



# NOAA Marine Debris Program Innovative Removal

## Derelict Fishing Gear Removal Project in the Quinault Indian Nation Special Management Area



### Project Description

The Washington Derelict Gear Removal Project aimed to: remove derelict crab pots from 155 square miles of habitat within the Quinault Indian Nation Special Management Area (QSMA), develop a reporting and recovery program for derelict gear, and conduct outreach and education on reducing derelict gear within the QSMA. Together, non-tribal and tribal fisheries deploy over 100,000 crab pots every fishing season, with an estimated 10% of this gear becoming lost. To remove this accumulating lost gear, this project used techniques which included a combination of sonar, divers, and pumping pots with hydraulic drivers. The threats from pots buried in sediment were reduced by the use of a line cutter that removes lines and buoys from derelict pots.

### Innovative Techniques

This project utilized a line cutting device, an innovative technique that uses a weighted, swiveling blade to remove line and buoys from derelict crab pots. This device slides down the derelict pot line to the ocean floor, where the blade is then pulled from above to cut the line.

## Uses & Lessons Learned

The line cutting technique is useful for the removal of buoys and lines that are attached to crab pots that are buried in sediment, too deep to be removed even with the use of hydraulic pumps. Once the line is removed, the gear no longer poses a threat to marine mammals and other marine life that may become entangled in buoys and lines. Effective use of the line cutter requires training and practice.

## Point of Contact

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