

Marine Debris



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

NOAA Marine Debris Program Southeast Coast

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. 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. The Program's East Coast regional coordinator is located in Silver Spring, MD.

Southeast Atlantic Marine Debris Initiative

The Southeast Atlantic Marine Debris Initiative (SEA-MDI) is partnering with the NOAA Marine Debris Program to supplement existing programs and partnerships by increasing involvement of organizations, industry, and communities in preventing marine debris and by combining resources with national and regional partners to increase the geographic scope and pace of marine debris prevention activities. SEA-MDI will partner with NOAA MDP in prevention and



Marine Debris Tracker app website home page.

public education for marine debris through social media, providing information on alternative disposal methods, and developing and disseminating tools and innovative products to address marine debris. One of the major products from this partnership so far is the Marine Debris

Tracker app, which allows individuals to log individual pieces of marine debris that they find and upload the information to a central website.

<http://marinedebris.noaa.gov/projects/seamdi.html>

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.



Derelict fishing gear includes any fishing gear lost, abandoned, or discarded, including lobster pots. *Photo courtesy of MA Division of Marine Fisheries.*

Ongoing Research

Three research projects started on the East Coast in 2009 with the shared goals of determining location, abundance, and impacts of derelict fishing gear. These projects are part of a larger effort to understand the costs of derelict gear to fishermen and the marine environment. All of these projects are multi-year efforts that are expected to publish results in late 2011 or early 2012. In Florida, essential fish habitat damage from derelict spiny lobster traps is being quantified. In North Carolina, researchers are surveying coastal waters to quantify the number of derelict blue crab traps and their impacts, with a focus on impacts to diamondback terrapin populations. The results from all these

projects will be used to inform local fishery and coastal management decisions, as well as to direct future removal efforts.

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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.