

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: 07/30/2021**

Contact:

Ariel Smith

Coastal & Marine Team Lead, Coastal Action

[ariel@coastalaction.org](mailto:ariel@coastalaction.org)

902-990-0094

## **Collaborative Remediation of Abandoned, Lost, and Discarded Fishing Gear in Southwest Nova Scotia: Year 2**

**Mahone Bay, NS:** Fishers from Southwest Nova Scotia are out for the second wave of ghost gear retrieval this summer with Coastal Action on the *Collaborative Remediation of Abandoned, Lost, and Discarded Fishing Gear (ALDFG) in Southwest Nova Scotia* project, funded through Fisheries and Oceans Canada's [Sustainable Fisheries Solutions and Retrieval Support Contribution Program](#).

Abandoned, lost, and discarded fishing gear – commonly referred to as ghost gear – makes up a large portion of all marine debris, causing negative environmental and economic impacts including habitat degradation, indiscriminate fishing and entanglements, decreased catches, at-sea safety hazards, and vessel damage. ALDFG is generated by unfavorable environmental conditions (like storms and bottom type), poor gear condition, and inappropriate disposal at sea. Losses can be accidental, and fishers are not always at fault, as the marine environment is shared with other industries.

This project works collaboratively with industry, academia, and government to prevent, reduce, and assess the impacts of ALDFG on the South Shore of Nova Scotia (LFAs 33, 34, and 35 – Nova Scotia only) from July 2020 to March 2022. Project partners include Clean Annapolis River Project (CARP), Coldwater Lobster Association, Brazil Rock Lobster Association, Dalhousie University, Ocean Tracking Network, and Sustane Technologies, [among others](#). Since last summer, captains have completed 60 at-sea retrieval trips, and 85 volunteers have conducted six shoreline cleanups, removing nearly 11 tonnes of ghost gear from our ocean. This summer, 69 additional at-sea retrieval trips are being conducted in SWNS, along with several shoreline cleanups. While most fishers try their best to retrieve lost gear during active fishing seasons, some gear inevitably remains at sea due to several challenges. For example, gear can be hard to relocate once it is lost, and existing license conditions prescribed by DFO limit in-season retrieval of ALDFG. Our data, recently published in [Marine Pollution Bulletin](#), has shown that lost traps continue to fish lobsters and other groundfish. This collaborative project highlights that stewardship approaches and industry participation are key for successful retrieval and research.

This project is laying the groundwork for improving ALDFG retrieval and management in the region and allows industry to be a part of the solution.



### **About Coastal Action:**

Coastal Action, established in December 1993, is a charitable organization that addresses environmental concerns throughout the South Shore region of Nova Scotia, Canada. Our goal is to promote the restoration, enhancement, and conservation of our environment through research, education, action, and community engagement. Coastal Action is currently tackling many environmental issues that fall under the following theme areas: Species at Risk and Biodiversity, Watersheds and Water Quality, Climate Change, Environmental Education, as well as Coastal and Marine. The organization receives direction from a volunteer Board of Directors supported through a full-time Executive Director.

Canada



Fisheries and Oceans  
Canada

Pêches et Océans  
Canada