



Press Release—Fishermen, T. Buck Suzuki Environmental Foundation, Archipelago Marine Research awarded federal support to collaborate on ghost gear retrieval in B.C.

July 9, 2020, Vancouver, B.C. – Lost and abandoned fishing gear, often called “ghost gear,” is among the largest and most deadly contributors to marine pollution globally. A threat to coastal ecosystems, marine mammals, and fish stocks, lost gear is an ongoing environmental and financial concern for B.C. fish harvesters. The T. Buck Suzuki Environmental Foundation works alongside fish harvesters in the province to address this issue in collaboration with fish harvesters to reduce, remove, and recycle lost fishing gear on the B.C. coast.

The Foundation’s “BC Lost Gear” project is one of 26 projects in Canada recently selected for the Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO)’s \$8.3 million Sustainable Fisheries Solutions and Retrieval Support Contribution Program. This program will fund the Foundation’s on-going work with fish harvesters, Archipelago Marine Research, and others to identify causes and locations of gear losses in B.C.; to conduct gear retrievals and impact assessments; and to coordinate gear recycling and storage.

Quotes

Megan Eadie, Director of Innovation: “The T. Buck Suzuki Environmental Foundation has been supporting fish harvesters’ efforts to reduce marine pollution for over thirty years. We are excited to continue these efforts through the BC Lost Gear project by identifying causes and areas of high gear loss, retrieving lost gear from our coasts, and working to develop effective recycling strategies for lost gear.

About the T. Buck Suzuki Environmental Foundation

The T. Buck Suzuki Environmental Foundation was founded in 1981 to foster thriving coastal communities, healthy marine ecosystems, and abundant sustainable fisheries. We work closely with commercial fishermen, policymakers, governments, First Nations, NGOs, scholars, and community members using a flexible, innovative, and collaborative approach. Our projects cover a swath of issues, including pollution prevention and lost gear retrieval, capacity-building, and increasing legal access for small-scale fishermen to B.C. fisheries.

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