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**Marine Conservation Alliance Foundation wraps up successful 2010 marine debris cleanup season  
*Over 2 million pounds removed since 2003***

Today, the Marine Conservation Alliance Foundation reported that in an effort to protect coastal habitat important to marine life and sea birds it had cleaned up over 400,000 pounds of debris from Alaska's beaches this year. This brings the total collected since 2003 to over 2 million pounds.

The Foundation worked throughout Alaska with twelve tribes, communities, non-profits, and businesses to conduct this year's cleanup.

Projects were targeted on beaches with known debris "hotspots" and benefited from the local knowledge and expertise of the cleanup crews. Debris from both foreign and domestic sources was removed with an emphasis on beaches that collect derelict fishing gear. Ocean currents bring debris to Alaska's shores from Asia, domestic sources, and international shipping. Common items include fragments of high seas drift nets, trawl nets and floats, and other miscellaneous debris like water bottles.

MCA Foundation President Anne Vanderhoeven said, "We are especially appreciative of our partners who plan these projects and carry them out under difficult beach and weather conditions. It is especially gratifying to see communities that are inspired by the cleanup projects in a way that renews community pride."

One significant project this year was the removal of the derelict fishing vessel OCEAN CLIPPER from the northern fur seal rookery on St. Paul Island. This engineering challenge was documented both on the [SeaAlliance](#) YouTube channel, a [blog](#), and [National Geographic's "World's Toughest Fixes"](#).

Other projects included debris removal from locations across the state: Southeast Alaska near Sitka and Craig, Prince William Sound, the Kodiak Archipelago, Nelson Lagoon, Port Heiden, the Pribilof Islands, Hooper Bay, Teller, and Wales. Rookeries on St. Paul and St. George Islands were cleaned prior to the annual arrival of the northern fur seals to avoid disturbing the pups.



Skiffs were an integral part of the 2010 Port Heiden Cleanup on the Alaska Peninsula. *Photo courtesy of the Native Council of Port Heiden.*

A map showing cleanup locations and project summaries from 2003 to 2009 is available on the [Foundation website](#).

In addition to actual removal, the Foundation strives to prevent marine debris by partnering with the Alaska Marine Safety Education Association to educate fishermen and has a DVD available for vessel masters to educate their crews. Copies of the DVD “[Trashing Your Livelihood: Marine Debris and Commercial Fishing](#)” are available from Alaska SeaGrant at no charge. Additional educational materials for schools are on the Foundation website.

Formed in 2003 to tackle the marine debris problem in Alaska and to coordinate cooperative research efforts between fishermen and scientists, the MCA Foundation is the non-profit arm of the Juneau-based Marine Conservation Alliance, an industry association that includes fishermen, vessel owners, seafood processors and communities involved in the groundfish and crab fisheries in the Bering Sea and Gulf of Alaska. Funding for MCAF debris cleanup and research efforts comes largely through grant from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Association with additional support from the State of Alaska and private donations.

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