

Oregon Ports Expand Program to Recycle and Recover Energy from Old Fishing Gear

Port of Astoria and Hammond are the latest additions to the innovative Fishing for Energy partnership

PORT OF ASTORIA, Ore., Oct. 22 /PRNewswire/ -- The Oregon port of Astoria is the latest addition to the Fishing for Energy initiative, the program providing commercial fishermen a cost-free way to recycle old and unusable fishing gear. Gear collected at the port will be stripped of metals for recycling with the help of Schnitzer Steel in Portland and processed into clean, renewable energy at the Covanta Marion Energy-from-Waste facility in Brooks, OR. Fishing for Energy is a partnership between Covanta Energy (Covanta), the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF), the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Marine Debris Program, and Schnitzer Steel Industries, Inc. It was established in 2008 to reduce the financial burden imposed on commercial fishermen when disposing of old, derelict (gear that is lost in the marine environment), or unusable fishing gear and thereby reduce the amount of gear that ends up in U.S. coastal waters.

At a ceremony held this morning at Pier Three Boat Yard in the Port of Astoria, the partnership installed collection bins for old, abandoned or lost fishing gear from area commercial fishermen. Bins will be available this month and into November for local fishermen to drop off any retired gear at the Boat Yard location and at Tongue's Point in Astoria. The partnership also stationed bins at Hammond to support the ongoing derelict gear removal program by the state, recycling more than two tons from that program since the installation of bins in September.

Speaking on behalf of the partnership, Jamie Wilson, Regional Director of Schnitzler Steel Inc. said, "Schnitzer Steel is proud to be able to contribute to the Fishing for Energy partnership – this is right up our alley. We believe it is our responsibility to pitch in where we can to improve our natural environment."

By placing the collection bins at two locations in Astoria, it makes it easy for fishermen to participate. Derelict fishing gear can threaten marine life in a number of ways; by damaging ecosystems as nets and heavy equipment settle upon the ocean floor or through 'ghost fishing,' wherein a net continues to catch fish, even if abandoned or lost. Gear can also impact navigational safety, damage fishing equipment and boats that are in use, and have economic repercussions on fishing and shipping enterprises and coastal communities.

Fishing for Energy thrives due to extensive cooperation between government, private, public and local organizations. The diversity and unparalleled expertise of the partners results in a unique, community-focused program that addresses a marine environmental issue, reduces costs for small commercial fishing businesses and recycles metal and recovers energy from the remaining material.

Cyreis Schmitt, from the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, lauded the state's partnership with Fishing for Energy. The partnership allowed the state to redistribute funds and expand removal efforts. "Through this free program, no marine debris went into a landfill, and the project was able to use the cost savings on landfill fees to recover even more pots," said Schmitt.

Since launching in 2008, Fishing for Energy has reeled in more than 800,000 pounds of old fishing gear, a portion of which has been retrieved directly from the ocean by fishermen. In 2010, Fishing for Energy was awarded the prestigious Coastal America Partnership Award, which is presented to groups that restore and protect coastal ecosystems through collaborative action and partnership. The partnership has also expanded to include a grant program that directly supports efforts to remove derelict fishing gear from U.S. coastal waters and will continue to partner with new ports to promote retired or derelict fishing gear collection through community education and outreach. For more information on the partnership visit: www.nfwf.org/fishingforenergy.

About Covanta

Covanta Energy is an internationally recognized owner and operator of large-scale Energy-from-Waste and renewable energy projects and a recipient of the Energy Innovator Award from the U.S. Department of Energy's Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy. Covanta's 45 Energy-from-Waste facilities provide communities with an environmentally sound solution to their solid waste disposal needs by using that municipal solid waste to generate clean, renewable energy. Annually, Covanta's modern Energy-from-Waste facilities safely and securely convert approximately 20 million tons of waste into more than 9 million megawatt hours of clean renewable electricity and create 10 billion pounds of steam that are sold to a variety of industries. For more information, visit www.covantaholding.com.

About National Fish and Wildlife Foundation

A nonprofit established by Congress in 1984, the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation sustains, restores and enhances the Nation's fish, wildlife, plants and habitats. Through leadership conservation investments with public and private partners, NFWF is dedicated to achieving maximum conservation impact by developing and applying best practices and innovative methods for measurable outcomes. Since its establishment, NFWF has funded 3,700 organizations and leveraged \$490 million in federal funds into \$1.6 billion for conservation. For more information, visit www.nfwf.org.

About NOAA

NOAA understands and predicts changes in the Earth's environment, from the depths of the ocean to the surface of the sun, and conserves and manages our coastal and marine resources.

The NOAA Marine Debris Program, housed within the Office of Response & Restoration, coordinates, strengthens, and increases the visibility of marine debris issues and efforts within the agency, its partners, and the public. The program supports activities at both a national and international level focused on identifying, reducing and preventing debris from entering the marine environment. NOAA's Office of Response and Restoration (OR&R) protects coastal and marine resources, mitigates threats, reduces harm, and restores ecological function. The Office provides comprehensive solutions to environmental hazards caused by oil, chemicals, and marine debris. For more information, visit: www.noaa.gov.

About Schnitzer Steel Industries, Inc.

Schnitzer Steel Industries, Inc. is one of the largest manufacturers and exporters of recycled ferrous metal products in the United States with 42 operating facilities located in 14 states throughout the country, including seven export facilities located on both the East and West Coasts and in Hawaii and Puerto Rico. The Company's vertically integrated operating platform also includes its auto parts and steel manufacturing businesses. The Company's auto parts business sells used auto parts through its 45 self-service facilities located in 14 states and in western Canada. With an effective annual production capacity of approximately 800,000 tons, the Company's steel manufacturing business produces finished steel products, including rebar, wire rod and other specialty products. The Company commenced its 104th year of operations in fiscal 2010.

SOURCE Fishing for Energy