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Responsibility

NOAA reports 'dip' in confirmed whale entanglements in 2022, zero involving right whales

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By Responsible Seafood Advocate

NOAA confirms 67 large whale entanglements nationally in 2022 – none involving the North Atlantic right whale

NOAA Fisheries has released the **National Report on Large Whale Entanglements Confirmed in the United States in 2022** (<https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/resource/document/national-report-large-whale-entanglements-confirmed-united-states-2022>). In 2022, there were 67 large whale entanglement cases – a slight decrease from 2021 and slightly below the historical average. The majority involved humpback whales and there were no confirmed entanglement cases with the endangered North Atlantic right whale.

“We will continue to analyze data from 2022 to understand whether this dip is temporary or part of a longer-term downward trend,” wrote NOAA in a press release.

Over 85 percent of all confirmed live whale entanglement reports were observed off the coast of four states: California (34.3 percent), Massachusetts (20.9 percent), Alaska (14.9 percent) and Hawai'i (14.9 percent).



A new NOAA report confirms 67 large whale entanglements nationally in 2022 – none involving the North Atlantic right whale. Photo credit: Center for Coastal Studies; NOAA Permit No. 18786.

Forty percent of confirmed cases involved commercial or recreational fishing gear (e.g., buoys with identifiable marks, traps, nets and monofilament line). The remaining cases involved lines that could not be directly attributed to a fishery or other source (e.g., no clear evidence of traps, nets, buoys without identification, or other gear with a known source).



<https://link.chtbl.com/aquapod>

\$18 million invested in fishing gear innovation to support North Atlantic right whale conservation



NFWF-NOAA funding will help develop and integrate new fishing gear in New England fisheries to help North Atlantic right whale conservation.



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Scientists and managers use entanglement data to determine the impact of entanglement on individual whales and on populations. They look at different aspects of each entanglement case, including entanglement rates, entanglement severity, configuration of the entanglement on the animal, type of gear or debris and injuries and impact on the animal.

Experts use these criteria to evaluate existing management measures and implement new management measures, as warranted, to reduce the threat of entanglement to large whales.

Read the full report here (<https://media.fisheries.noaa.gov/2024-01/National-Report-Large-Whale-Entanglement-2022-508.pdf>).

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Author



RESPONSIBLE SEAFOOD ADVOCATE

editor@globalseafood.org (<mailto:editor@globalseafood.org>)

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