

GEODUCK ENHANCEMENT IN BRITISH COLUMBIA: A CASE STUDY OF INCENTIVES FOR ENHANCEMENT

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The commercial geoduck fishery in British Columbia has been managed by individual quotas since 1989. Individual quotas have fostered a co-operative management approach in the fishery, which is implemented through a non-profit society with membership made up of all licence holders in the fishery. This non-profit society, the Underwater Harvesters Association (UHA), co-manages the fishery with Fisheries and Oceans Canada. The UHA funds scientific research, surveys, monitoring, management, generic marketing and various other activities in support of the fishery and the industry. The UHA has also had a program of wild stock enhancement since 1995. The enhancement program has taken place in the absence of any stock crises and is funded and implemented by the industry.

This paper describes the UHA enhancement program and examines the various indicators of success including estimates of the program's Net Present Value, ratio of cultured juveniles to estimated recruitment from the wild population, and estimated potential number of planted animals in the commercial catch.

Enhancement of wild stocks has the potential to increase production in the wild fishery. Whether or not enhancement is economically viable depends critically on the institutional and policy frameworks to secure access to harvest and to protect harvesters' investment. Because enhancement implies increasing the productivity of a common property resource, differences in management play an important role in determining incentives for self funded versus publicly funded enhancement.

The paper also describes how differences between the Washington State, Alaska and British Columbia geoduck management systems affect incentives for wild geoduck stock enhancement in each of those jurisdictions. Such a comparison is useful because these management systems range from competitive limited entry, to individual quotas, to state auctioned quotas and Tribal self-management.