



NORTHWEST STRAITS
marine conservation initiative

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Derelict Fishing Net Project Funded through NOAA

Mount Vernon, WA - The Northwest Straits Marine Conservation Initiative has been awarded \$4.6 million in economic stimulus funding from NOAA, to pull derelict fishing nets from Puget Sound. These funds, directed to the non-profit Foundation arm of the Northwest Straits Initiative, will allow the immediate hire of vessels and crews to remove an estimated 3000 nets from the seafloor. The project will employ 40 people, restore 645 acres of marine habitat, and will be completed in 18 months.

“Derelict fishing nets are actively killing enormous numbers of fish, seabirds and other marine animals. We now have the funding needed to get 90% of the derelict nets out of Puget Sound forever. These waters will be safer for boaters, divers, and marine life” said Ginny Broadhurst, Secretary of the Northwest Straits Foundation.

The derelict fishing gear project will stimulate the marine economy in Puget Sound by creating 40 living wage jobs, at a time when this economic sector is severely impacted by the national economic downturn. “We’re going to employ people who wouldn’t be working without this project, and the work is incredibly valuable to Puget Sound” said Broadhurst. In addition to creating jobs and restoring marine habitat, the project will protect crabs and fish valued commercially in the hundreds of thousands of dollars.

Since 2002, the Northwest Straits Initiative has removed over 1200 derelict fishing nets, restoring more than 240 acres of marine habitat, and saving millions of animals from incidental death each year.

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For additional information on the derelict fishing gear removal project, go to www.derelictgear.org. More information about the Northwest Straits Initiative can be found at www.nwstraits.org.