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**Northwest Straits Foundation and Snohomish County Marine Resources  
Committee**  
**Educating Crabbers on Opening Weekend**

*Instructional videos, information and resources can be found online to help reduce the loss of crab pots.*

EVERETT, Wash., June 28, 2017– The Northwest Straits Initiative is educating crabbers to make sure their crab pot is not one of the estimated 12,000 lost in Puget Sound every year. Lost crab pots continue to capture crab with no one to harvest them; resulting in over 180,000 Dungeness crab killed each year. That is a lot of wasted crab not making it to the dinner table.

Lost crab pots can often be prevented by following the Northwest Straits' checklist:

- Avoid marine transit and ferry lanes.
- Check tides and currents; avoid crabbing during strong tidal changes and currents.
- Make buoys more visible, add a second buoy or stick and flag.
- Avoid being cut by passing boats by using a weighted line to sink below the surface.
- Weight the pot so it does not move in high currents or tidal changes.
- Use 1/3 more line than water depth to allow for changes in tides and currents.
- Secure lid and escape panels with biodegradable cotton escape cord. This allows crabs to escape from lost pots after the cord degrades.
- Stay with the pot, a watched pot will bring home more crab.

This checklist can help ensure crab pots are set correctly and remain in place until harvest time. Crabbers can also find instructional videos, helpful apps, and additional resources to help keep their crab pots safe online at [www.derelectgear.org](http://www.derelectgear.org).

Crabbers can be on the lookout for volunteers with the Snohomish County Marine Resources Committee at local boat launches on opening weekend of July 1 – 2, 2017. Volunteers will be providing educational materials, gauges for measuring crabs, and will be available to discuss how to correctly set crab pots, so fisherman can catch more crab. Snohomish County and the MRC's goal is no more lost crab pots in Puget Sound and for everyone to have a successful day on the water.

Relevant URLs:

- [www.derelectgear.org](http://www.derelectgear.org)
- [www.nwstraits.org/our-work/catch-more-crab/](http://www.nwstraits.org/our-work/catch-more-crab/)
- <http://www.snocomrc.org/>

#### **About the Snohomish County Marine Resources Committee**

The Marine Resource Committee's (MRC) goal is to understand, protect, and restore the marine and estuarine ecosystems of the county. Local citizens appointed by County Council use science-based information to develop projects and help shape local and regional marine conservation policy. MRC members work to complement ongoing efforts by both government and non-profit agencies. There are seven MRCs in the Northwest Straits region of the Puget Sound. For more information, visit [www.snocomrc.org](http://www.snocomrc.org).

#### **About Snohomish County Public Works**

The Snohomish County Public Works Department constructs and maintains county roads; controls and manages surface water quantity, quality, and fish habitats; and oversees the recycling and disposal of solid waste. The department's main office is located at 3000 Rockefeller Ave., Everett, WA 98201. For more information about Snohomish County Public Works, visit [www.snohomishcountywa.gov/PublicWorks](http://www.snohomishcountywa.gov/PublicWorks).

#### **About the Northwest Straits Foundation**

The Northwest Straits Foundation is the non-profit partner in the Northwest Straits Initiative, a regional marine conservation program authorized by Congress in 1998. Join us on Twitter, Facebook and at <http://nwstraitsfoundation.org/>.

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