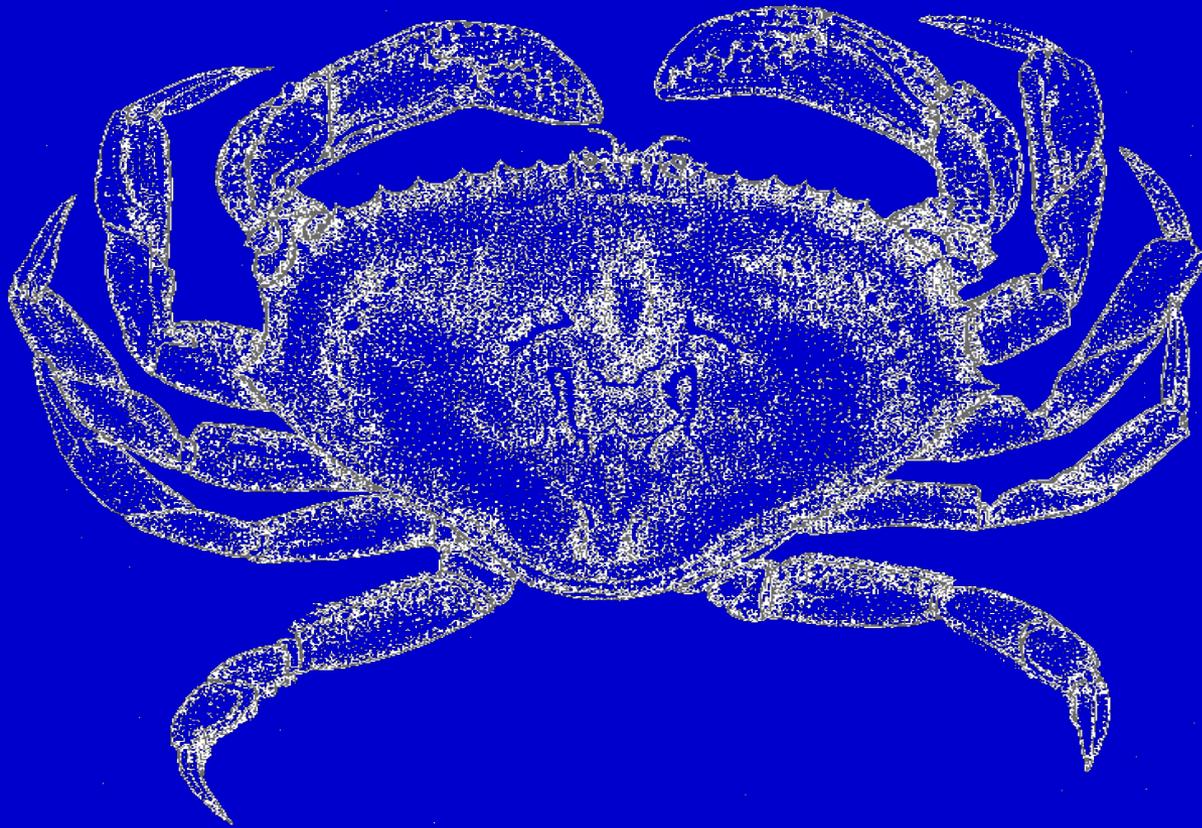


2011 Puget Sound Dungeness Crab Fishery



Rich Childers; Puget Sound Shellfish Manager, Fish Program

Mike Cenci; Deputy Chief of Enforcement, Enforcement Program

Washington Fish and Wildlife Commission Meeting

February 3, 2012

Presentation Outline

- Key elements of the Puget Sound crab fishery policy (C-3609)
- Performance and harvest of the 2011 Puget Sound commercial and recreational crab fisheries
- 2011 crab fishery education and outreach program
- Crab fishery regulation compliance data collected by enforcement and fishery management 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

2011-12 Commercial and Recreational Fisheries

2007 – 2011 Recreational Dungeness Crab Catch Card Statistics

Season	CRC Issued	CRC Returned	CRC Reported Internet	Total Returns Internet + Returned
Summer				
2007	226,035	34,400	32,373	29%
2008	212,998	26,037	43,919	33%
2009	239,429	37,128	72,172	46%
2010	211,022	29,406	77,742	51%
2011	233,265	31,222	89,095	52%
Winter				
2007	158,309	10,281	6,388	10%
2008	208,928	10,993	10,871	10%
2009	89,991	11,909	27,382	44%
2010	71,457	9,633	27,346	52%
2011	28,921	4,500	14,100	64%

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

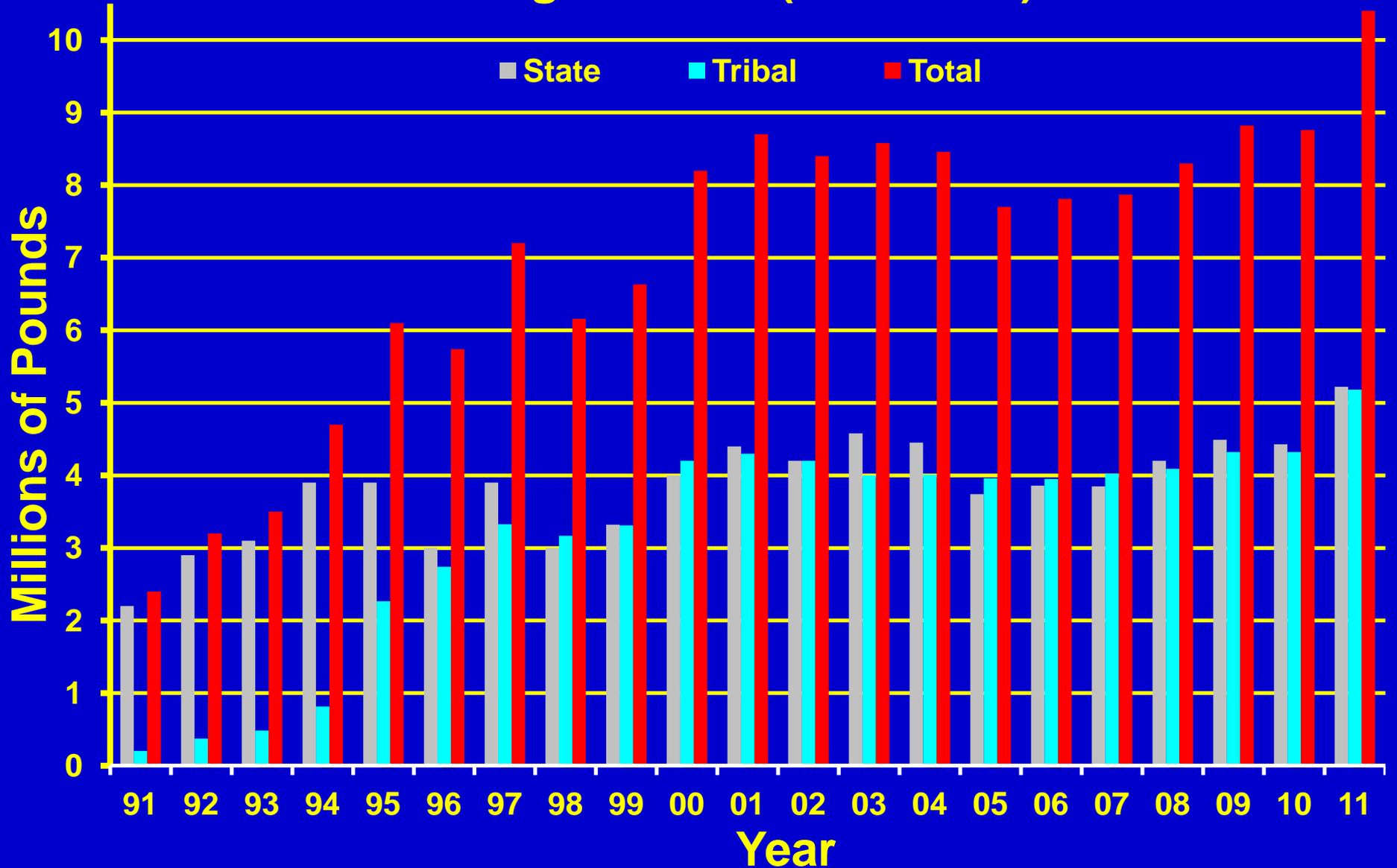
- Limited entry fishery since 1981
- Limited to 250 transferable permits

Number of Licenses Owned	2011-12 Season	
	Number of Owners (%)	Number of Licenses
1	88 (59%)	88
2	50 (34%)	100
3	5 (3%)	15
≥4	5 (3%)	46
Totals	148	249

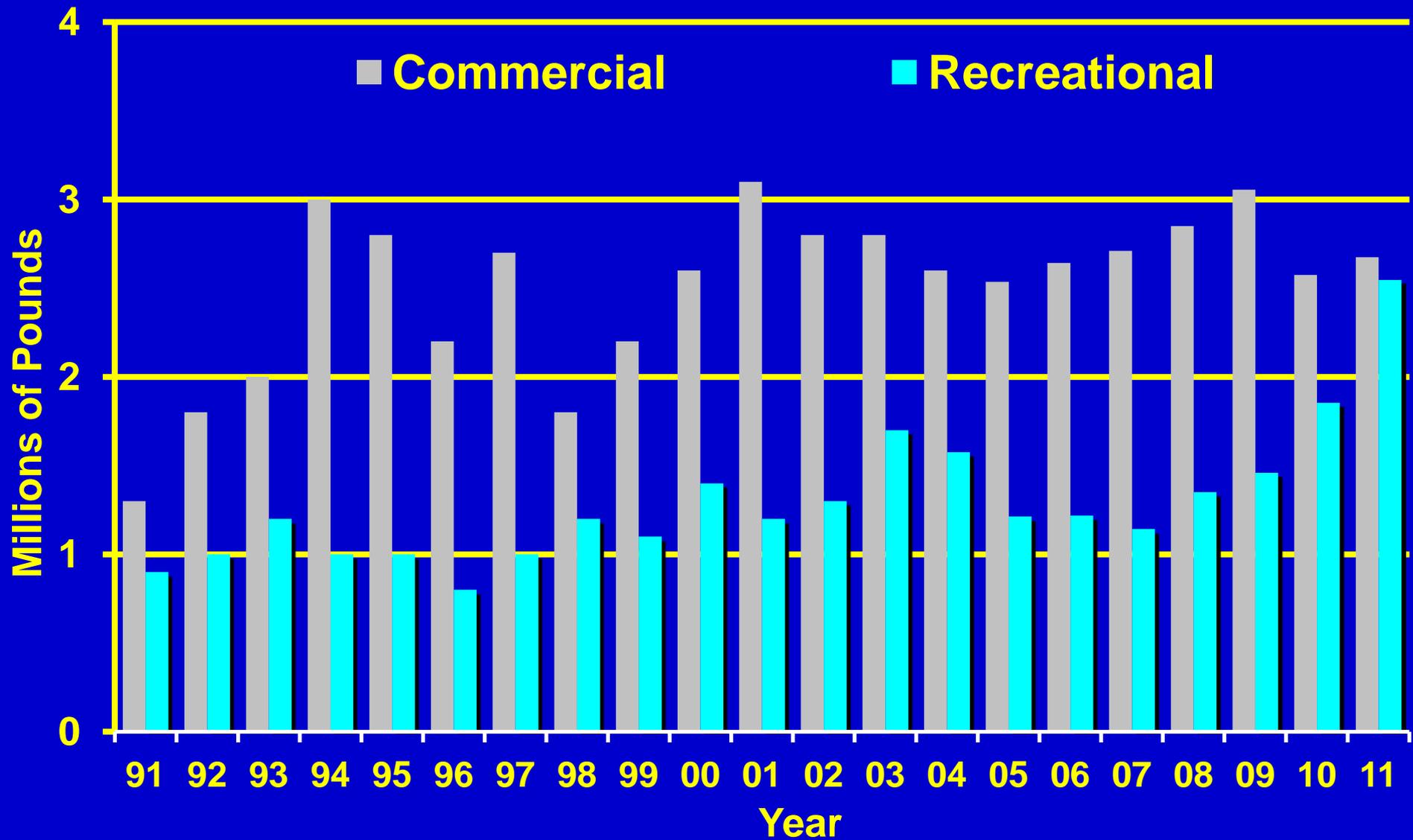
Recreational and Commercial Fisheries in 2011-12

Region	Summer Recreational Season	Winter Recreational Season	Commercial Fishery
1	Yes	Yes	Yes
2	Yes	Yes	Yes
3	Yes	Yes	Yes
4	Yes	No	
5	Yes	No	
6	Yes	Yes	

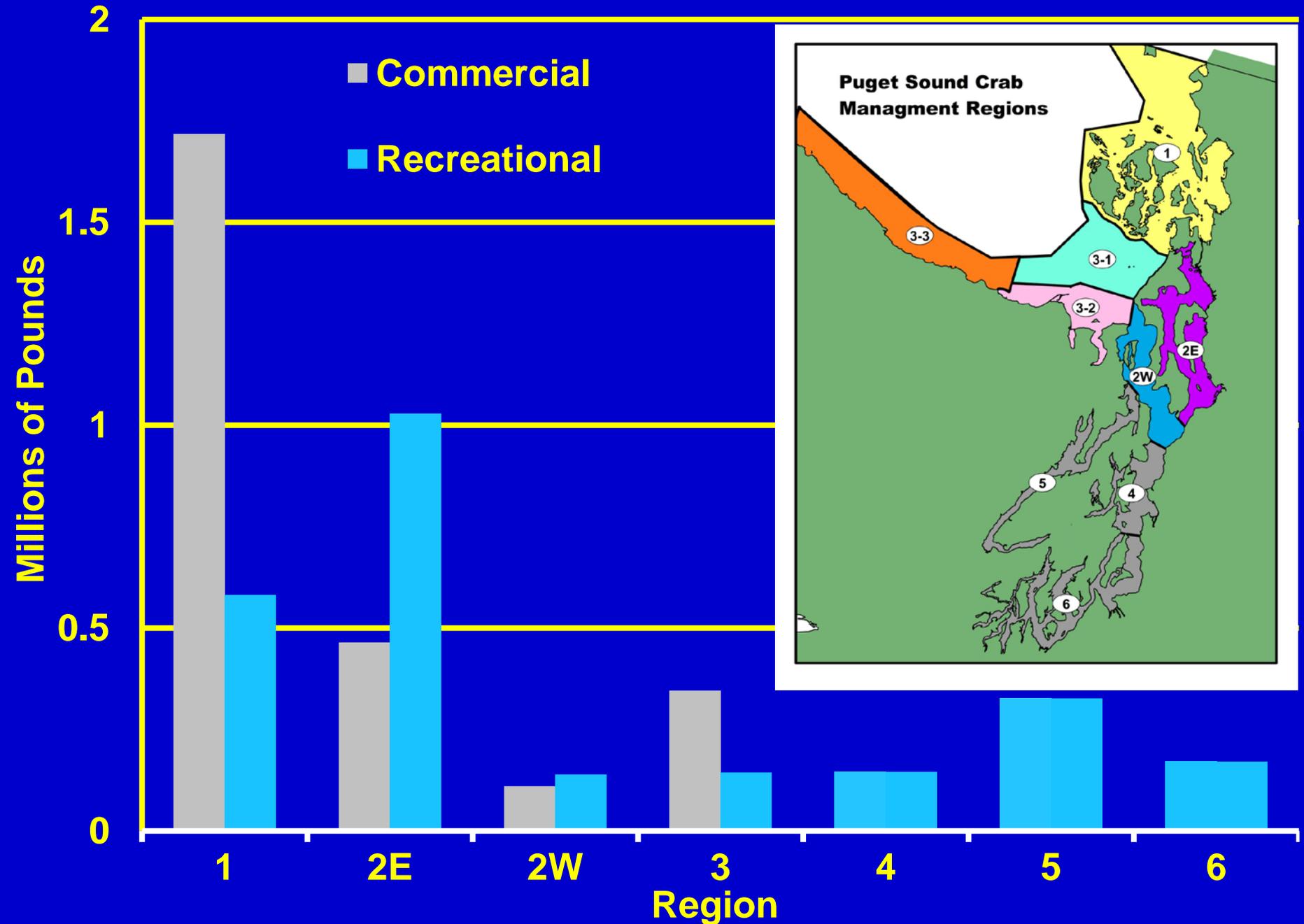
State and Tribal Dungeness Crab Harvest in Puget Sound (1991-2011)



Dungeness Crab Harvest for State Fisheries in Puget Sound (1991-2011)

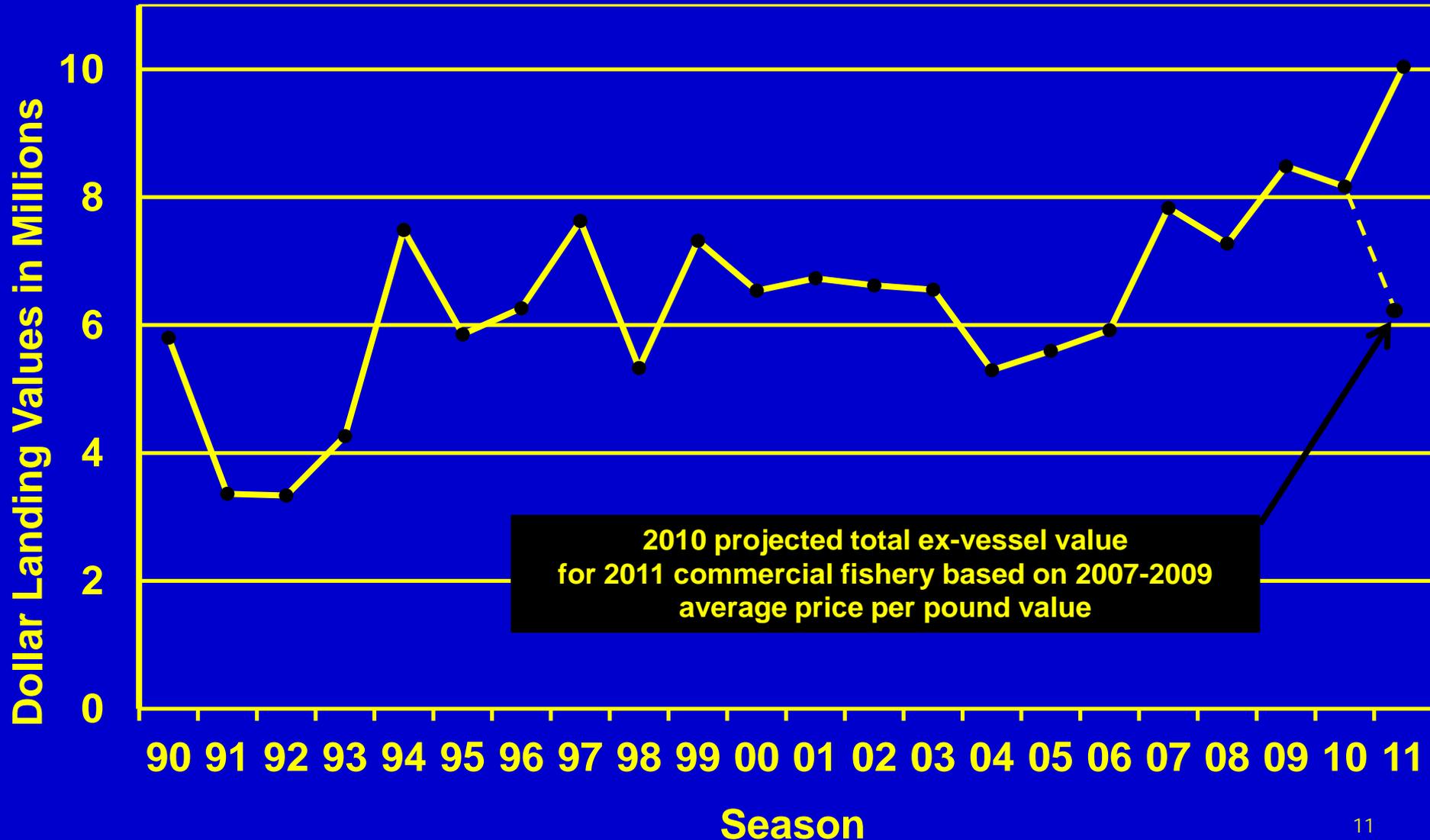


2012 Dungeness Crab Harvest for State Fisheries by Region



Total Adjusted Ex-Vessel Landing Values for the Puget Sound Commercial Crab Fishery (1990-2010 actual) (2011 projected)

Ex-vessel values were adjusted to 2011 dollars using a Consumer Price Index (CPI) conversion maintained by the United States Department of Labor Statistic



Enforcement - Education - Outreach

Education and Outreach Program

Long Term Goal Improve Regulation Compliance in the Recreational Dungeness 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 on Association
 - Northwest Marine Trade Association
 - Recreational crab fishery advisors
 - Beachwatchers
 - County MRCs

Education and Outreach Program Focus

- Resource conservation violations
 - Possession of undersized or female crab
 - Rot cord

- Resource allocation violations
 - Exceeding daily limit
 - Failure to record and report catch

- Closed Season crabbing

2011 Education and Outreach Program

- 120,000 Crabbing in Puget Sound brochures produced
 - 86,000 mailed to households that purchased crab endorsements prior to the July recreational opening
- 70,000 waterproof regulation reference cards and calipers
- WSU Beachwatchers volunteers stationed high use offload sites
- Boat shows and sportsman events
- Pre season newspaper and radio coverage
- WDFW offload site angler survey
- WDFW enforcement crab fishery emphasis patrols
- WDFW website link specific to Puget Sound crab
- “Report your catch” reminder post cards mailed to all fishers

2011 Offload Site Angler Surveys



- Surveys: August-September
- Surveys conducted at 21 high use offload sites
- Collect CRC compliance data after crabbing trips are completed
- 535 fishers surveyed
- 1,757 Crab checked and measured

WDFW Enforcement Crab Rule Compliance Emphasis Patrols



- 32 officers involved in summer 2011 emphasis
- Primarily on the water contacts
- Increased closed season patrol effort in 2011
- 2189 fishers contacted (1790 in 2010)
- 4,729 crab checked (3111 in 2010)

Results of the Offload Site Angler Surveys and Enforcement Emphasis Patrols

Category	Enforcement Contacts	Offload Site Survey
Possession of undersize crab	8% (10% 2010)	4% (11% 2010)
Possession of female crab	0.9% (0.8% 2010)	0% (<1% in 2010)
CRC in possession	NA	98%
CRC violation (fail to record or inaccurate)	21% (24% in 2010)	18% (21% in 2010)
Exceeding daily limit	1.5% (2% in 2010)	NA

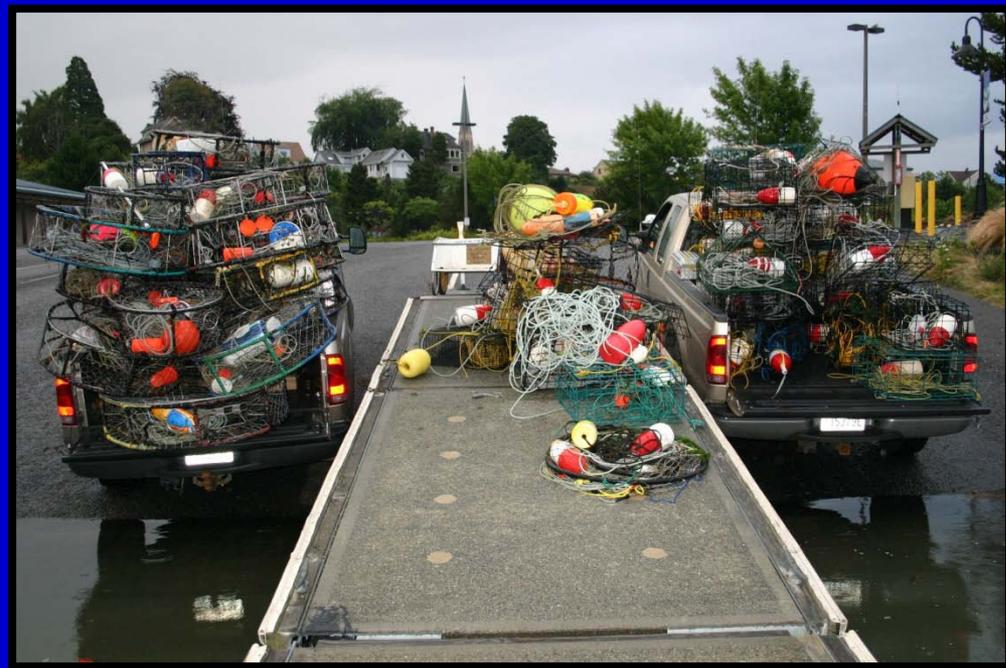
Enforcement Closed Season Compliance

Emphasis patrols



Closed Season Emphasis

July 1 – September 5, 2011



- 42 emphasis patrol days for closed recreational season
- 798 pots seized with recreational half red-half white buoys
- 656 pots were scrutinized for proper buoy markings
- Of the 656 pots, 41% were properly marked with name address etc
- Unknown % of pots were derelict i.e. lost or abandoned

Rot Cord Compliance

- **Recreational : 651 pots inspected / 121 no rot cord = 81 % compliance**
- **Tribal gear: 56 pots inspected / 21 no rot cord = 62% compliance**
- **State commercial: 9 pots inspected / all had rot cord = 100% compliance**
- **Canadian: 450 pots inspected / 442 no rot cord = 1.8% compliance**

Commercial Violations 2011

Tribal / Non- Tribal

- **Gear / crab theft**
- **Fail to account for catch**
- **Possess crab w/out documentation**
- **Commercial fish closed area**
- **Possess / sell undersized crab**

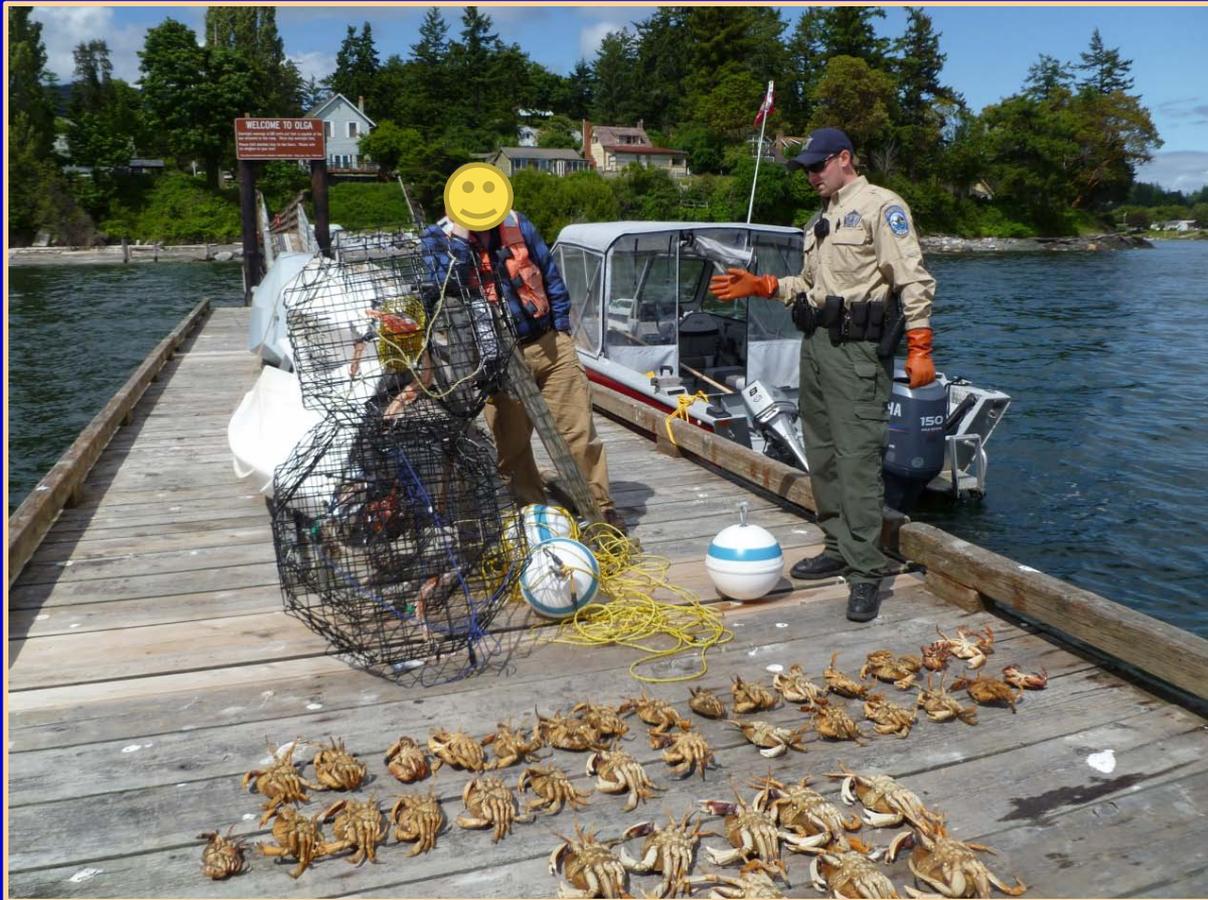
US-Canada Border Patrols

- Four separate multi-day emphasis patrols
- Two vessels seized
- 450 crab pots removed



Violator Types

Hardcore - Opportunistic - Confused / Uneducated



Summary

- **Recreational fisheries were open 5 days per week in all regions from July 1 through Labor Day (Sept 5)**
- **Winter recreational openings occurred in all regions except 4 and 5**
- **The total pounds harvested from the recreational fishery reached a record high**
- **Commercial fishery openings occurred in regions 1, 2, and 3 as per policy C-3609**
- **The total pounds harvested from the commercial fishery are projected to exceed 2010**
- **In partnership with organized angler groups and NGOs an extensive crab fishery education and outreach program was implemented in 2011**
- **Overall the regulation compliance in the recreational fishery improved from 2010**

Questions

