

Stockton University, Jacques Cousteau National Estuarine Research Reserve Recycle Crab Pots

NOAA-Funded Project Collects Over 1,500 Pots, Returns Over \$50,000 to South Jersey Commercial Crabbing Community in Three Years

For Immediate Release; Photos on [Flickr](#)

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Galloway, NJ - A towering pile of crab pots with bay mud still clinging to the corroding metal slowly shrank as volunteers weighed each pot, recorded valuable scientific data and broke them

Crab pots severed from their buoys become ghost pots that litter the bay floor and, early on, may inadvertently trap blue crabs and other marine species, making the resource less available to all stakeholders. The pots also pose hazards to boaters in shallow water.

In 2012, Stockton and the Jacques Cousteau National Estuarine Research Reserve received the Nation's 45th Tm(N)u7o0058024 328

Marine Debris Recycling/ page 2

between science and industry for the benefit of all stakeholders Steve Evert. A total of \$241,597 is supporting the removal and prevention program into next year with about half of the total granted by NOAA and the other half being an in-kind match by Stockton.

The current project goal (2015-17) is to recover 1,000 pots from coastal bays, bringing the total effort since 2012 to over 2,000 recoveries. the blue crab fishery and commercial fishermen by training crabbers to use low-cost sonars to recover lost pots during the season, breaking the cycle of derelict gear and increasing the available resource for all

Marine Debris Recycling/ page 3

Brewster, who has had an interest in marine wildlife since his childhood days of watching Steve Irwin, crabs off of a pier in Belmar. Tomkovich became interested in marine science during a class in high school and decided to major in it when she came to Stockton.

In addition to the valuable data that volunteers are helping to collect, crushing crab pots is a great way to spend time outdoors blowing off steam before finals week, Mark Sullivan said to his students.

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