Gulf of Maine Council on the Marine Environment

Canada and the United States working together for a healthy environment

Regional Collaboration to Address Marine Debris in the Gulf of Maine

GOMC Meeting – December 9, 2021

Regional Collaboration to Address Marine Debris in the Gulf of Maine

Funding:

- **NOAA: $367,839 | Match: $448,158**

Two-Year Project:

- **October 2021 – September 2023**

Advance Gulf of Maine Marine Debris Action Plan

- International Collaboration
- Coastal Cleanups
- Education, Outreach & Awareness
- Prevention / Source Reduction
- Sustainable Practices
  - Restaurants
  - Fishing / boating
- Recycling and Repurposing

Regional Collaboration to Address Marine Debris in the Gulf of Maine

Partners

- GOMA / GOMC
- NOAA Marine Debris Program
- Blue Ocean Society
- Center for Coastal Studies
- Huntsman Marine Science Centre
- Surfrider Foundation
- Urban Harbors Institute

Partnership with NOAA

NOAA's Role

- Monthly check-ins
- Cleanups
- Fieldwork
- Outreach
- Messaging

Blue Ocean Society

- Expand Adopt-a-Beach program in (90 cleanups+ over 2 years)
- Increase monofilament fishing line recycling locations (3+ new sites)
- Amplify project messaging through whale watches, Blue Ocean Discovery Center, beach cleanups, educational programs, outreach event

Regional Collaboration - from Massachusetts to Nova Scotia

- Center for Coastal Studies partnering with GOMA partners and Nova Scotia Beach Garbage Awareness
- Increased focus on derelict fishing gear removed from shorelines; collating data; sharing BMP
- Investigation of cross-border transport of lobster trap ID tags to support gear modification/loss prevention
- Regional expansion of CCS Beach Brigade, a group of 200+ volunteers who currently participate in cleanups and data collection on Cape Cod

Collect data and images to convey scale of the issue and work w/ fisheries managers and industry to develop viable alternatives

Lobster trap ID tags collected on Cape Cod beaches; lobster trap corners collected on NS shoreline.

Huntsman Marine Science Centre

- Conduct shoreline cleanups along Bay of Fundy with data tracking (~8)
- Coordinate and expand wharfside rope collection project
- Develop outreach and engagement opportunities to share project messages through rope repurposing workshops, cleanup efforts, use of the Fundy Discovery Aquarium and other events

Urban Harbors Institute

- Conduct coastal cleanups along MA coast
- Work with CCS to expand documentation regarding the presence and impacts of ALDFG
- Conduct outreach and develop guides on marine debris for recreational boaters, fishers, and others
  - Develop and distribute fact sheet/field guide for boaters, fishers
  - Finalize and distribute CCS guides

Surfrider Foundation

Northeast Regional Chapters in the GOM: MA, ME & NH

- **Orchestrate Group and DIY Beach Cleanups**
  - Centering environmental justice
  - Interconnectivity: water, energy, fossil fuels, climate, EJ
  - Plastic pollution: problems->data collection->solutions
- **Educate, Empower, Create & Activate Ocean Stewards**
  - Ocean Friendly Restaurants
  - Rise Above Plastics
  - Hold on to Your Butts
  - Storytelling, communication assets, visual tools
  - GOM MDAP

Questions / Discussion

How can we expand collaboration with GOMC partners?