

***BoatUS Foundation Receives \$10 Million NOAA Grant for
Abandoned and Derelict Vessel Removal Program
Targeting Nation's Coasts and Great Lakes***

***Nonprofit to develop competitive grant program to fund removal of
abandoned, derelict vessels. Includes prevention and education measures***

ANNAPOLIS, Md., Sept. 6, 2023 – Boats end up abandoned or derelict on our nation's coasts for several reasons. Irresponsible owners abandon vessels when they can no longer afford to care for them or pay for their disposal. Poorly maintained, "at risk" anchored boats combined with the [increasing frequency and severity of storms](#) leave shorelines littered with wrecks after each hurricane. A four-year, [\\$10 million grant from NOAA's Marine Debris Removal Program](#) to the [BoatUS Foundation for Boating Safety and Clean Water](#) aims to rid our nation's shores of abandoned and derelict vessels (ADV), and remove the associated pollution, navigation and safety hazards that can harm waters for years.

The grant, funded by the [Bipartisan Infrastructure Law](#), is part of NOAA's larger mission to address [marine debris](#), which not only includes fiberglass boats but derelict fishing gear, plastics and other types of debris.

The grant directs the Annapolis, Maryland-based boating nonprofit to "...improve U.S. coastal and marine waters affected by abandoned and derelict vessels by facilitating removal and prevention activities across the country."

The majority of funds will kick-start a one-stop-shop competitive grant program to seek out and complete marine debris removal projects on our nation's coasts (saltwaters) and in the Great Lakes for funding and support. Under the guidelines, any organization – public or private – will be able to apply for ADV removal funds.

To help educate and prevent future ADVs, the Foundation will also create a national ADV database to track the scope of the challenge and measure success, document ADV prevention and removal activities to share with the public, and support a national dialogue and education efforts on boating-related debris removal, with an added focus on how ADVs impact waters in underserved communities.

"This is a coordinated, once-in-lifetime investment to remove abandoned and derelict vessels, and we're proud to help NOAA carry out this important mission to rid our shores of marine debris," said BoatUS Foundation president Chris Edmonston. "Our goal over the next four years is to focus on the immediate issue – the substantial number of ADVs that need removal. In the future, we hope to expand the program to inland freshwater lakes and waterways, and reach a point where ADV removals diminish as educational and preventive efforts have greater impact. It's much more cost-effective to stop it before it happens."

BoatUS Foundation director of outreach and grant program manager Alanna Keating said, "We're excited about building upon our years of experience with ADV removals. What makes this program unique is it is open to any organization, nonprofit or for-profit, as well as local, state, and regional government agencies. Clean, coastal waters for everyone. Some of our focus will be seeking underserved or marginalized communities that don't have the local resources to rid their shores of abandoned and derelict vessels."

“This grant, made possible by the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, underscores NOAA’s commitment to combat marine debris and its negative impact on the communities and economies that depend on clean, healthy waterways,” said Nicole LeBoeuf, assistant administrator, NOAA’s National Ocean Service. “This pivotal partnership will enable us to address the issue of abandoned and derelict vessels, and help safeguard our coasts and Great Lakes from pollution, hazards and navigational challenges.”

The Foundation, which drew more than 60 letters of support for the grant application, expects to announce the opening of ADV grant program applications in early 2024. Updates will be posted to BoatUS.org/ADVGrant as they occur.

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Suggested social media post:

@BoatUSFoundation has received a 4-year, \$10 million grant from NOAA’s Marine Debris Removal Program to remove abandoned derelict vessels from our nation’s coasts and Great Lakes, and prevent associated pollution, navigation, and safety hazards. <https://bit.ly/44xe4W2> @noaadebris #BoatingSafety #CleanWater #MarineDebrisRemoval #EnvironmentalProtection #CommunityOutreach

About the BoatUS Foundation for Boating Safety and Clean Water:

The BoatUS Foundation for Boating Safety and Clean Water is a national leader promoting safe, clean and responsible boating. Funded primarily by donations from the nearly 800,000 members of Boat Owners Association of The United States (BoatUS), the nonprofit provides innovative educational outreach directly to boaters and anglers with the aim of reducing accidents and fatalities, increasing stewardship of America's waterways and keeping boating safe for all. A range of safe and clean boating courses – including the nation's largest free online boating safety course – can be found at BoatUS.org/Courses.