

# PUGET SOUND VITAL SIGNS

## INDICATOR DUNGENESS CRAB CATCH FOR PERSONAL USE

This indicator tracks the annual estimate of Dungeness crabbing for personal use by summarizing catch record card (CRC) data. Personal use is defined here to include harvest for recreation, food security, cultural and family heritage, as well as other personal and emotional experiences. The indicator does not include tribal harvest. Harvest patterns are shown by the number of people participating and the total pounds of Dungeness crab caught per year in the non-tribal, noncommercial fishery. This data is not corrected for estimated unrecorded catch (EUC).

Indicator Progress

Target Status



Target

No targets are currently set for this indicator.

Data Source

Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife Puget Sound Dungeness Crab Catch Record Card

Indicator Lead

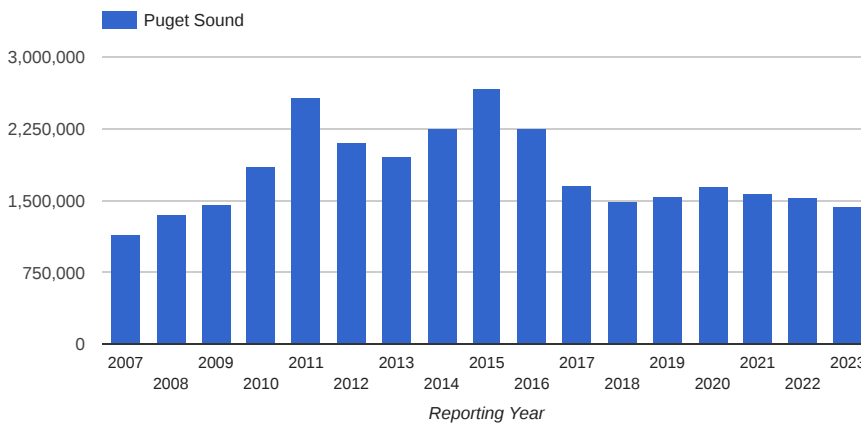
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 Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife

Last Updated

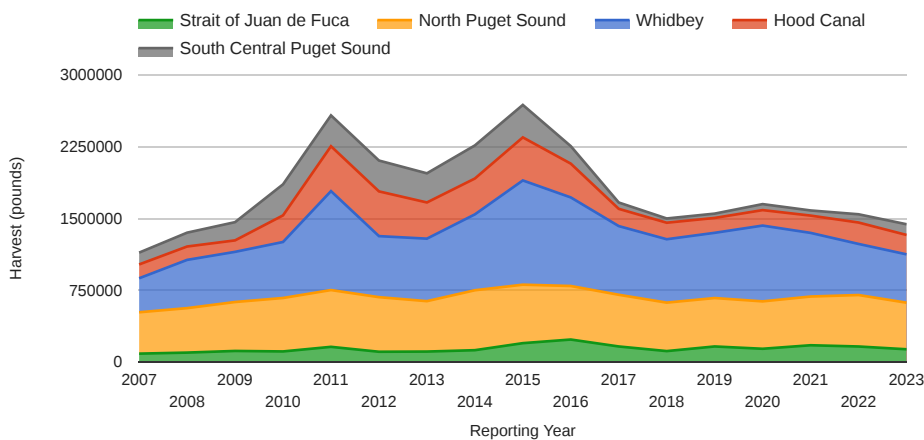
09/24/2024

Dungeness crab catch for personal use

By: Total Harvest



By: Harvest by Marine Basin



Pounds of Puget Sound Dungeness crab harvested for personal use each year by marine basin and across Puget Sound. Each marine basin contains one or more Puget Sound Marine Areas (MA): Strait of Juan de Fuca (MA 4, 5, and 6), North Puget Sound (MA 7), Whidbey (MA 8-1 and 8-2), Hood Canal (MA 9 and 12), and South Central Puget Sound (MA 10, 11, and 13).

## Key Vital Sign Indicator Results

- Crabbing is one of Puget Sound’s most popular noncommercial fisheries. Each year over 200,000 people purchase a Puget Sound Dungeness crab endorsement card, which is required to harvest crab for personal use.
- Between 2007 and 2023, harvest for personal use peaked in 2015. That year crabbers caught nearly 2.7 million pounds of Dungeness crab across Puget Sound. Harvest has since declined and in 2023 crabbers caught approximately 1.4 million pounds.
- Most of the annual harvest comes from two marine basins: North Puget Sound which includes Marine Area 7 (covering the San Juan Islands and Bellingham Bay) and the Whidbey Basin which includes Marine Areas 8-1 and 8-2 (covering east of Whidbey Island including Skagit Bay and Port Susan).
- Since 2015 an increasing number of harvest closures have been required within South-Central Puget Sound and Hood Canal. As a result, total harvest has declined, and the progress of this indicator is determined to be “Getting Worse”.
- In 2018 Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife and Tribal Co-Managers closed Marine Areas 11 and 13 in the South-Central Puget Sound Basin to any harvest. The closures were in response to continued declines in the Dungeness crab population. Marine Area 11 has reopened to harvest on a limited basis since 2020. Limited harvest quotas have been in place in Marine Area 10 (Seattle-Bremerton area) from 2018 through 2022. Marine Area 12 (Hood Canal) – South of Ayock Point has been closed since 2019. Marine Area 12 south of Ayock Point and Marine Area 13 were closed to recreational crabbing for both summer and winter 2023. Marine Area 10 and Marine Area 11 were closed to recreational crabbing for only winter 2023.
- See a map showing the estimated annual Dungeness crab catch for the [11 Puget Sound Marine Areas](#).

## CONTRIBUTING PARTNERS



Washington  
Department of  
**FISH &  
WILDLIFE**

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