

A photograph of a seal swimming in a kelp forest. The seal is in the center, looking towards the camera. The water is blue-green, and the kelp leaves are yellowish-green. In the background, there are several vertical lines that appear to be fishing gear, possibly traps or nets, which are the subject of the text overlay.

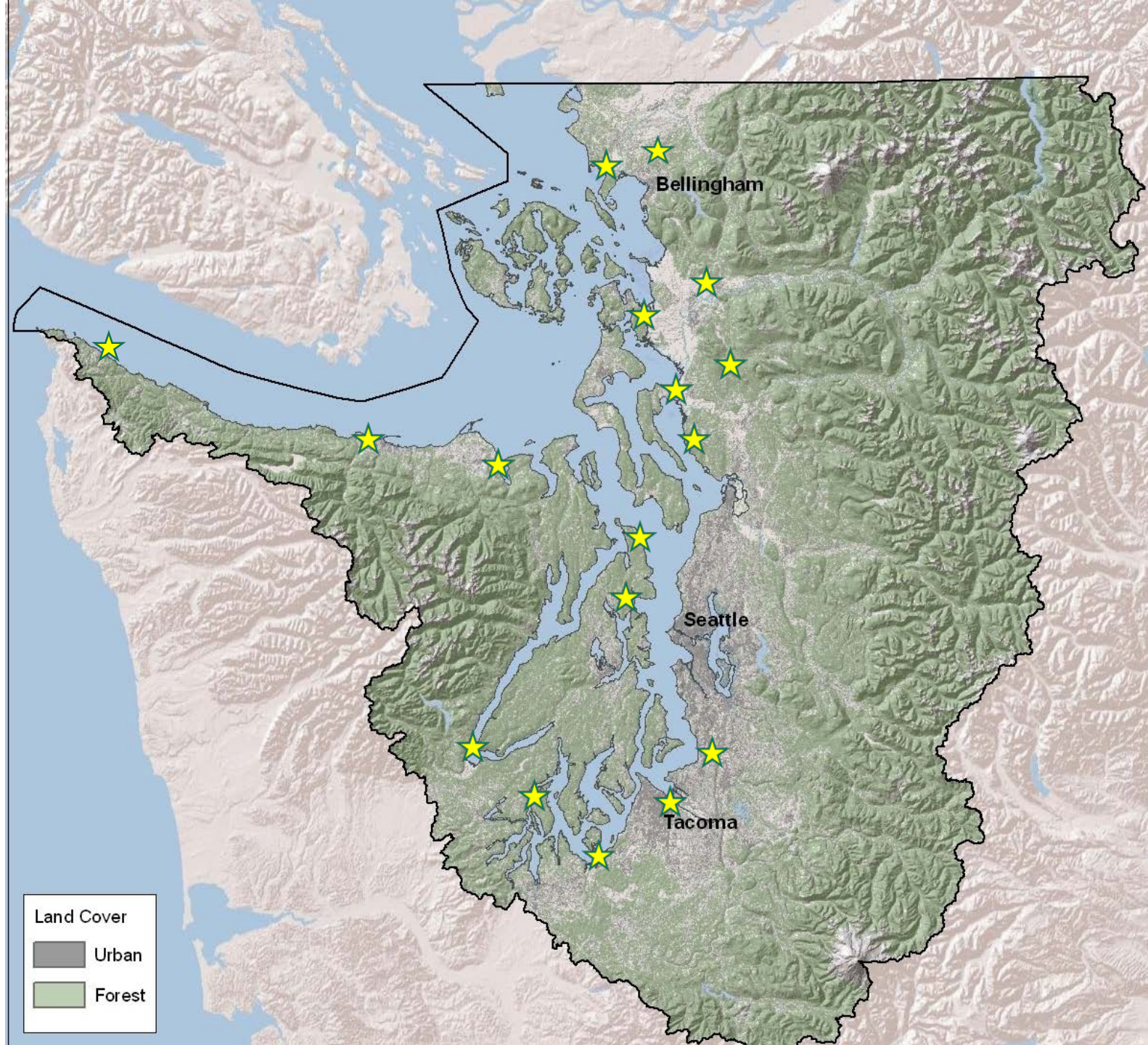
# **Working with User Groups to Develop Outreach Campaigns to Prevent Impacts of Lost and Abandoned Fishing Gear**

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*Photo: Florian Graner*

# Washington's Salish Sea

- Recreational and commercial Dungeness Crab fishery
- Commercial salmon fishery
  - Chinook, coho, chum, sockeye and pink



# Derelict Crab Pots

- Estimated 12,000 lost annually
- Pots can fish up to 2.2 years
- 180,000 harvestable crabs lost per year
- User error most common cause





# Ghost pots of Puget Sound

**12,000 crab pots are lost** in Puget Sound each year. A single lost crab pot without escape cord can kill up to 30 crabs until deterioration. That adds up to 180,000 harvestable crabs lost each year. To avoid this, follow best fishing practices when you go crabbing:

- **AVOID MARINE TRANSIT** and ferry lanes
- **USE MULTIPLE BUOYS** in high current areas
- **MARK YOUR GEAR** with clearly visible buoys
- **WEIGHT YOUR LINE** to sink below the surface and avoid being cut by passing boats
- **WEIGHT YOUR POTS** so they do not move in high currents or tidal changes
- **USE THE CORRECT LENGTH OF LINE.** Use 1/3 more line than water depth.
- **SECURE LID AND ESCAPE PANELS WITH BIODEGRADABLE COTTON ESCAPE CORD.** This allows crabs to escape from lost pots after the cord degrades.
- **ADD BUNGEE CORD TO TOP DOOR ESCAPE PANELS.** This increases chances of escapement once escape cord has disintegrated.

[www.derelictgear.org](http://www.derelictgear.org)



partners in marine conservation



## **Northwest Straits Foundation**

removes lost and abandoned fishing gear from Puget Sound. Since 2001, the Foundation has worked cooperatively through the Northwest Straits Marine Conservation Initiative with fishermen, tribes, and agencies to document the impacts of derelict gear, remove damaging gear, and raise awareness about the harm caused by derelict gear in Puget Sound.

**Progress to date** As of May 2015, we have removed 5,500 derelict nets, 3,800 derelict crab pots and restored 790 acres of critical marine habitat in Puget Sound. Over 442,000 animals representing 260 species were found entangled in this gear, including marine mammals, birds, and commercially valuable fish and shellfish.

**Research** plays a big role in how the Northwest Straits Foundation tackles the problem of derelict fishing gear. Results of the Foundation's recently completed crab pot escapement study suggest that crab pot design, especially panel opening design, affect crab escapement rates and success. Designs with panel doors that drop open, instead of those that need to be pushed open, increase escapement rates. The good news is you can greatly increase your crab pot's effectiveness with a cheap fix, by adding a bungee cord to the top to pull the door open after the escape cord disintegrates. **Learn how you can volunteer with your local Marine Resources Committee (MRC) or make a gift to support our work at our website.**



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**CATCH  
MORE  
CRAB!**

*Seven helpful  
tips to prevent your  
crab pot from becoming  
one of the **12,000 pots lost in  
Puget Sound** each year:*

- **Avoid high traffic**, marine transit and ferry lanes.
- **Check tides and currents.** Avoid crabbing during strong tidal changes and currents.
- **Make buoys more visible.** Add a second buoy or a stick and flag.
- **Use a weighted line** to sink below the surface and avoid being cut by passing boats.
- **Weight your crab pots** so they do not move with currents or tidal changes.
- **Use longer line.** Use 1/3 more line than the water depth to allow for changes in tides and currents.
- **Secure lid and escape panels with cotton (biodegradable) escape cord.** Crabs can escape from lost pots after the cord degrades.



for more information visit  
[derelictgear.org](http://derelictgear.org)

## KEEP YOUR POTS CATCH MORE CRAB!

### 12,000 Crab Pots are Lost

in Puget Sound each year. A single lost crab pot can kill up to 50 crabs until it deteriorates – that's 180,000 harvestable crabs that could otherwise make it to the dinner table!

### The Northwest Straits Initiative

Since 2002, we have removed more than 5,700 derelict nets, 4,800 derelict crab pots and restored 830 acres of critical marine habitat.

### Who We Are

A nationally-recognized conservation initiative, the Northwest Straits Initiative brings together scientists and community volunteers in northwest Washington, coordinated by a non-profit Northwest Straits Foundation, a state government partner Northwest Straits Commission, and seven county-based Marine Resources Committees.

### Enter to win!

To be entered into a prize drawing for new crabbing gear, please complete the brief survey found at the following link: <https://goo.gl/iwvhXB>

To learn more about lost crab pots in Puget Sound visit [www.derelictgear.org](http://www.derelictgear.org)



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# Results

- Videos reach over 300,000 people annually
- Over 6,000 informational packets distributed in 2017
- \*68% surveyed changed their practices
  - \*110 people surveyed



# Derelict Nets

- More than 5,600 legacy derelict nets removed
- 830 acres restored
- Over 450,000 marine organisms entangled
- Newly lost net Reporting, Response, and Retrieval Program
- State and Tribal co-management of fisheries
- Only 7 out of 78 confirmed reports came from fisher





# Report lost fishing nets within 24 hours



Lost and abandoned fishing gear continues to fish, killing marine animals and destroying habitat. You can help the Northwest Straits Foundation remove derelict fishing nets from Puget Sound.

**Report lost or abandoned nets or pots to**  
**[www.derelictgear.org](http://www.derelictgear.org)**

**(360) 733-1725** Northwest Straits Foundation  
**(855) 542-3935** WA Dept of Fish & Wildlife

Include the following information in your report:

- Type of gear
- Latitude (ex 4834.333)
- General location
- Longitude (ex 12300.333)
- Approximate water depth

*There are **no penalties** associated with reporting lost fishing gear. **Nets are dangerous!** Do not attempt to remove nets. Divers, stay a safe distance away.*



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## **progress to date**

As of June 2015, we have removed more than 5,600 derelict fishing nets and 3,600 derelict crab pots, restoring 800 acres of important marine habitat in Puget Sound. Over 460,000 animals representing 240 species were found entangled in this gear, including mammals, diving birds, and commercially valuable fish and shellfish. An estimated 10-30 nets are lost each fishing season. An ongoing Reporting, Response and Retrieval program is in place to ensure newly lost nets are recovered before they become derelict.

## **reporting lost nets**

Fishermen must report lost or abandoned nets within 24 hours of loss using the reporting information on the front of this card. This no-fault, no-penalty program enables real-time response by the Foundation and its partners to ensure the reported nets are located and removed by trained divers and removal vessels. Learn more at:

**[www.derelictgear.org](http://www.derelictgear.org)**



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# BE A SOUND THINKER

## REPORT LOST NETS



We all care about Puget Sound. It helps define us. Supports our livelihoods. Lets us pass something on to future generations. So report lost nets as soon as possible. There are no penalties, removals are free and this simple act can do more than save fish.

To report lost gear call 360-733-1725 (NW Straits Foundation) or 855-542-3935 (Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife), or visit [derelictgear.org](http://derelictgear.org).

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Protect Puget Sound to  
ensure our livelihoods.

## REPORT LOST NETS

Easy. No penalties. Free removals.

**To report lost gear call  
360-733-1725, visit [derelictgear.org](http://derelictgear.org)  
or contact your tribal resources.**



# BE A SOUND THINKER

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## REPORT LOST NETS

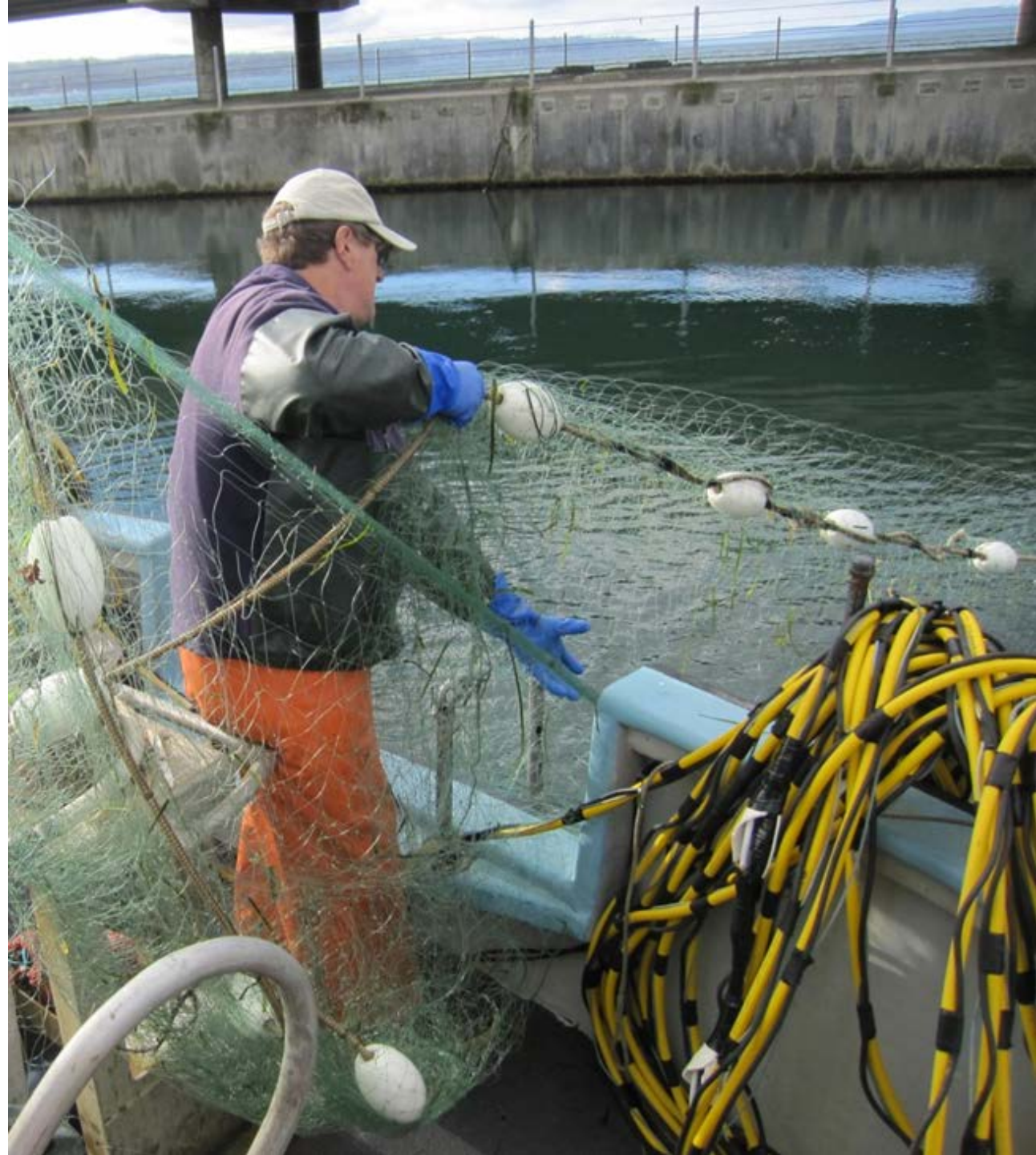
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or 855-542-3935 (WDFW),  
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# Results

- 590 wallet cards & 320 magnets distributed
- 40 posters distributed
- 24 meetings with tribal personnel
- 12 confirmed reports
  - No reports from fisher
  - 5 responses coordinated with Tribal personnel
  - 5 responses coordinated with State personnel
- Improved communications



# Thank You to our Funders

NOAA Marine Debris Program

Environmental Protection Agency

Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife

Karakin Foundation

Vincent J. Coates Foundation

Thank

You!



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*Photo: Florian Graner*