

2015 Puget Sound Dungeness Crab Fishery



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Presentation Outline

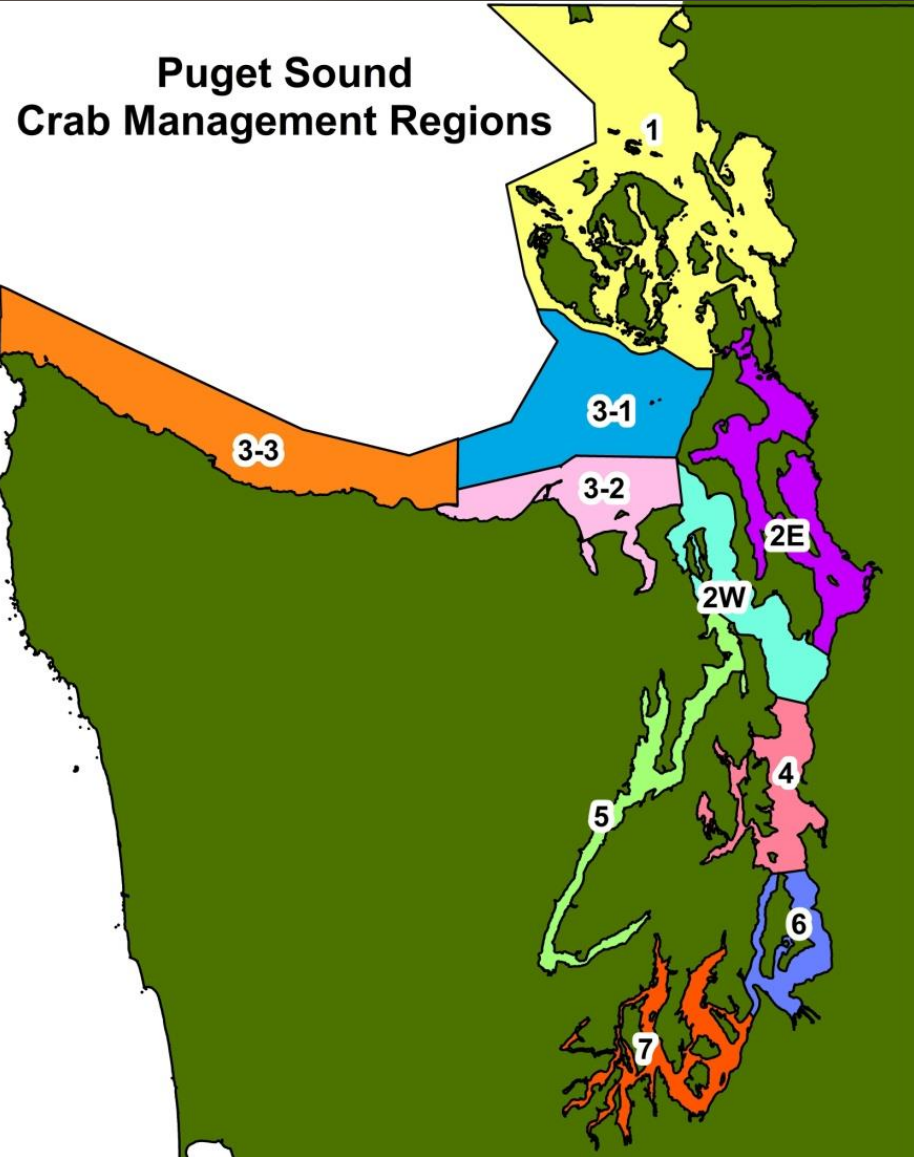
- Key elements of the Puget Sound crab fishery policy (C-3609)
- Performance and harvest of the 2015 Puget Sound commercial and recreational crab fisheries
- 2015 recreational crab fishery education and outreach program
- Crab fishery regulation compliance data collected by enforcement and fish program staff

Puget Sound Crab Fishery Policy C-3609

- A revised policy was adopted by the Commission on October 1, 2010
- Protect and conserve the Puget Sound Dungeness crab resource
- Provides for recreational and commercial fisheries
- Maintains a base recreational season from year to year
 - July – Labor Day 5 days per week, including weekends
 - October – December winter season 7 days/week (dependent on state share remaining after summer season)
 - 5 crab daily bag limit
- Develop and implement cooperative education and outreach program

Puget Sound Crab Fishery Management

Puget Sound
Crab Management Regions

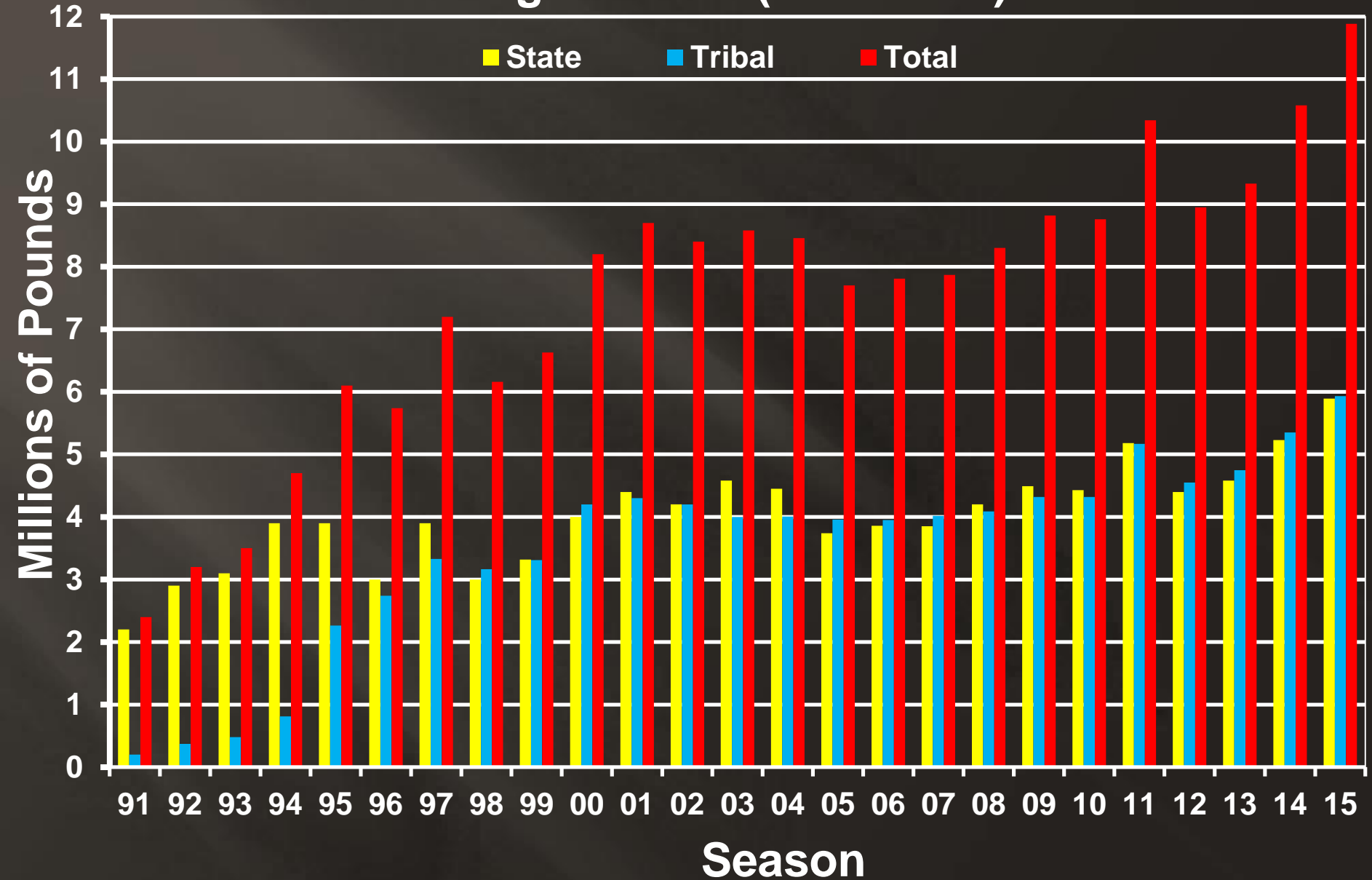


- Seven management regions
- Policy C-3609 provides commercial and recreational opportunity in Regions 1,2, and 3. Regions 4,5,6,and 7 are reserved for recreational only
- Region specific annual harvest quotas are set pre-season to increase stability and predictability in fisheries
- Regional State/Tribal harvest shares are established annually through co-management agreements.
- June through May management period with soft-shell closures during spring and early summer months

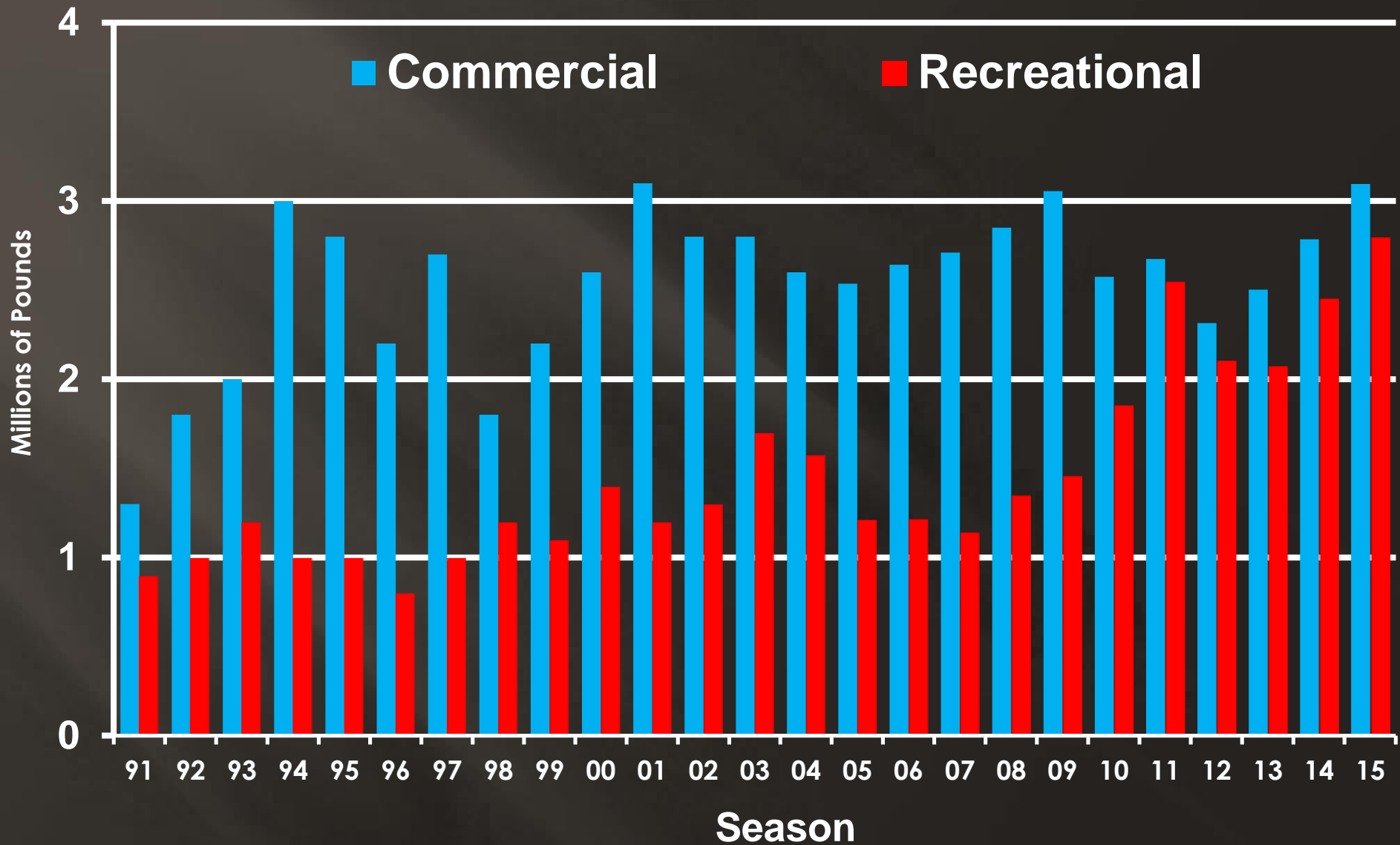
2015 Commercial and Recreational Fisheries



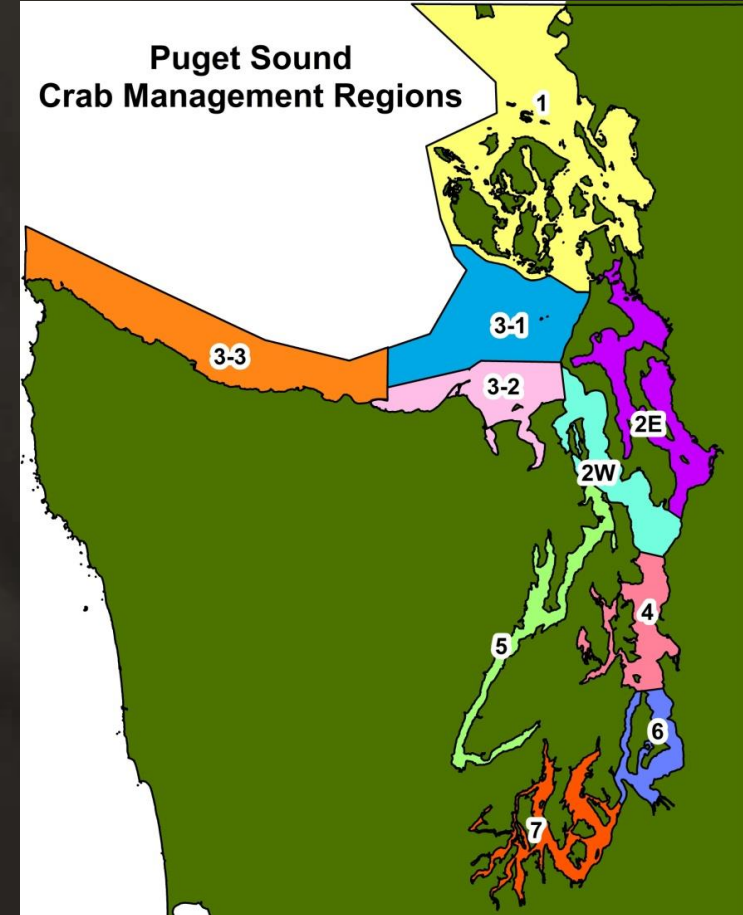
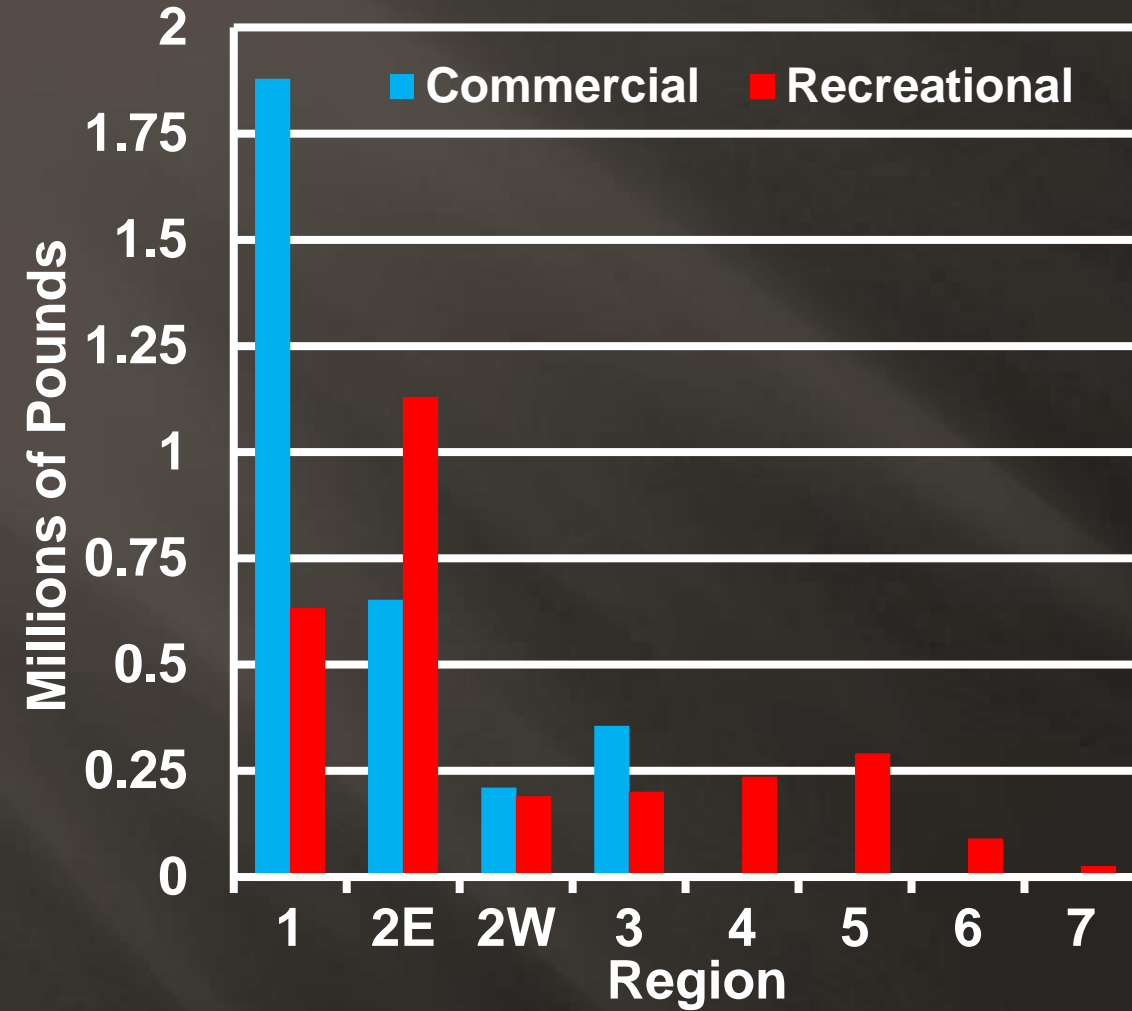
State and Tribal Dungeness Crab Harvest in Puget Sound (1991-2015)



Dungeness Crab Harvest for State Fisheries in Puget Sound (1991-2015)

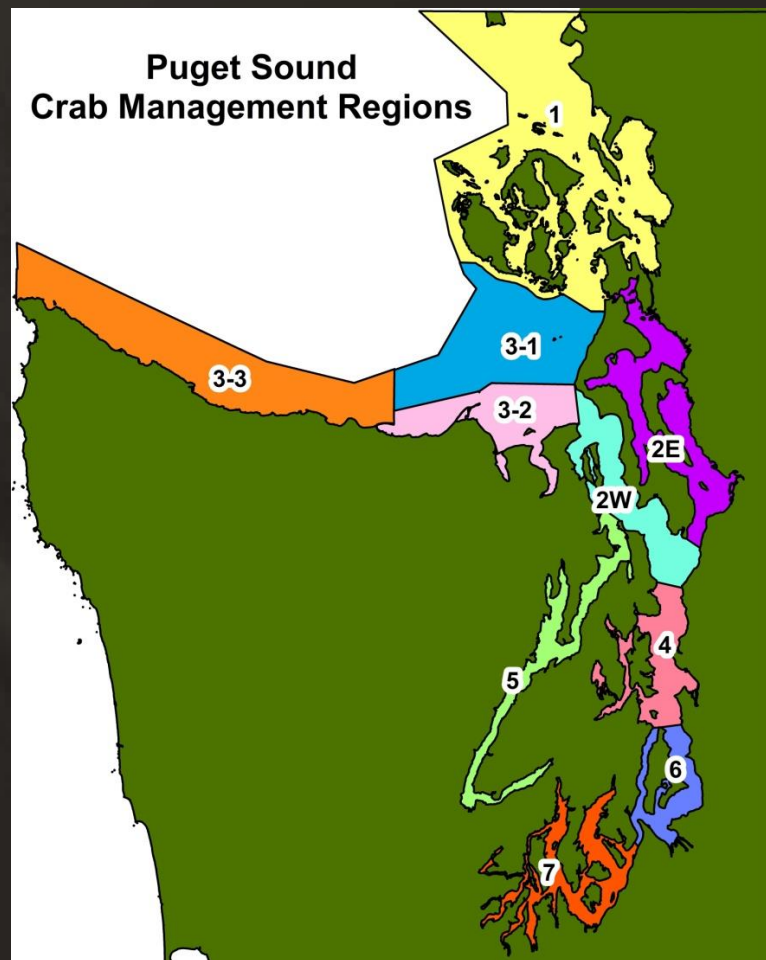


2015 Dungeness Crab Harvest for State Fisheries by Region



Recreational and Commercial Fishery Openings in 2015

Region	Summer Recreational Season	Winter Recreational Season	Commercial Fishery
1	Yes	Yes	Yes
2E	Yes	Yes	Yes
2W	Yes	Yes	Yes
3	Yes	Yes	Yes
4	Yes	Yes	
5	Yes	Yes*	
6	Yes	Yes	
7	Yes	Yes	



* Winter recreational fishery extended to February 29.

2007 – 2015 Recreational Dungeness Crab Catch Card Statistics

	Season	CRC Issued	CRC Returned	CRC Reported Internet	Percent Returns Internet + Returned
Summer	2007	210,327	34,400	32,373	32%
	2008	210,893	26,037	43,919	33%
	2009	236,665	37,128	72,172	45%
	2010	208,462	29,406	77,472	52%
	2011	230,355	31,222	89,095	52%
	2012	200,711	26,504	79,895	53%
	2013	214,692	26,236	90,379	54%
	2014	213,741	25,276	91,270	55%
	2015	232,621	25,685	94,336	52%
Winter	2007	157,905	10,281	6,388	11%
	2008	207,143	10,993	10,871	11%
	2009	89,259	11,909	27,382	44%
	2010	70,763	9,633	27,346	52%
	2011	28,514	4,675	13,899	65%
	2012	27,711	4,508	13,357	65%
	2013	29,638	4,419	15,223	66%
	2014	35,371	5,040	17,401	63%
	2015	36,398	5,039	18,284	64%

Number of “New” Recreational Crab Fishers 2010-2015

Season	Total Crab Endorsements Issued	New Recreational Crab Fishers	Percentage New Recreational Crab Fishers
2010	213,013	73,845	34%
2011	237,129	82,944	35%
2012	209,957	57,548	27%
2013	214,685	62,291	29%
2014	223,184	64,133	29%
2015	243,043	70,613	29%

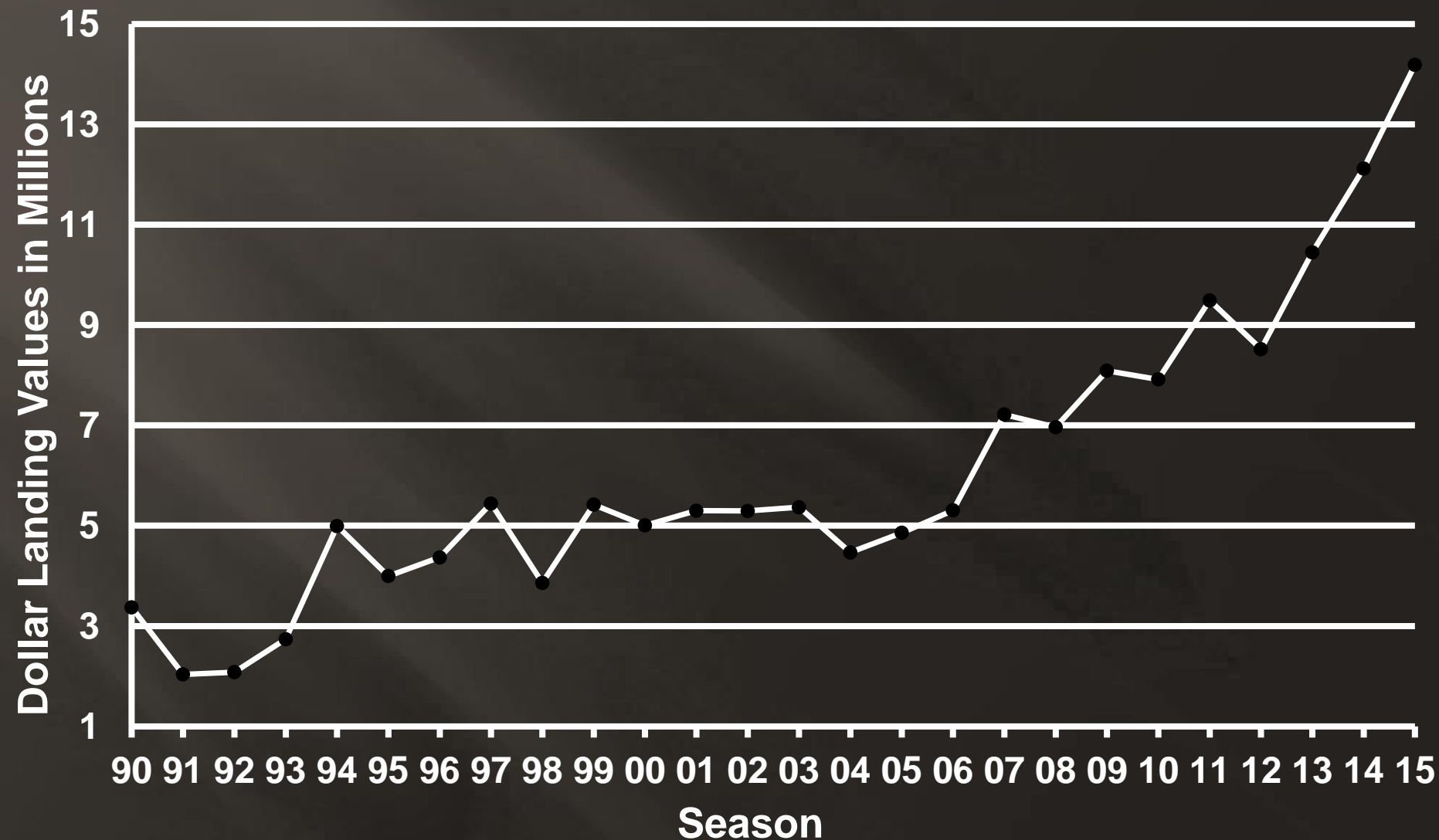
Number of Puget Sound Commercial Dungeness Crab Licenses Owned by Individual Fishers or Companies

- Limited entry fishery since 1981
- Limited to 249 transferable permits

Number of Licenses Owned	2015 Season	
	Number of Owners	Number of Licenses
1	74	74
2	44	90
3	6	18
4	5	20
≥4	4	47
Totals	134	249

Total Adjusted Ex-Vessel Landing Values for the Puget Sound State Commercial Crab Fishery (1990-2015)

Ex-vessel values were adjusted to 2015 dollars using a Consumer Price Index (CPI) conversion maintained by the United States Department of Labor Statistic



Education – Outreach – Enforcement



Education and Outreach Program

Long Term Goal Improve Regulation Compliance in the Recreational Dungeness Crab Fishery

- Key Program Message: **Know Before You Go**
- Education and Outreach partnership and steering committee
 - WDFW fishery managers and enforcement officers
 - Puget Sound Anglers
 - Coastal Conservation Association
 - Northwest Marine Trade Association
 - Recreational crab fishery advisors
 - Northwest Straits Commission
 - Northwest Straits Foundation
 - County Marine Resource Committees (MRC)

Education and Outreach Program Focus

- Resource conservation violations
 - Possession of undersized or female crab
 - Rot cord/Escape cord
- Resource allocation violations
 - Exceeding daily limit
 - Failure to record and report catch
- Closed Season crabbing

2015 Education and Outreach Program

- Crabbing in Puget Sound brochures
 - Mailed to households that purchased crab endorsements
 - Distributed by license dealers and at education-outreach programs
- 4,000 crabber packets including escape cord sheet, waterproof crab guide, and crab brochure (~1,000 also had crab gauges)
- Boat shows, sportsman events, Everett crab derby
- Pre season newspaper coverage
- WDFW enforcement crab fishery emphasis patrols
- WDFW website link specific to Puget Sound crab
- “Report your catch” reminder post cards mailed to all fishers
- Crabbing in Puget Sound web video on agency website
- Offload site fisher surveys/interviews

2015 Offload Site Survey

- Goal: Collect CRC compliance data after crabbing trips are completed;
- Site surveys were conducted systematically throughout the summer season (July 1 to Sept 7);
- Both weekday and weekend visits were attempted;
- 28 survey locations
- 136 site surveys conducted
- 1,191 crabbers were interviewed
- 5,061 crabs were measured



Results of the Offload Site Crab Fisher Surveys

Category	Offload Site Contacts (Successful Crabbers Only)				
	2010	2011	2012	2013	2015
Possession of undersize crab	10%	4%	6%	3%	7%
Possession of female crab	0.3%	0%	0.3%	0.1%	0.3%
Exceeding daily limit	0.7%	0.2 %	0.5%	0.3%	0.1%
CRC in possession	98%	98%	97%	99%	99%
CRC violation (fail to record)	13%	11%	12%	9%	6%

Crab Fishery Enforcement

Recreational Fisher Violator Types



WDFW Enforcement Crab Rule Compliance Emphasis Patrols



- 44 officers involved in summer 2015 emphasis
- Primarily (83%) on the water contacts



	2012	2013	2014	2015
Fishers Contacted	3,814	3,494	4,809	3,659
Number of Crab checked	5,864	4,013	5,952	6,717

Results of Enforcement Emphasis Patrols

Category	Enforcement Contacts (Successful Crabbers Only)					2015
	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	
Possession of undersize crab	10%	8%	9%	8%	9%	7%
Possession of female crab	0.6%	0.9%	0.8%	1%	1%	1.2%
Exceeding daily limit	3.3%	3.2%	1.7%	1.4%	1.6%	2.6%
CRC violation (fail to record)	24.0%	19.4%	19.9%	16.5%	17.4%	17.2%

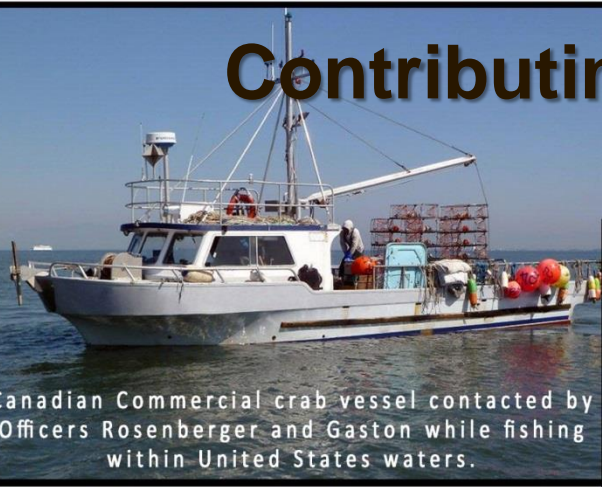
* Proper marking of recreational gear (buoys) is a continuing problem

Closed Season Compliance Emphasis patrols

Joint Effort: State-Tribal Enforcement –Fish Management



Contributing Factors



Canadian Commercial crab vessel contacted by Officers Rosenberger and Gaston while fishing within United States waters.



WDFW Patrol Vessel #1

- Lost or abandoned
- Closed season poaching
- Foreign fishing incursions
- Non-compliant gear



Now that's a lot of seized crab gear!

The Proactive Approach



- **Closed season shellfish pot emphasis patrols initiated in 2011, expanded in 2012, and continued in 2013, 2014, and 2015**
- **included all Marine Areas**
- **Recovery efforts focused on removal of unauthorized-lost-illegal gear before it becomes "derelict"**
- **Gear warning notice program initiated in 2015 (gear is disabled and tagged)**
- **Actual % of derelict pots (i.e. lost or abandoned) is unknown**

Problems and Challenges with Closed season Gear Recovery



- Storage and processing time that is required due to the large volume of gear recovered
- Not able to identify fisher due to Improperly marked buoys
- Fishers assuming gear was stolen
- Removing gear does not result in enforcement contact or educational opportunity





2015 Gear Tag Program

← 8 1/2 inches →

↑ 5 1/2 inches ↓

Front

00001 WDFW Officer badge #.	WARNING NOTICE Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife Police This fishing gear is not in compliance with applicable laws and regulations of the State of Washington		00001 
Date Issued: _____	For information contact the Fish and Wildlife Police 360 902-2936 Or see back for additional information		
Violation(s): 1 2 3 4 5			
Other: _____	Date Issued: _____		
Name _____	Officer badge # _____		
Address: _____	Violations		
	Actions Required		
	Tag to be removed by owner <input type="checkbox"/>	1. Closed season/day <input type="checkbox"/>	
Phone _____	Remove gear from water <input type="checkbox"/>	2. Need complete first and last name on buoy <input type="checkbox"/>	
Marine Area _____	Correct violations indicated <input type="checkbox"/>	3. Need complete address on buoy <input type="checkbox"/>	
Lat _____	Other <input type="checkbox"/>	4. Only half red & half white buoys for crab <input type="checkbox"/>	
Lon _____		5. Only yellow buoys for shrimp <input type="checkbox"/>	
		Other <input type="checkbox"/>	

Back

For fishery, gear, and season information go to:
<http://wdfw.wa.gov/fishing/shellfish>

RCW 77.15.480
Certain devices declared public nuisances.
If this gear is not brought into compliance and/or removed from the water it will be declared a public nuisance and be seized by WDFW.

RCW 77.130.010
Unclaimed personal property
This tag serves as official notice under R.C.W. 77.130.010.

Puget Sound Closed Season Shellfish Pot Recovery Results



	Patrol Days	Pots Recovered	Pots Disabled and Tagged
2011	42	1,319	NA
2012	44	1,024	NA
2013	28	405	NA
2014	26	555	NA
2015	25	1,099	187
Total	165	4,402	187

Commercial Regulations Enforced

- **Pot limits**
- **Gear restrictions**
- **Limited entry enforcement**
- **Size, sex, and shell condition**
- **Undocumented catch**
- **Canadian Vessel Incursions**

The Illegal Shellfish Trade (a focused approach)



1/8/2014

Summary

- Recreational fisheries were open 5 days per week in most regions from July 1 through Labor Day (Sept 1)
- Winter recreational openings occurred in all regions
- Commercial fishery occurred in regions 1, 2, and 3 as per policy C-3609
- In partnership with organized angler groups and NGOs an extensive crab fishery education and outreach program was continued in 2015
- Overall the regulation compliance in the recreational fishery is good
- Recreational rule compliance needing improvement
 - “immediate” recording of crab on the catch record card (CRC)
 - Proper marking of recreational gear
- Closed season gear removal emphasis patrols continue to be successful at removing large numbers of “derelict pots”

Questions

