



# Puget Sound Vessel Sewage No Discharge Zone

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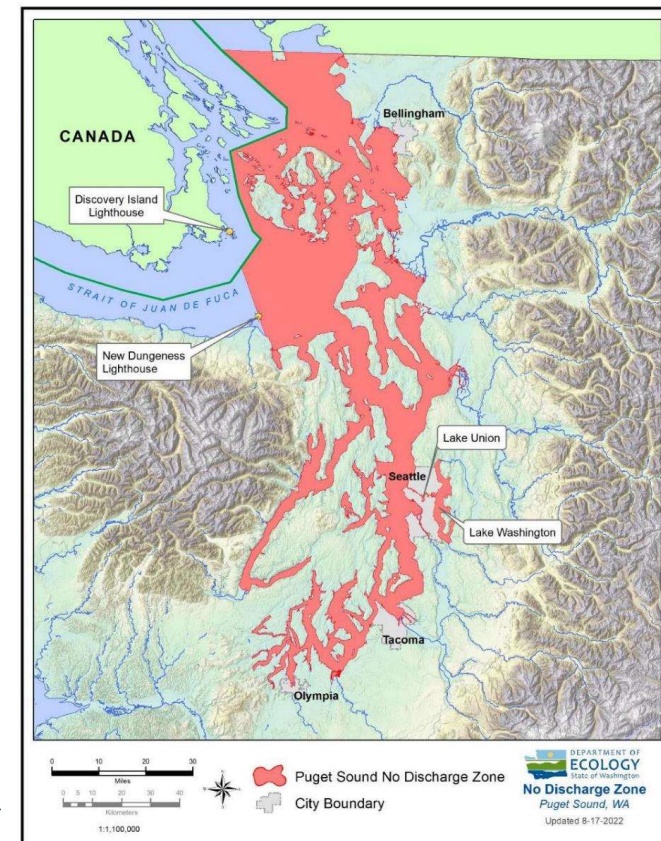
# Topics

- Puget Sound NDZ Basics
- Education & Outreach
- Compliance/Enforcement Strategy
- Impacts on Puget Sound



# Puget Sound NDZ Rule

- NDZs allowed under Section 312 of Clean Water Act
- Vessel sewage (untreated or “treated”) cannot be discharged within designated area
- Puget Sound NDZ Rule became effective May 10, 2018 (WAC 173-228)
- Relied on availability of proper sewage disposal options



# What's in WAC 173-228?



## Chapter 173-228 WAC

### VESSEL SEWAGE NO DISCHARGE ZONES

#### WAC Sections

<a href="#">HTML</a>	<a href="#">PDF</a>	<b>173-228-010</b>	Purpose.
<a href="#">HTML</a>	<a href="#">PDF</a>	<b>173-228-020</b>	Definitions.
<a href="#">HTML</a>	<a href="#">PDF</a>	<b>173-228-030</b>	Designated no discharge zones.
<a href="#">HTML</a>	<a href="#">PDF</a>	<b>173-228-040</b>	Vessel sewage management in no discharge zones.
<a href="#">HTML</a>	<a href="#">PDF</a>	<b>173-228-050</b>	Effective.
<a href="#">HTML</a>	<a href="#">PDF</a>	<b>173-228-060</b>	Enforcement.

## WAC 173-228-040

Vessel sewage must be managed in no discharge zones.

(1) Vessels with installed and operable toilets must be in compliance with 40 C.F.R. Part 140 with the ability to hold or stop discharges of sewage while in a no discharge zone.

(2) Vessels with marine sanitation devices must secure the devices to prohibit the discharge of sewage per 33 C.F.R. 159.7(b) while in no discharge zone waters.

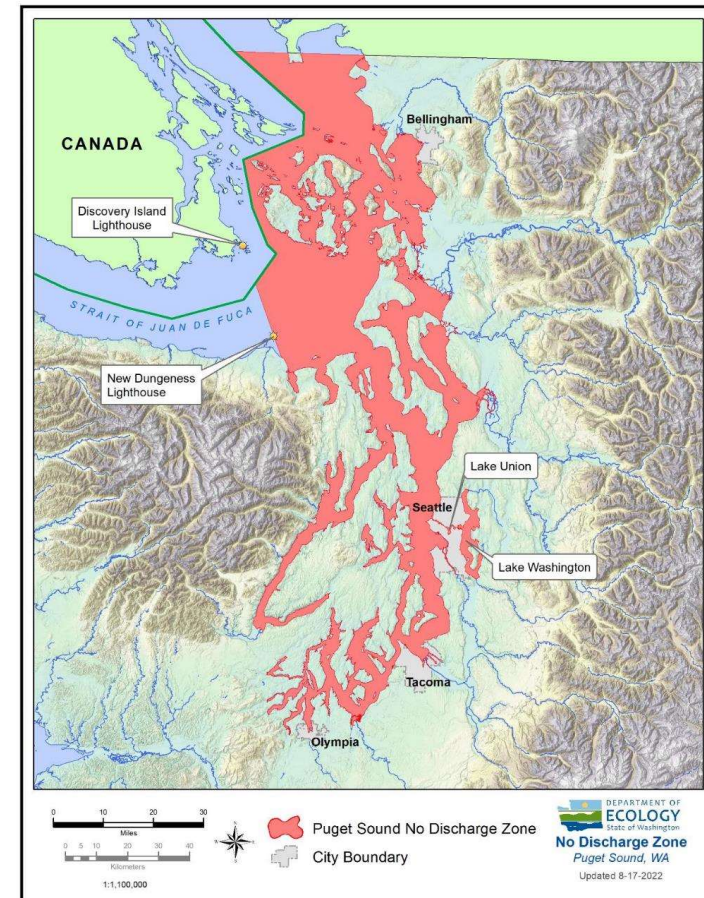
(3) Vessels without installed toilets must dispose of any collected sewage from portable toilets or other containment devices at facilities in a manner that complies with state law.



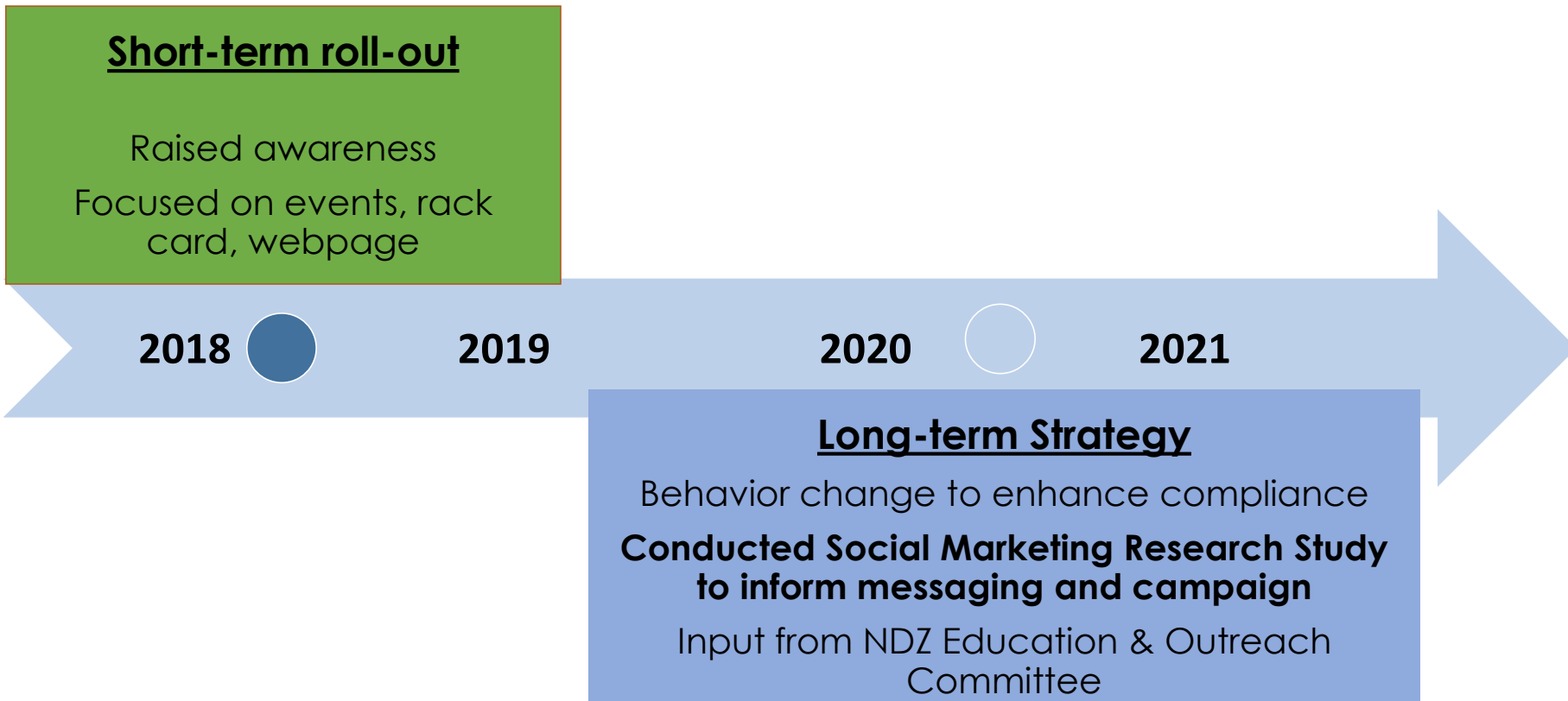


# Puget Sound NDZ Rule

- Rule allows for delayed implementation until May 10, 2023 for 4 vessel types:
  - Tugboats
  - Commercial fishing vessels
  - Small cruise ships <249 overnight passengers
  - NOAA research and survey vessels
- Does not affect greywater discharges
- Exemption for public vessels actively involved in emergency, safety, security, or related ops



# NDZ Outreach - Then and Now



# Social Marketing Research Study Findings – What to pursue



## Address barriers by explaining:

- What the NDZ means for boaters
- The area it covers
- Why it matters



## Best “why it matters” messages:

1. Detrimental effects of human sewage on shellfish, swimming areas, and sensitive water bodies
2. Warnings about consequences if caught illegally discharging



Many boaters support more compliance and enforcement.

Incorporate into messaging.



Awareness is already high but boaters want tools and reminders.

Multi-media approach  
Place-based visuals  
Pumpout Nav app

# Implementation

Multi-media



**PUMP OUT, DON'T DUMP OUT! It's the Law**  
(WAC 173-228)  
[Click here to see the NO DISCHARGE ZONE](#)  
AND DOWNLOAD THE FREE PUMPOUT NAV APP

Training & resources



Placed-based signage



Y-valve Education Pilot Program



NDZ in Pumpout Nav





# Compliance/Enforcement Strategy

## 1. Reporting discharges

Vessel sewage discharges in NDZ reported to Ecology's Environmental Report Tracking System (ERTS) - available 24/7 by phone and email

## 2. Three-strike policy

Starts with education, escalates to warning letter, violation, and fine

## 3. Partnerships

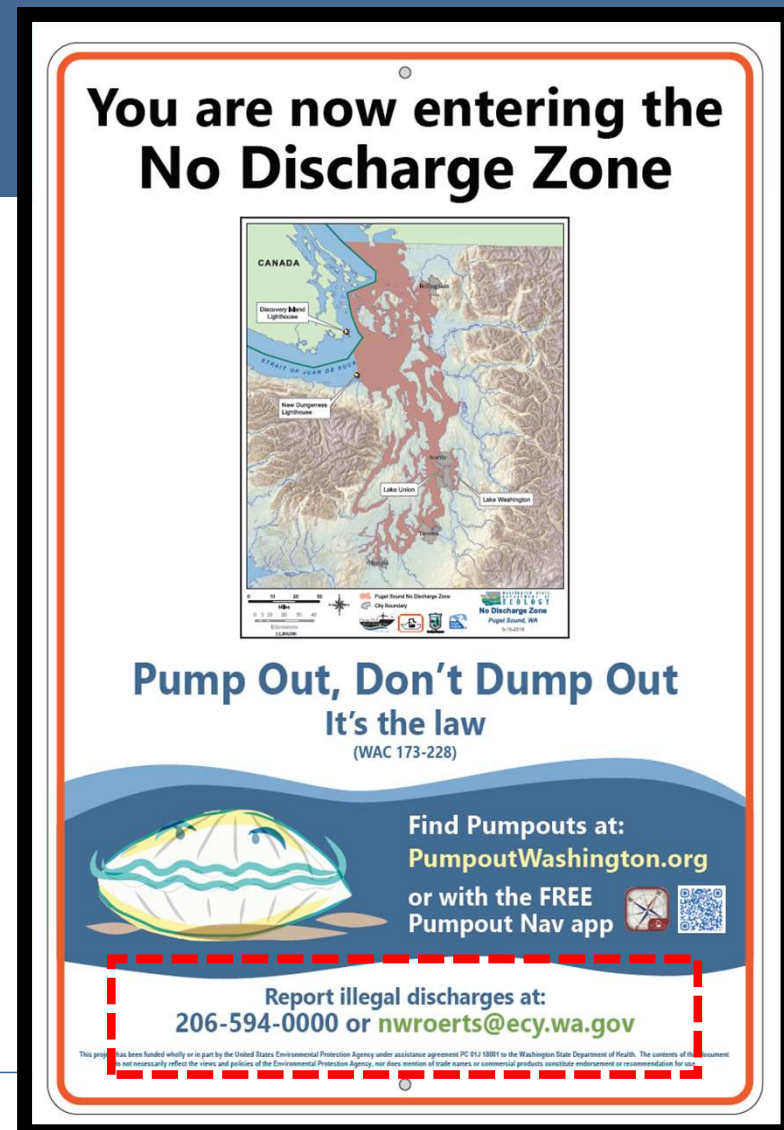
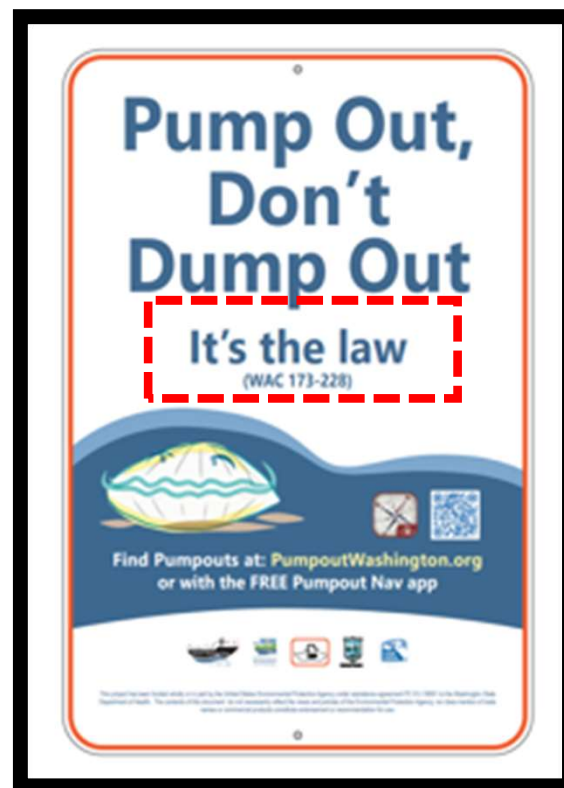
Essential due to different resources and ability to board. WAC 173-228-060 allows other federal, state and local agencies enforcement authority.

## 4. Education/outreach/training

Educate partners about NDZ rule and how to report illegal discharges.



# Materials Incorporate Enforcement Info



# Impacts on Puget Sound - Why it matters

- The NDZ is one of many strategies to improve water quality in Puget Sound.
- Vessel sewage discharges account for a small portion of the total pollutant mass entering Puget Sound, but the impact is disproportionately large
  - Vessel blackwater is **more concentrated** than POTW discharges
  - Vessels are mobile. Discharge could occur **directly over or near sensitive resources**

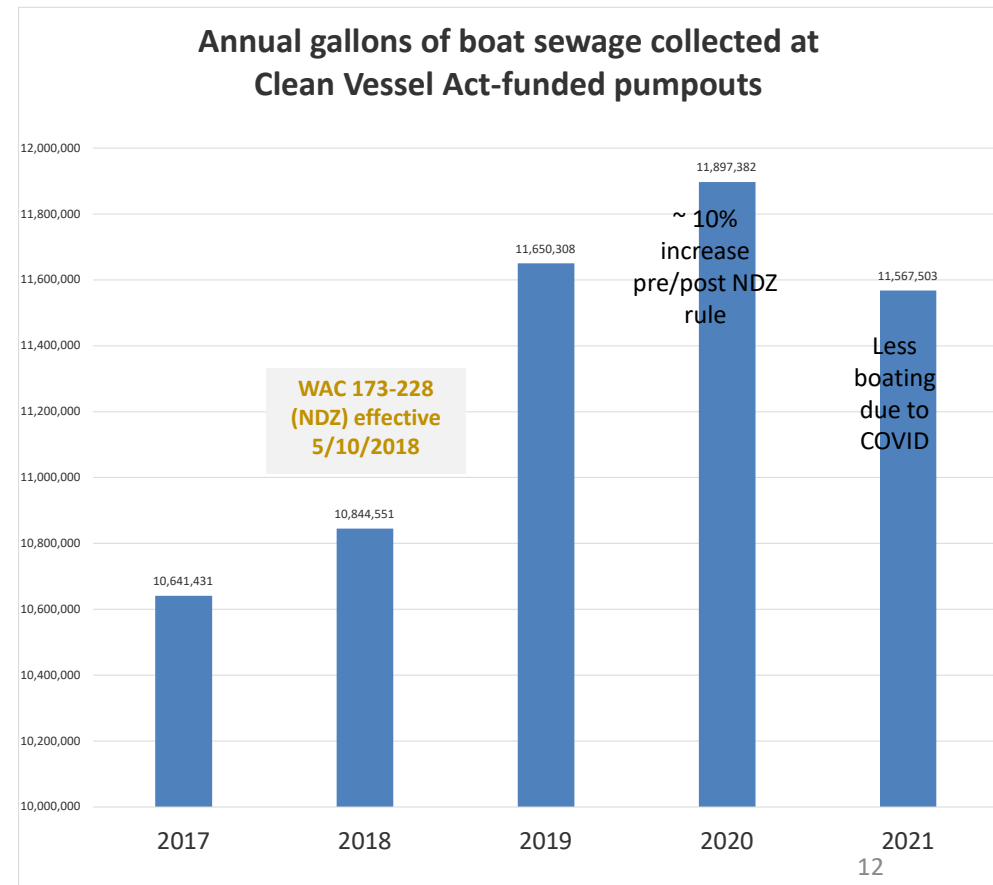
## ■ Impacts:

Economy	Recreation	Public Health	Water Quality
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Commercial shellfish harvest closures</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Swimming beach closures</li><li>• Rec. shellfish harvest closures</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Pathogen-contaminated shellfish (e.g., Norovirus)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Coliform</li><li>• Nutrient enrichment</li></ul>



# Outcomes

- Establishment of the Puget Sound NDZ led to the re-opening or upgrade of **over 650 acres** of commercial shellfish harvest beds





# Takeaways/Conclusion

- Establishing Puget Sound NDZ took time and information. Implementation continues to evolve.
- Outreach strategies should address barriers to compliance. Messages should focus on what you want boaters to do with sewage (pumpout) and why it's important.
- Collaborate with partners.
- Implementation challenges exist
  - Transitory nature of vessels
  - Commercial vessel retrofits
  - Difficult to determine effectiveness, when it's one of many strategies to improve water quality in Puget Sound



# Thanks for your time!

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