



For Immediate Release  
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### Removal of Ghost Fishing Gear from Cuttyhunk Shorelines

The Center for Coastal Studies (CCS) Marine Debris & Plastics Program was awarded \$55,206, one of eleven SNEP Watershed Implementation Grants issued in 2022, to locate, remove and properly dispose of lost fishing gear and other debris from the shores of Cuttyhunk Island.

This is the first time such a focused fishing gear debris removal effort has been undertaken on Cuttyhunk. As the southernmost island in the chain of the Elizabeths, its shores receive storm-driven debris which accumulates and is difficult to remove.

The field work begins the week of March 27 with an aerial survey by UAS (Unmanned Aerial System, or drone) to map debris areas and access points.

During the week of April 2, CCS staff and volunteers from Cornell University and the CCS Beach Brigade will remove lobster traps, rope and other items from the rocky shoreline, gather the debris in a centralized area, document, sort and load it into containers to be hauled off-island for disposal or recycling. Some recovered materials will be set aside for use in artwork which will be exhibited at a later date.

Island residents approached the CCS Marine Debris program requesting assistance on this collaborative project, and the partnership has grown to include the Cuttyhunk STEAM Academy, commercial fishermen, Cornell university students, the Massachusetts Environmental Police, natural resource officers from Buzzards Bay Coalition and MA Audubon, artists, and solid waste experts.

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*The Center for Coastal Studies (CCS) is a non-profit organization dedicated to understanding, preserving and protecting marine ecosystems and the coastal environment through applied research, education and public policy initiatives. The Marine Debris & Plastics Program uses a collaborative approach to identify and address priority plastic debris issues in the Gulf of Maine with a focus on abandoned, lost or otherwise discarded fishing gear.*