

Abandoned Crab Trap Removal

TIPS & TRICKS



Follow these tips and tricks for a fun, safe, productive day.

THE RIGHT EQUIPMENT FOR THE JOB

- Print out the *Volunteer's Crab Trap Removal Report* to complete at the day's end.
- Gloves – an absolute must!
- 2-3' metal hook for grabbing the float & trap.
- Garden snipper for cutting the float rope.
- Large tub or garbage can for floats.
- Bucket or similar container for ropes.
- Large piece of plywood to protect the boat deck when crushing the traps.
- Towels to wipe hands.
- Binoculars to see floats on the water and traps on the shorelines.
- Wire cutters to free crabs. Stone crabs are stubborn & not easy to shake out.
- Tie downs or ropes to secure the traps.



Call Allan Berger for supplies 713-829-2852

DRESS FOR SUCCESS

- Life jackets are especially important.
- Wear layered clothing such as t-shirt, sweatshirt & rain jacket to keep out the cold & wind.
- Wear clothing that you don't mind getting dirty. *DO NOT WEAR WHITE!*
- Waders to keep warm & dry.
- Hat, sunscreen & sunglasses – even though it's winter, protect your eyes & skin.

TEAM EFFORT

Retrieving & Marking Traps The boat captain and crew act as a team when retrieving abandoned crab traps. When a float is spotted in the water, the boat captain navigates to the float and slows or stops. The first crew member reaches the long metal hook underneath the float to snare the rope. The second crew member pulls on the rope to bring up the trap. Beware of traps that are stuck deeply in mud. If the boat is still moving, the crew members may need to brace themselves so as not to be pulled into the water. The hook is then used to grab the trap and pull it into the boat. The Data Deckhand/ Boat Captain, keeping hands dry for data entry, marks the location of the trap in the Collector App. The crew calls out the number and type of critters found in the trap for the Data Deckhand/ Captain to record in the Collector App.





Rescuing Critters To release the critters back into the water, find the V-shaped elastic cord and unhook it from the trap. Pull it back to the opposite side of the trap and hook it there. Pull apart the edges of the trap and shake the critters back into the water. Banging the trap on the side of the boat will help to release the crab's grasp. Stone crabs can be stubborn. Submerging them or rapping on their claws may help. Cutting the trap maybe necessary to get them out.



Tag, Rope & Float From the tag, the crew read the trap owner's name to the Data Deckhand/ Captain. If the trap has no tag, check the float for a number burned into it. Cut the rope off the trap and cut the float off the rope. Store the rope in a bucket and the float in a large storage container. This will make offloading much quicker and easier!



Smash & Store Placing the trap on plywood, stomp the outer edge of the trap to begin crushing it. Start on the sides of the trap that are adjacent the PVC stick. Try to get a good tilt on the bait basket. This is important for getting the trap crushed. It may be necessary to get on top of the trap to get it crushed. The heavier gage traps are especially hard to crush but crushing the traps not only allows for hauling in more traps; it makes for a safer ride back and easier to off load. Pile the crushed traps on top of each other and tie them down to ensure they don't blow off or injury anyone. Cargo tie-down straps with ratchet works well. Bring several to secure the load.



Offloading Take your traps to the nearest dumpster location. At the TPWD dock in Port O'Connor there will be a crew to help offload from noon til 5pm on Saturday 2/20. Other dumpster locations (not manned) include Seadrift Marina, Swan Point Boat Ramp, Charlies Bait Camp, & Austwell Boat Ramp.

Finish the Job Complete the Volunteer Report, take photos of your crew then email them to: AllanRBerger@outlook.com When you connect to Wifi, sync the Collector App so your data gets to the database.



*Thank You for Removing Abandoned Crab Traps!
Your efforts help protect, restore, and enhance our natural resources.*