

# An Investment in Trust: Communication in the Commercial Fishing and Fisheries Management Communities

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## What We Did

- n Semi-structured ethnographic interviews
- n We interviewed members of two communities:
  - Commercial Fishing Community
  - Fisheries Management Community
- n 4 regions
  - North Coast
  - Mid Coast
  - South Coast
  - Urban Centers

# What We Did



- n We looked at several communication strategies
  - Face to face communication
  - Written communication
  - Communication via electronic media
- n And various tools within each strategy
  - Within face to face, tools like
    - word of mouth
    - liaisons
    - meetings
  - Within written...
    - newsletters, etc.
  - Within electronic...
    - the Internet and WWWeb

# What We Did



- n We learned a lot from participants
  - about what is working
  - what is not working
  - and what could work better by **small but important** adjustments
    - for example, the Internet works fairly well but only with people who have access or use it!
  
- n People you know, work with, or constituents taught us a lot...and this is captured in the publication.

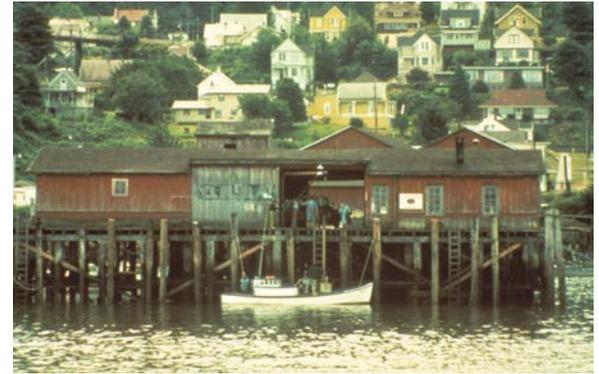


*“There aren’t any villains. Everybody’s trying to do the right thing. Sometimes we don’t know what it is, and sometimes we don’t have the tools, and sometimes it’s just a difference of opinion.”*

## What We Learned From Participants

- n We learned about both communities.
- n We learned about the issues that influence communication.
- n We learned about how these things ultimately affect the relationship between both communities.

# Fishing community: competition and distrust



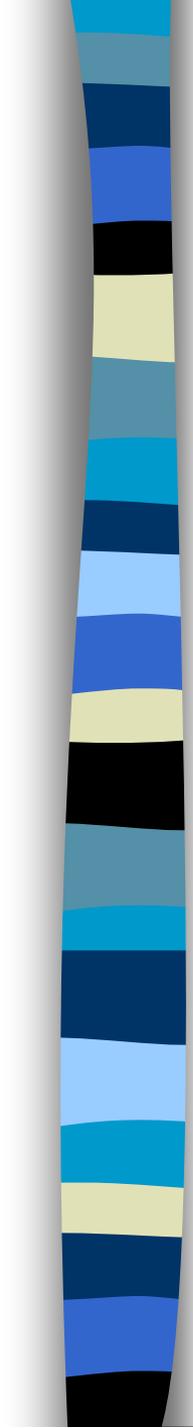
- n “Fishing industry” actually comprises many different and often conflicting interest groups based on gear types, fisheries, geographic locations, and other factors
- n Most communication in the fishing community takes place within, and not across, these interest groups
- n Processors and gear suppliers have unique communication needs and concerns
- n Reach the entire community (crew, on-shore partners)



# Fisheries

## management community: overworked and under-funded

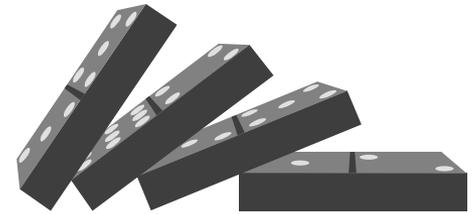
- n Sincere interest to communicate
- n The lack of time and funding, overwork, lawsuits, and bureaucracy are major constraints
- n There is a lack of communication and understanding about what agencies are and do
  - public views NMFS and the Council as the same



# We Learned About the Issues that Influence Communication...

and how they affect the relationship between these communities.

- n Information needs are directly related to the receiver's (listener/reader) priorities
- n Trust and power
- n Communication skills
  - language differences
  - listening
  - willingness to change
- n Cultural differences and Stereotyping
- n Representation
- n Data



# Why Invest in Communication... and Ultimately Trust?



- n Communication is not the “sliver bullet” but...
- n Research participants shared over 50 “actions to improve...” (page 64-67) that could be put into use
  - on an individual level
  - on a community level
- n Plus other helpful suggestions scattered throughout the publication:
  - listening skills (p. 13)
  - working with liaisons (p. 44)
  - holding effective meetings (p. 46)
  - using the Internet (p. 56)

# Why Invest?



- n Pay now or pay later
  - hot topics deserve **adequate, effective** communication
  - invest time now (build trust) to save time later
- n Improvements in communication and trust can
  - improve understanding and confidence
  - improve how meetings function
  - get more buy-in
  - save time because you don't have to fix things later
- n This is not extra work. Rather, improvements in strategies and tools used that can make a difference in the
  - work we do,
  - the products we produce,
  - and the relationships we have (or will have later)