



NOAA NATIONAL OCEANIC AND
ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE



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NOAA partnerships highlight technical solutions to bycatch reduction

Today, NOAA Fisheries is awarding more than \$2.4 million to partners around the country to support innovative bycatch reduction research projects through its Bycatch Reduction Engineering Program (BREP).

Bycatch occurs when fishing operations discard unintentionally caught fish or interact with living marine resources such as marine mammals, sea turtles, seabirds, protected fish, corals and sponges.

Reducing bycatch is a key part of NOAA's efforts to maintain sustainable fisheries and conserve and recover protected species. BREP provides critical funding to key partners to develop technological solutions and changes in fishing practices that decrease the bycatch of fish and protected species or minimize injury to marine life.

"By working side-by-side with fishermen and our partners, this program has been able to develop smart solutions that keep unwanted, unusable or protected species in the water, while increasing the catch of species fishermen are looking to harvest," said Eileen Sobeck, assistant NOAA administrator for fisheries.

Ongoing projects supported by BREP funding:

- Create an enhanced communication network and real-time maps to allow longfin squid fishermen to avoid butterfish "hot spots" and reduce bycatch by 54 percent in the Northeast;
- Reduce bycatch of the endangered eulachon by up to 91 percent using LED lights in the West Coast ocean shrimp trawl fishery;
- Develop a modified gillnet that reduced sturgeon interactions by more than 60 percent in Virginia and North Carolina.

This is the fifth year that NOAA Fisheries has awarded funding through BREP to increase bycatch reduction research and partnerships. Information about the 2016 BREP awards is available [here](#). Past accomplishments are highlighted in the annual [Bycatch Reduction Report to Congress](#).

NOAA's mission is to understand and predict changes in the Earth's environment, from the depths of the ocean to the surface of the sun, and to conserve and manage our coastal and marine resources. Join us on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) and our other [social media channels](#).