

# Gulf of Maine Lobster Foundation

A nonprofit organization working to support a healthy lobster fishery and sustainable resources in the Gulf of Maine. Lobster Lines is our tri-annual newsletter presenting our projects, programs and partners during this time. We thank you for your ongoing support of GOMLF and our programs.

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GULF OF MAINE LOBSTER FOUNDATION

# Lobster Lines

ISSUE 9

GOMLF Newsletter

Fall 2025

## Grappling Program Expansion



**Penobscot Bay Daily Average: 75 Traps**

**Southport to Pemaquid Point Daily Average: 100 Traps**

Thanks to our fishermen and months of boots on the ground work we are increasing our capacity along the coast to retrieve ghost traps from two prominent fishing ports. We currently have gotten permits for 12 fishermen to grapple traps out of their ports for removal. Without them this effort would not be possible. In the upcoming months we anticipate the removal of over 15,000 traps by local fishermen. Alongside these traps we are collecting rope, locating gear balls and removing anchors from our harbors. We have located 6 gear balls in Penobscot Bay and 4 gear balls in the Midcoast region for future removal.

**GRAPPLED TRAP TOTAL for year as of December 16, 2025: 1,423**



# The Saga and Story of Pablo the Sea Turtle Student Drifter

## Partnerships

**Gear Grab**  
geargrab.org

**eMOLT**  
emolt.org

**Student Drifters**  
studentdrifters.org

Contact Emma to report a gearball or derelict gear you are interested in seeing removed from the Maine coastline.

[emma@gomlf.org](mailto:emma@gomlf.org)

(207)669-2814

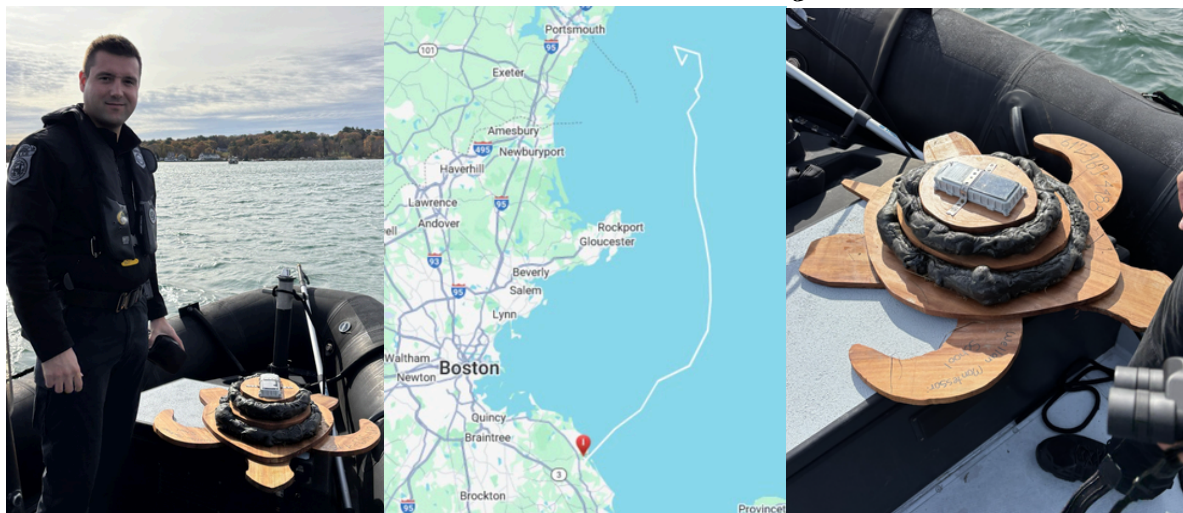
## What Can I do to get involved?

Sponsor a student drifter

Make a donation on our website

Follow us on Facebook and Instagram

**GOMLF**  
1 High Street,  
Suite 5  
Kennebunk, ME  
(207) 205 - 3088



After a successful launch by Board President and fishermen Jeff White off f/v Wicked Wendy we would like to report on the travels of “Pablo the Turtle” as he navigates the Northeast to collect data for students at Wellan Montessori School in Massachusetts.

Thank you to the Scituate Police Department (SPD) for the successful retrieval of “Pablo the Turtle,” a turtle-shaped surface drifter. Lt. Norton and Officer Oar aboard Scituate Police Marie Unit 2 (MP2) retrieved the unit with assistance from a Wills Island resident and aerial drone coverage provided by Scituate Detective Sergeant Steverman, “Pablo” was safely secured on MP2 and transported back to the Scituate Police Station for minor rehabilitation. The device, which had been tracking ocean currents for several weeks, had drifted hundreds of miles before finally washing ashore following strong northerly winds.

Amy Perrault, middle school STEM teacher at Wellan, coordinated this mission. SPD Chief Mark Thompson stated that “since the island is only accessible by boat, we were thrilled to play a small role in this educational mission by ensuring the drifter’s rescue and safe return to his seafaring mission.”

“Pablo” is the third surface drifter Wellan students have built in the school’s MakerSpace under Design Lab Specialist, Merav Rosen. With support from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), students track the drifter by satellite for a six-month period. The drifter records location data, which the students then analyze back in the classroom to better understand ocean currents and climate change. Wellan’s previous turtle drifters were tracked across the North Atlantic, nearing the Azores and North Africa at the six-month mark. “Pablo” was launched off the coast of Maine into the Gulf Stream a few weeks ago, and after this brief detour in Scituate, will continue his journey.

Wellan teachers expressed their gratitude upon learning that the Scituate Police Department had safely recovered the device. “What began as a lesson about climate and oceanography has become—thanks to the generous support of Scituate Police officers—a lesson about community and collaboration as well. For our students to have their work valued by these professionals is especially meaningful.” The SPD then worked with the students for a successful relaunch of Pablo!

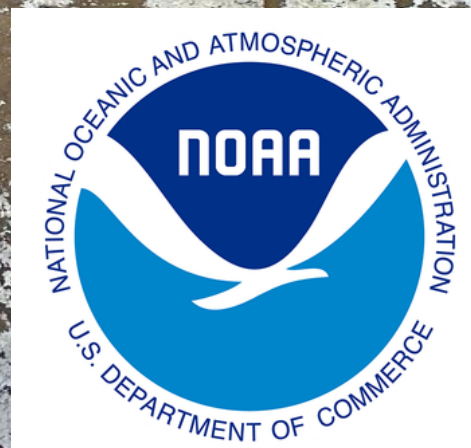
# *Launch of New England Gear Team Website*



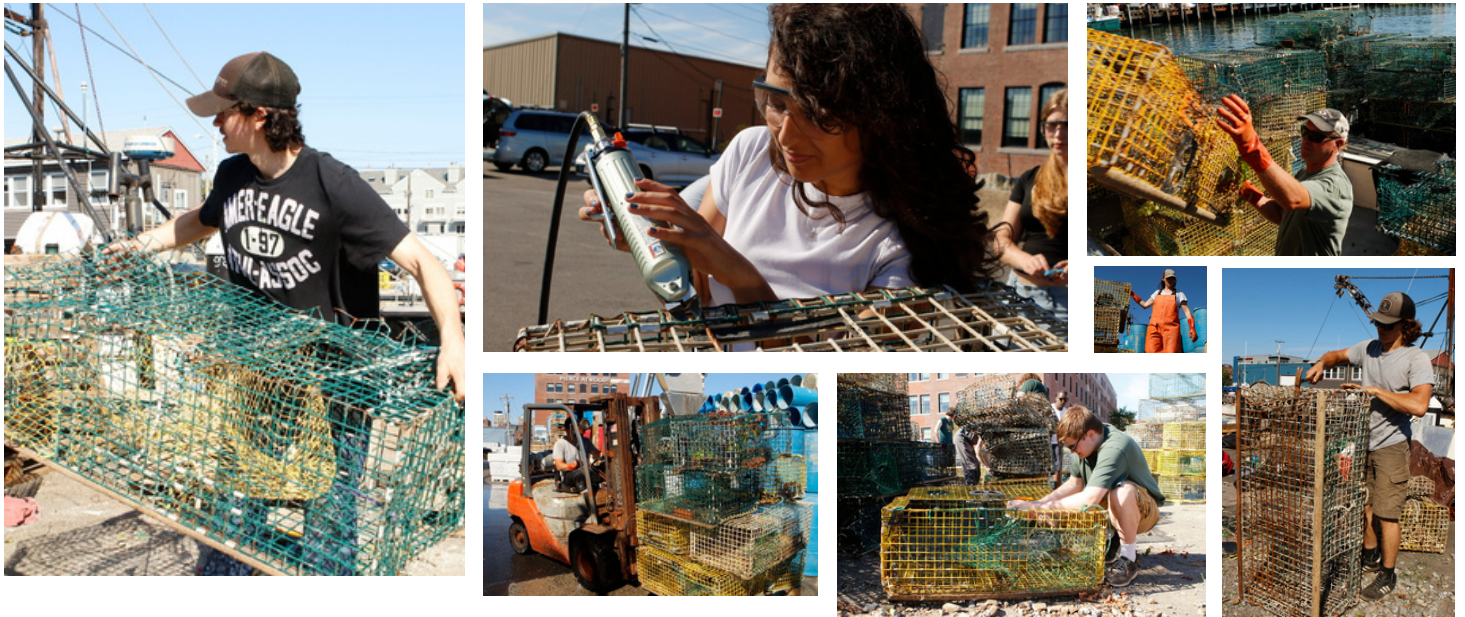
Through our New England Gear Team partnership formed under funding from the NOAA Marine Debris 2023 grant cycle we are proud to share the launch of the Gear Team Website, fondly entitled the Gear Hub!

Visit [www.gear-hub.org](http://www.gear-hub.org) to check it out!

This partnership has provided extensive support to all of us through the power of collaboration, making us more powerful as a unit as we all address marine debris along our coastlines and at-sea. The funding for our current Gear Grab programming is provided through this collaborative grant.



# October Voluntary Gear Disposal Event: Portland



In October we received over 300 traps from Southern Maine for voluntary Disposal! We are incredibly appreciative to students from **Baxter Academy** for volunteering to help us with the breakdown and disposal of these traps to be prepared for recycling.

**Salvage:** approximately 100 traps/wire for reuse by local fishermen or makers.  
1 full palette of ergo bricks and steel runners repurposed by local fishermen

**Recycled:** 4.8 tons of traps and metal fishing wire recycled

**Disposal for energy:** 3.78 tons of unsalvageable debris sent to be turned into energy

## ONGOING VOLUNTARY DISPOSAL

We have lined up removal of over 600 traps to be removed from yards in the next few months.

## MIT Workshop with Stonehill College and Sea Grant



We were lucky to help coordinate and attend the MIT Drifter workshop at the MIT Sea Grant Lab in Cambridge, MA. At this event we were able to work with almost 20 teachers from across New England to help them build and eventually deploy their student drifters in their classroom.



## **Conferences Attended**

### ***Lobster Science Symposium***

Chris Cash at the Lobster Institute hosted a phenomenal Lobster Science Symposium in early November. The speakers covered various aspects of the industry including biological updates, social analysis of fishing communities and landings updates. These presentations help guide our work and keep track of the issues relevant to the fishery for the coming seasons.

### ***Maine Climate Council Quarterly Update***

We remotely attended the Maine Climate Council Quarterly update to gauge how initiatives may focus on the blue economy, marine science and fishery community support. We also got various updates on funding opportunities for individuals and communities preparing for or responding to disaster events like the '23-'24 storm cycle.

### ***Maine Green Schools Symposium***

Several supporters for our organization attended and reported back about the Green Schools Symposium and the efforts along the coast to involve our next generation in environmental science, decreasing costs through energy efficiency and potential for Student Drifters at downeast schools.

### ***On-Demand Gear Update at The Island Institute***

We attended the on-demand gear update at the Island Institute to see how these changes may affect the industry moving forward. We also got updates about the type of systems that are performing best and the status of this project at the state level.

## Haystack: Marine Debris Summit

We got to attend the Haystack School of Mountain Crafts for the Marine Debris Summit! Lots of our regional Gear Team was in attendance including Oceanswide, Rozalia Project, Center for Coastal Studies and Net Your Problem. What a great group with extensive knowledge sharing about the future of marine debris with interesting perspectives surrounding fishing islands, municipal waste issues and potential for infrastructure and reuse.



### Thank you to our Funders

*As a nonprofit we are funded by grants and donations. We are grateful to continue to receive funds from our following partners. Their support allows us to continue to perform our work.*



*Additional thanks to the Portland Fish Exchange, Island Heritage Trust and Baxter Academy*

**Thank you for reading Lobster Lines!**