



OCEAN VOYAGES INSTITUTE COMMITS TO REMOVING 1 MILLION POUNDS OF PLASTIC FROM THE OCEAN

Record-breaking season prompts non-profit group to raise the bar on open ocean clean-up after 340,000 pounds of plastic waste pulled from Great Pacific Garbage Patch



HONOLULU, HI — August 5, 2020 [Ocean Voyages Institute](#)'s marine plastic recovery vessel, *S/V KWAI*, docked in Honolulu today, after 35 days at sea, successfully concluding the second and final haul of the non-profit group's 2020 open ocean recovery mission, adding 67 tons to the record-setting 103 tons (206,000 pounds) removed in June, which became the largest open ocean clean-up in history.

The non-profit group's total for the summer season now amounts to 170 tons (340,000 pounds) of ghost nets and plastic debris removed from the North Pacific Gyre (Great Pacific Garbage Patch), a staggering amount, which quadruples the group's previous year's record.

Ocean Voyages Institute's Founder and Executive Director **Mary T. Crowley** states her group's efforts are just getting started. "With plastic set to outnumber fish by 2040, we humans are responsible for the oceans collapsing in my lifetime, and we must set ambitious targets to tackle the problem of plastic in the ocean," continuing, "even with our record-setting clean-up,

I know we need to do more, and our 1 million pound goal is my commitment to the essential undertaking of cleaning the oceans of plastic.”

Ocean Voyages Institute’s high seas clean-up expedition began in May, with a 48-day mission, followed by a second 35-day leg which departed on July 1st, with the *KWAI* logging more than 5000 nautical miles from Hawaii to the Pacific Gyre and back twice this summer.

Today in Honolulu, Ocean Voyages Institute crew returned with a cargo hold full of ghost fishing nets and toxic plastic debris for the second time this summer. While docked in Honolulu, the ship’s crew will sort the debris into various types of plastics for upcycling and recycling with help from local volunteer groups.

“This summer definitely had its challenges, from COVID-19 and having to quarantine our hard-working crew, to almost not being able to depart on the second leg of our mission due to funding gaps,” added Crowley. “Now I feel like we are on a roll, and the support from around the world has been so encouraging, I know we will reach our million pound goal and keep going cleaning our oceans and encouraging major changes in the use of plastics.”

[Photos/Video Here](#)

[Ocean Voyages Institute is sharing still photos, drone footage and b-roll video.](#)

All media credit: Courtesy of Ocean Voyages Institute

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ABOUT OCEAN VOYAGES INSTITUTE

Ocean Voyages Institute (OVI) was founded in 1979 by Mary T. Crowley. Over the past 40 years it has provided sail training programs, engaged with high schools and college classrooms on subjects such as marine biology, and collaborated with other non-profit organizations around the world on a variety of projects and missions furthering the preservation of the maritime arts and sciences, ocean environment, and island cultures. OVI creates access to ocean experiences as well as education promoting appreciation of the beauty and importance of our ocean to a healthy planet and our own health. OVI began ocean clean-up initiatives in the Pacific Ocean in 2009 on board the non-profit’s brigantine *KAISEI* and has been working continually to find solutions to the ocean trash dilemma since then. Ocean Voyages Institute has received numerous awards, including United Nations (UNEP)’s “Climate Hero Award,” and Google Inc.’s “Earth Hero Award.

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