Recreational Fishing Licenses

Recreational fishing is part of the lifestyle of Puget Sound. For generations, residents of Puget Sound and our many visitors have enjoyed fishing in the Sound and along its numerous rivers and streams. Recreational fishing provides an opportunity to enjoy the outdoors and is part of the lifestyle of Puget Sound. Today, because of the decline in some populations of fish, recreational fishing is closely managed to allow recreational fishing without harming individual species or stocks that need protection. Our long term vision, as recovery proceeds, is to restore the ecosystem and health of Puget Sound to ensure sustainable, ongoing recreational fishing.

Photo Credit: WSDOT

Recreational Fishing License Sales

Recreational fishing license sales are being tracked as an indicator of Puget Sound's overall health and the prosperity and quality of life for the people in the region. This indicator was adopted without setting specific 2020 targets because annual goals are set through seperate regulatory processes.

Staff are considering including this parameter in the Quality of Life Index that is under development.

Recreational Fishing and Crabbing Permits for the Puget Sound
1999-2000 Season through 2019-2020 Season

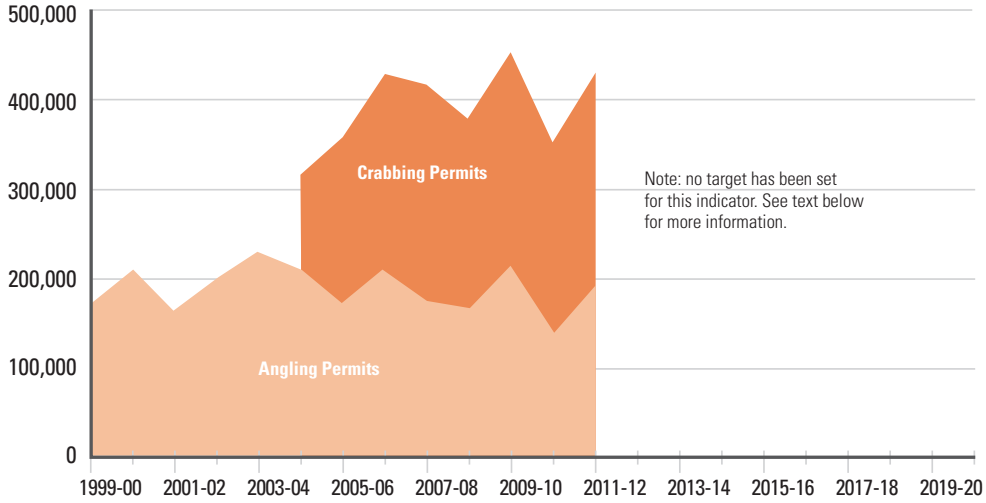

Figure1. Fishing licenses: Number of saltwater or combination license holders that fished or intended to fish in Puget Sound, as estimated by the Dedicated Funds telephone survey conducted after the end of the license year. License years run April 1 through March 31.

Crabbing licenses: Number of shellfish-only license holders that purchased a Puget Sound Crab endorsement. Available since 2004-05, when the Washington State Legislature created the Puget Sound Dungeness crab endorsement, which allows data to be collected.

Source: Catch Record Card Data, Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife, Washington Interactive License Database (WILD) Dedicated Fund Telephone Survey