

# Fish and Shellfish Consumption Advisory for Commencement Bay Nov. 9, 2018



## Unsafe concentrations of pollutants.

Pollution from past commercial and residential practices in and around Commencement Bay left a legacy of contamination. This resulted in unsafe concentrations of pollutants like mercury and polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) in the water, sediment, bottom-feeding fish and shellfish. Excessive exposure to these chemicals has been shown to cause nerve damage, cancer and birth defects. Because of this risk, Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department issued health advisories to minimize exposure.

In 1985, we issued a fish consumption advisory, recommending people not eat bottom-feeding fish, clams or crab from the waterways. Despite a tremendous amount of cleanup, the advisory remains in effect until samples show contaminants in fish are at safe levels.

## Washington State Department of Health expanded our advisory.

See the current advisory and recommendations at

<https://www.doh.wa.gov/CommunityandEnvironment/Food/Fish/Advisories/PugetSound/MarineArea11>

- **Commencement Bay Waterways (Thea Foss, Blair and Hylebos Waterways)**—Do not eat crab, shellfish or bottom-feeding fish.
- **Inner Commencement Bay**—Limit flatfish\* to two servings per month.
- **Outer Commencement Bay** (boundary between Boathouse Marina and Brown's Point)—Limit flatfish to one serving per week or four servings per month.
- **Commencement Bay other than the Waterways**—No more than four servings of Dungeness crab meat per month and no more than two servings of Dungeness crab butter per month.

\* Flatfish include English Sole, Starry Flounder and Rock Sole.

These guidelines don't include migratory fish like salmon. Eating salmon up to three meals a week, or 12 servings per month is acceptable. Limit servings of Chinook and Blackmouth salmon to two per month.

If you eat the recommended amount of servings per week or month, don't eat any additional fish, shellfish or crab that week from Puget Sound or the grocery store.

## Next Steps

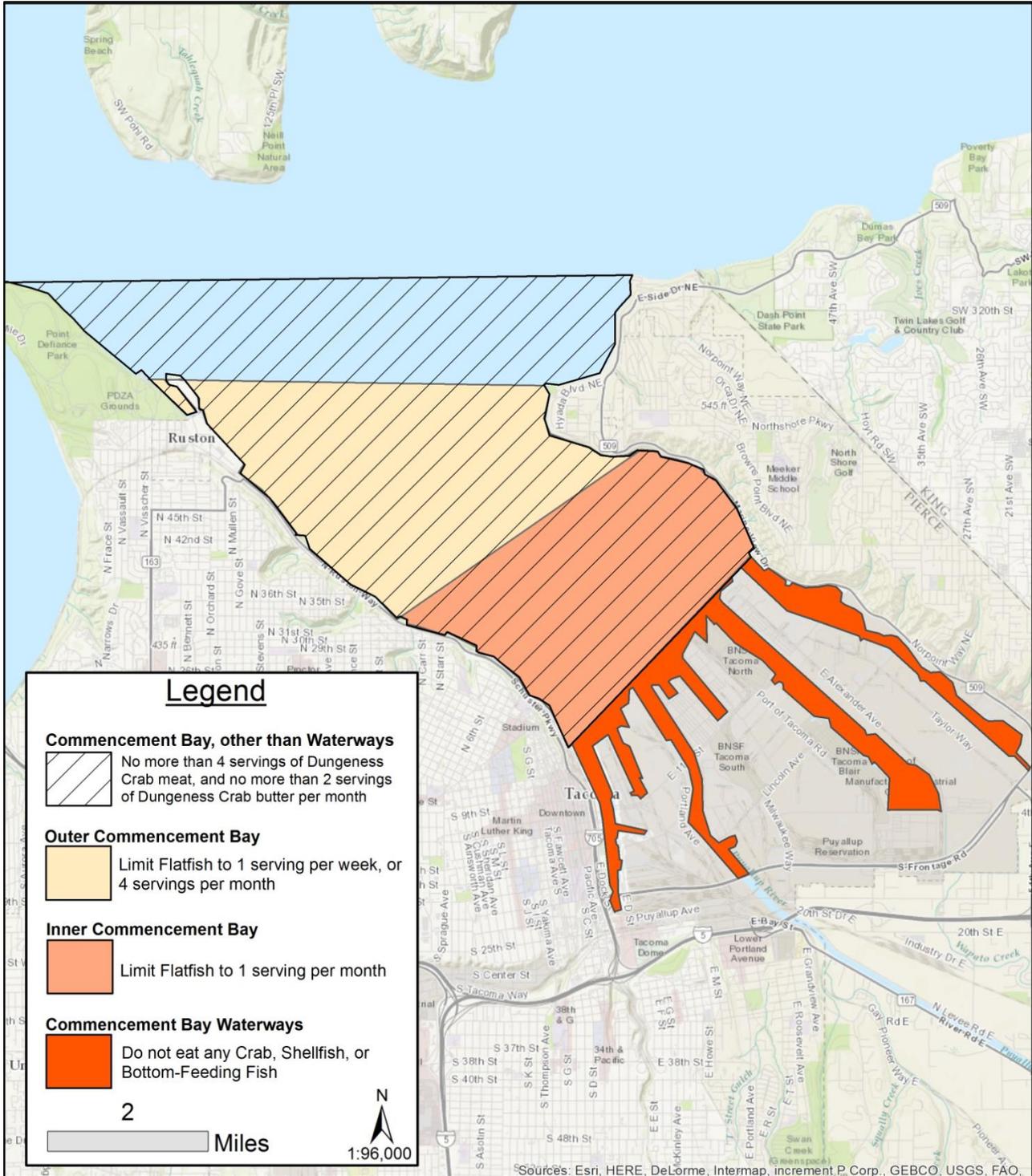
The Environmental Protection Agency plans to sample fish this summer to see if contaminant concentrations have changed.

## Questions?

Contact us at (253) 798-6470 or [EHSurfaceWater-Shellfish@tpchd.org](mailto:EHSurfaceWater-Shellfish@tpchd.org)

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