

# 2025 Alaska Marine Debris Data Summary



## Draft 2025 Data

**1,502,547 lbs** of  
marine debris  
collected in 2025

**1,469 people**  
involved

**27 lead entities,**  
with many more  
partners  
supporting



## Introduction

Alaska has a vibrant and active marine debris community that has been engaged in organized cleanup efforts and collecting data for more than 40 years. In recent years, the number of communities, organizations, and Tribes leading these efforts has grown substantially. This first edition of the statewide Alaska Marine Debris Summary aims to capture the remarkable collective effort that took place in 2025.

In 2025, we can document that 27 entities coordinated marine debris removal projects across Alaska in partnership with other local groups in their regions. Together, these efforts removed more than 1.5 million pounds of debris and engaged nearly 1,500 participants. Participants ranged from youth to elders and included both paid workers and volunteers. The debris collected also varied widely, from microplastics and single-use plastic bottles to large quantities of derelict fishing gear, polystyrene foam, and creosote-treated lumber.

Cleanup efforts ranged from single-day, community-wide events to multi-month operations in remote locations that required field camps, helicopters, and vessels. Each of these efforts play an important role in keeping Alaska's shorelines clean and healthy while raising awareness of the growing marine debris problem.

*This draft was prepared by Ocean Conservancy, Alaska Sea Grant and Sitka Sound Science Center.*

*The final 2025 Data Summary will be available by May 2026.*

# Alaska Marine Debris Problem & History

Alaska has more than 44,000 miles of shoreline, much of which is remote, disconnected from easy transport and difficult to access. Ocean currents bring tremendous quantities of marine debris to those beaches from all over the globe, harming vital wildlife, local economies and threatening subsistence practices.

Addressing marine debris in Alaska presents unique challenges. Vast distances between communities, limited infrastructure, high transportation costs, and harsh weather make removing and properly disposing of debris expensive, difficult, and sometimes dangerous. As a result, rural communities, Tribes, and others are often left to manage the significant impacts and costs of debris they did not create.

Durable partnerships among Tribes, communities, nonprofits, industry, and government agencies are essential to addressing this issue. Through collaboration, community-led initiatives, data collection, education, and sustained funding, we can work together to keep Alaska's coasts and communities healthy and free of marine debris.



## Lead Cleanup Entities

Aleut Community of St. Paul Island - Center for Alaskan Coastal Studies - Chichagof Conservation Council - City of Chevak - Dive Alaska - Douglas Indian Association - Drifters Fish - F/V Axel - Gulf of Alaska Keeper - Island Trails Network - Kawerak, Inc. - Native Village of Afognak - Native Village of Goodnews Bay - Native Village of Port Heiden - Norton Sound Economic Development Corporation - Ocean Plastics Recovery Project - Organized Village of Kake - Prince William Sound Stewardship Foundation - Qawalangin Tribe of Unalaska - Resurrection Bay Conservation Alliance - Ridgeline Aviation - Sitka Sound Science Center - Takshanuk Watershed Council - Tongass to Tides Science Academy - Yakutat Tern Festival - Yakutat Tlingit Tribe - Zender Environmental