derelict Fishing Gear (DFG) Removal Guidelines to provide a framework for the safe and environmentally-sensitive removal and proper disposal of DFG. The guidelines address the following:

- Different types of DFG commonly found in Washington's marine environment (especially in the Puget Sound)
- Circumstances under which removal should be attempted
- Qualifications of removal teams
- Common methods that may be used to locate and remove DFG
- Procedures for determining if a project can be conducted in accordance with the guidelines
- Disposal or recycling options
- Removal and disposal documentation and the reporting process

The guidelines can be found on the [Washington Dept. of Fish and Wildlife website](#).

Innovative Techniques

The guidelines act as a direct and enduring source of information related to the removal of DFG and can be used within and beyond the Puget Sound. The guidelines go into operational details for net removal by divers and enhance the overall proficiency and safety of the operation.

Uses & Lessons Learned

The guidelines have been used successfully by the Northwest Straits Foundation and other entities in the Puget Sound, as well as by the Sea Doc Society as a template to remove DFG in California. The guidelines could also be used by other entities planning to remove derelict fishing gear under conditions similar to the Puget Sound.

Point of Contact

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Photo: NOAA