

# Crab Management Advisory Committee

May 27, 2026



# CMAC Agenda

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- I. CMAC Introductions; Announcements
- II. Approval of minutes from December 3, 2025, meeting
- III. Review 2025/2026 Chesapeake Bay Winter Crab Dredge Survey results
- IV. Review 2025 Virginia harvest data
- V. Public Comment
- VI. Adjournment

# Stock Assessment

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- Passed peer review April 2026
- Final report not yet released
- Update through 2025 expected summer 2026
- Late Summer-Winter 2026: Presentation to CMAC, discuss management response

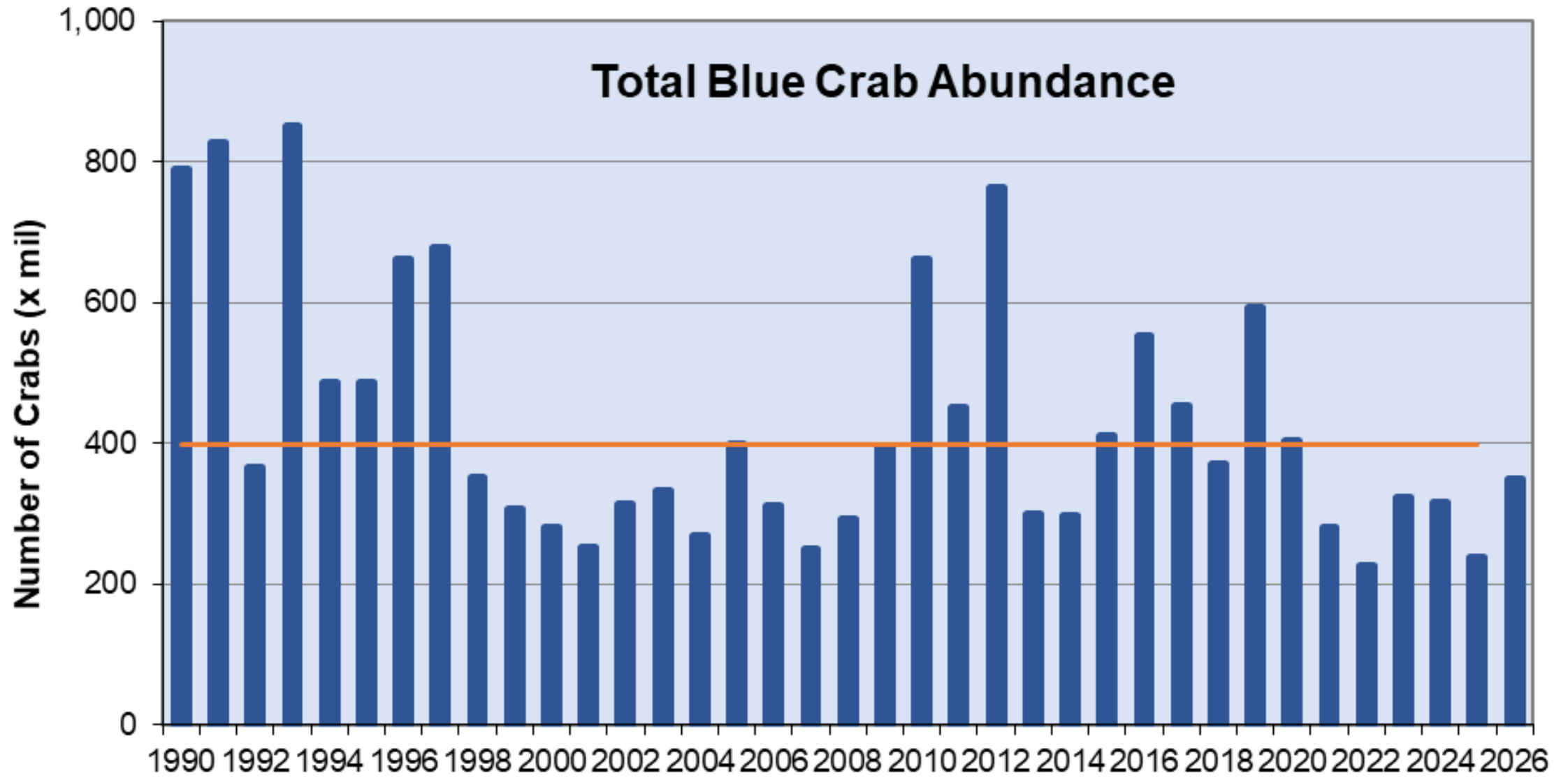
# 2025 Winter Dredge Survey Results

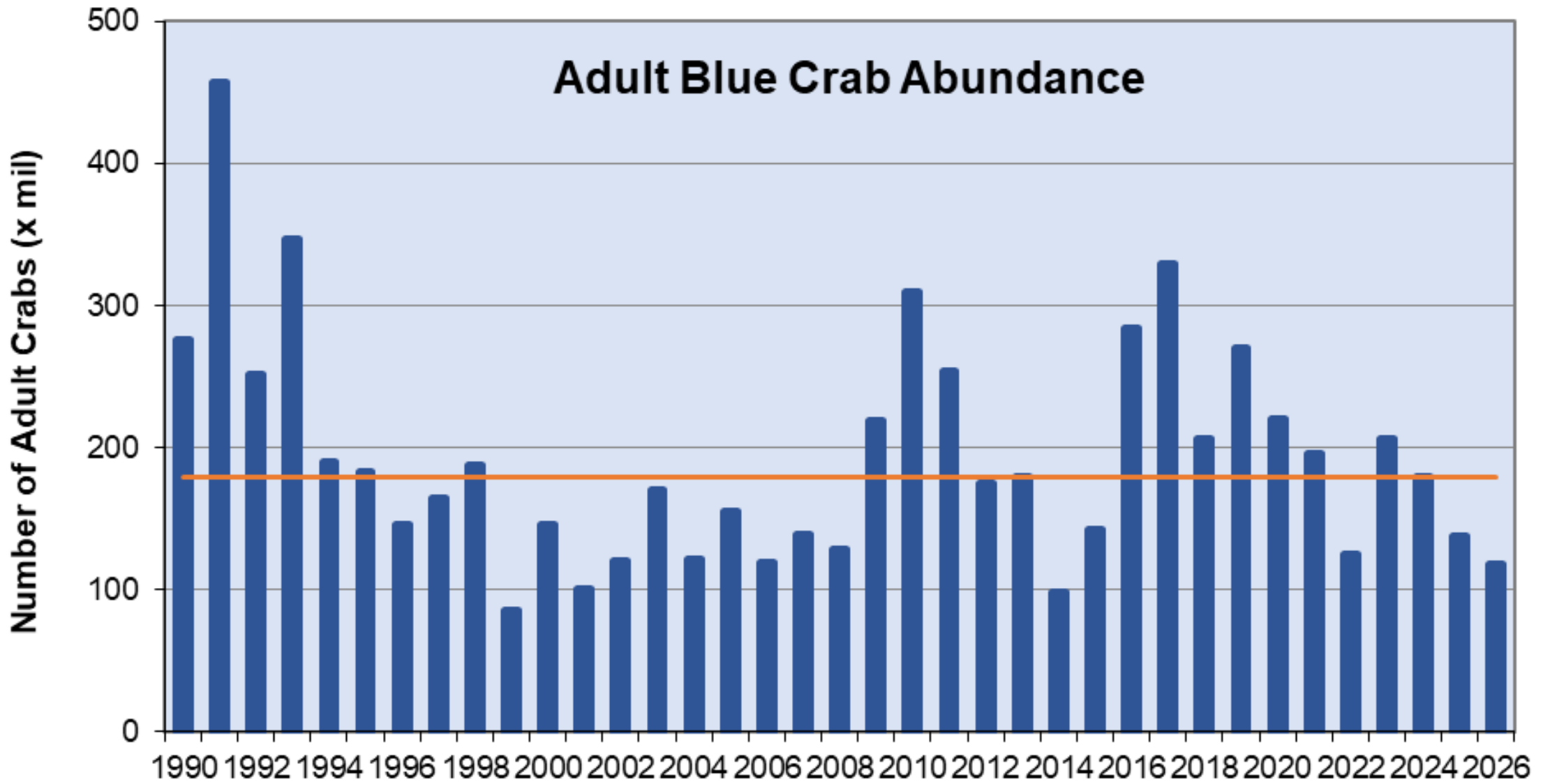


# 2026 Abundance Results

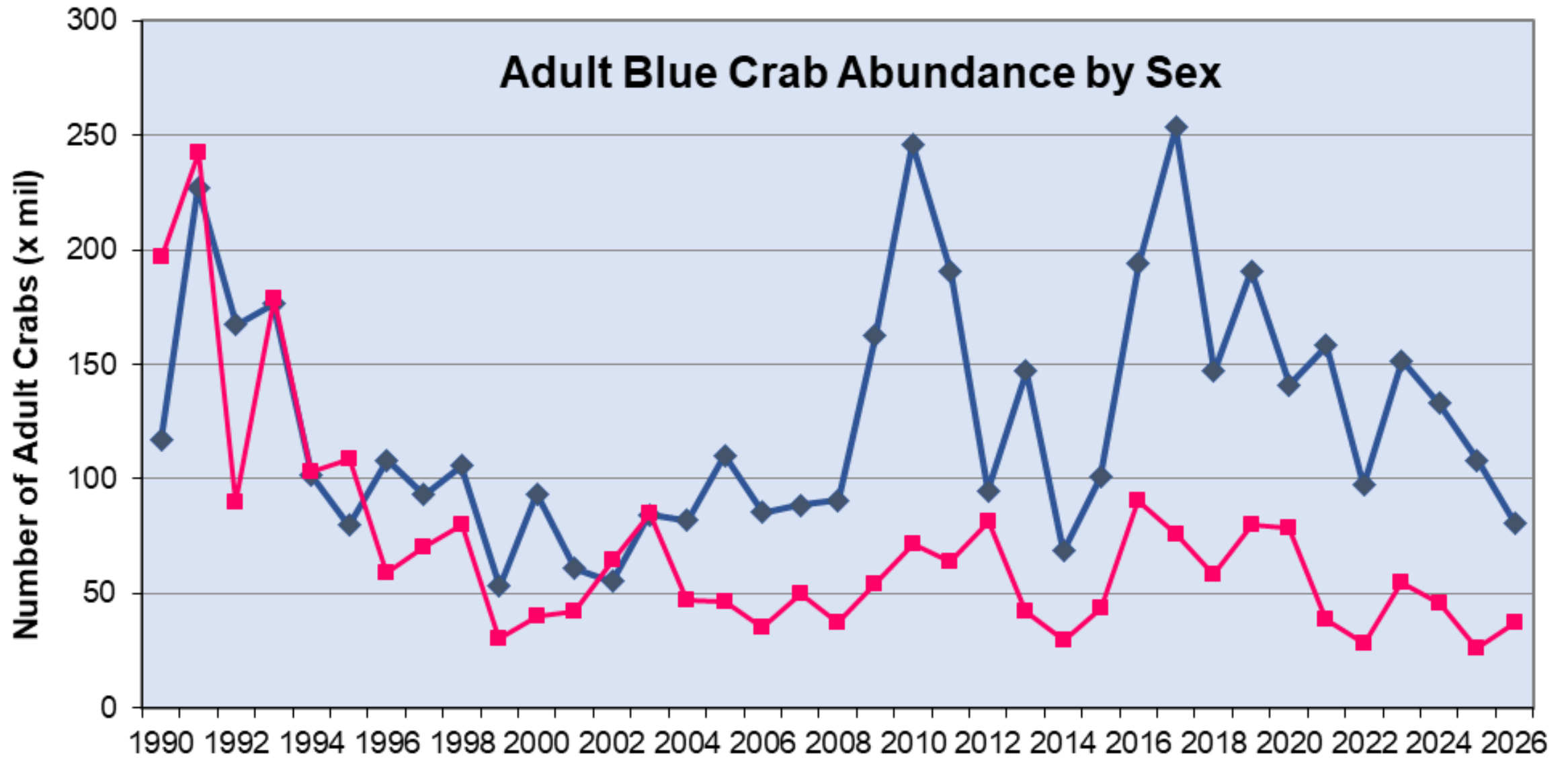
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- Total crab abundance increased 46% to 349 million
  - Ranks 21<sup>st</sup> in 37 years of survey
- Adult female abundance decreased 25% to 81 million
  - Above the abundance threshold of 72 million crabs
  - Below the abundance target of 196 million crabs
- Adult male abundance increased 43% to 37 million
- Juvenile abundance increased 121% to 228 million





## Adult Blue Crab Abundance by Sex

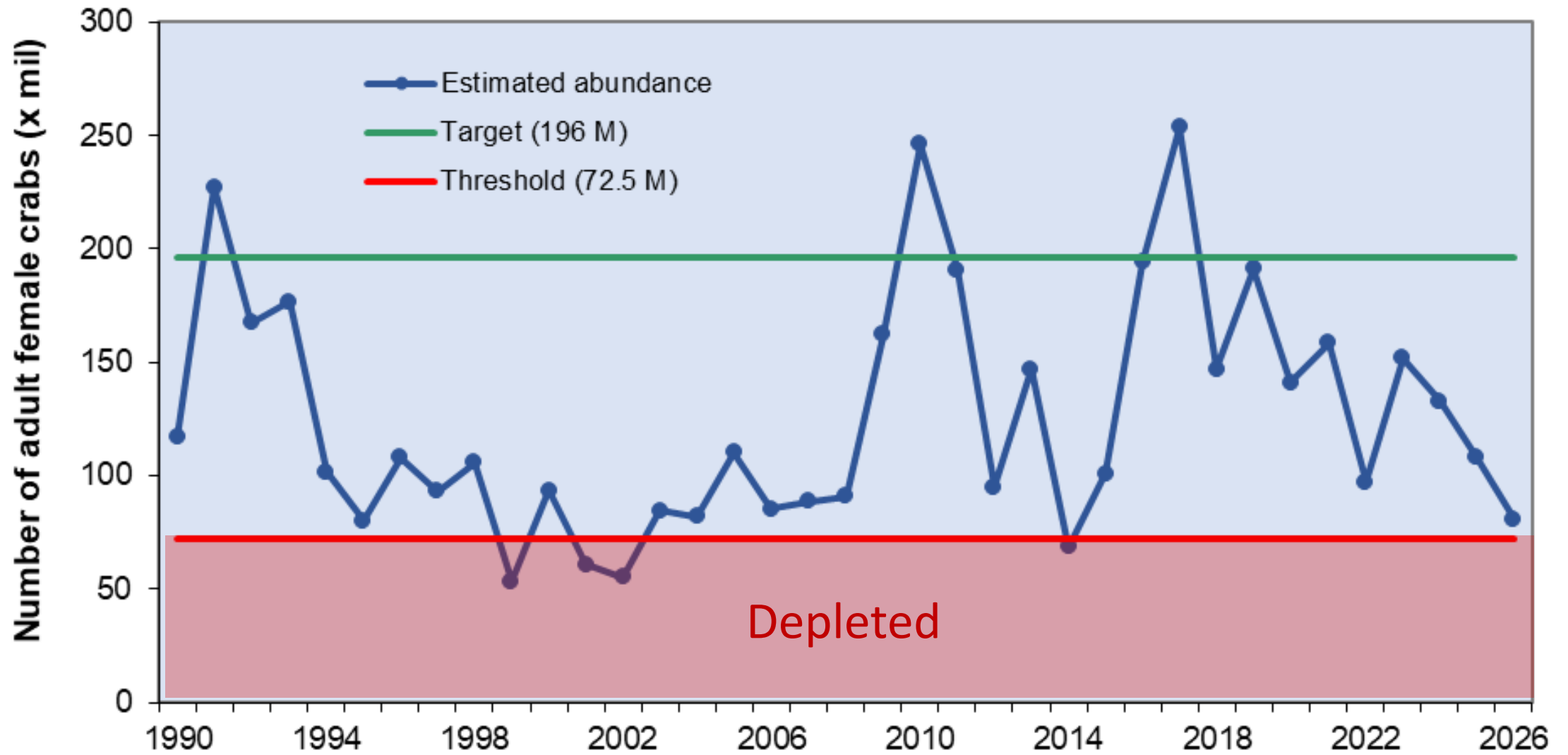


# Overwintering Mortality

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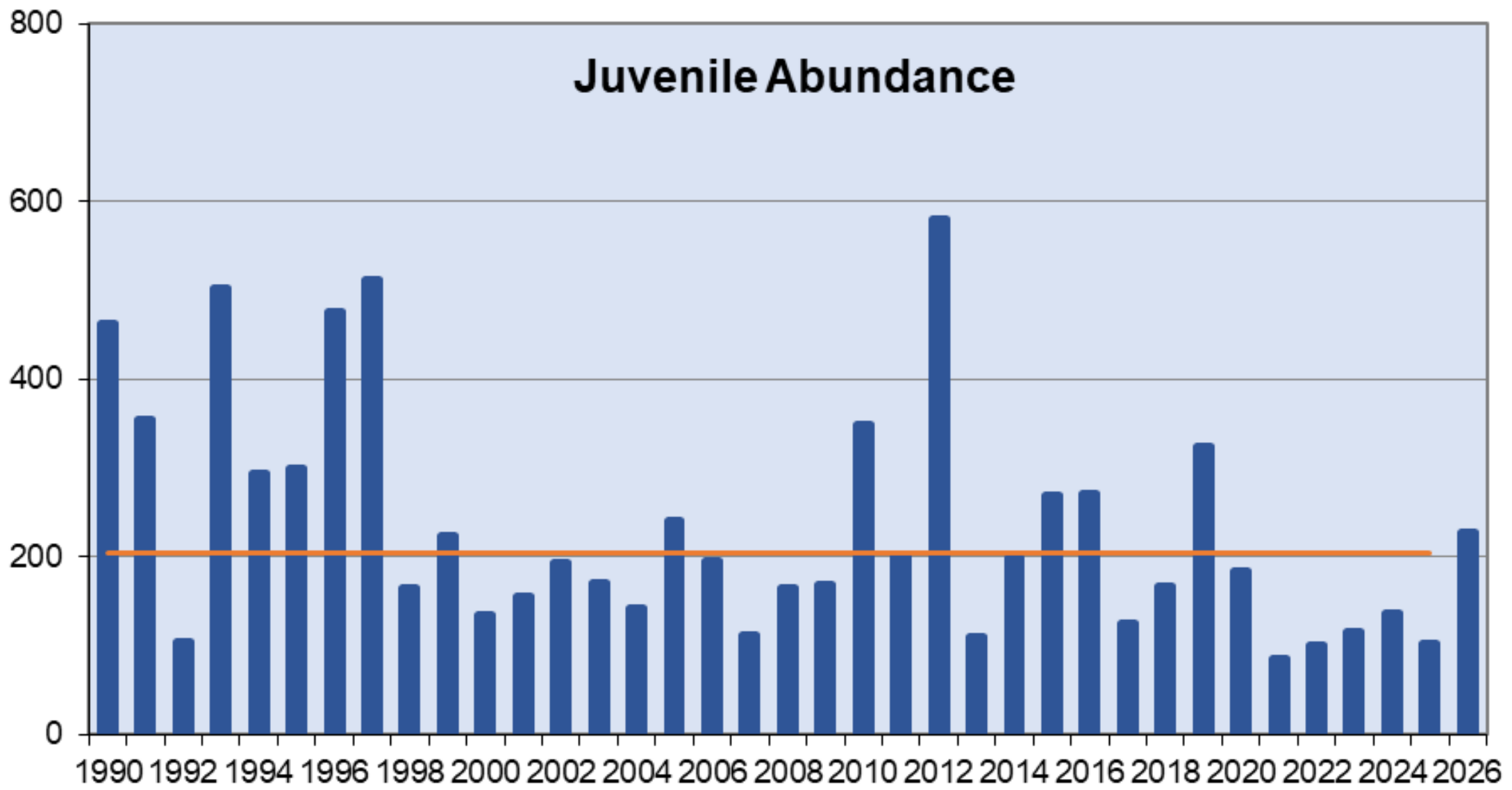
Age/Sex Grouping	1996-2025 Average	2023	2024	2025	2026
All crabs	5.89%	0.24%	1.00%	4.00%	5.17%
Juveniles	1.06%	0.08%	0.80%	0.20%	0.51%
Adult Females	7.23%	0.26%	0.00%	5.90%	11.79%
Adult Males	8.91%	0.71%	5.20%	12.20%	20.50%

# Adult Female Abundance

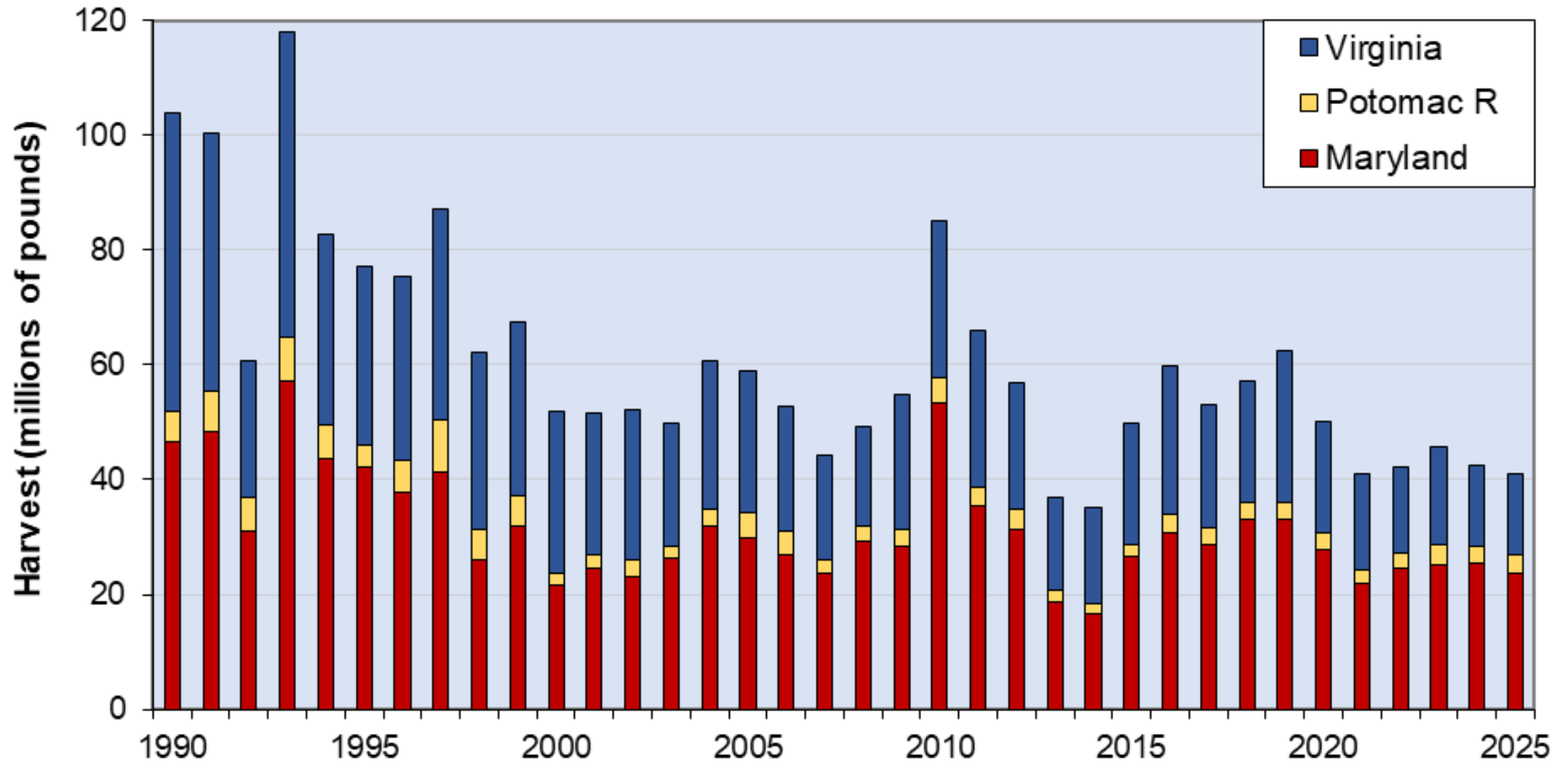


# Juvenile Abundance

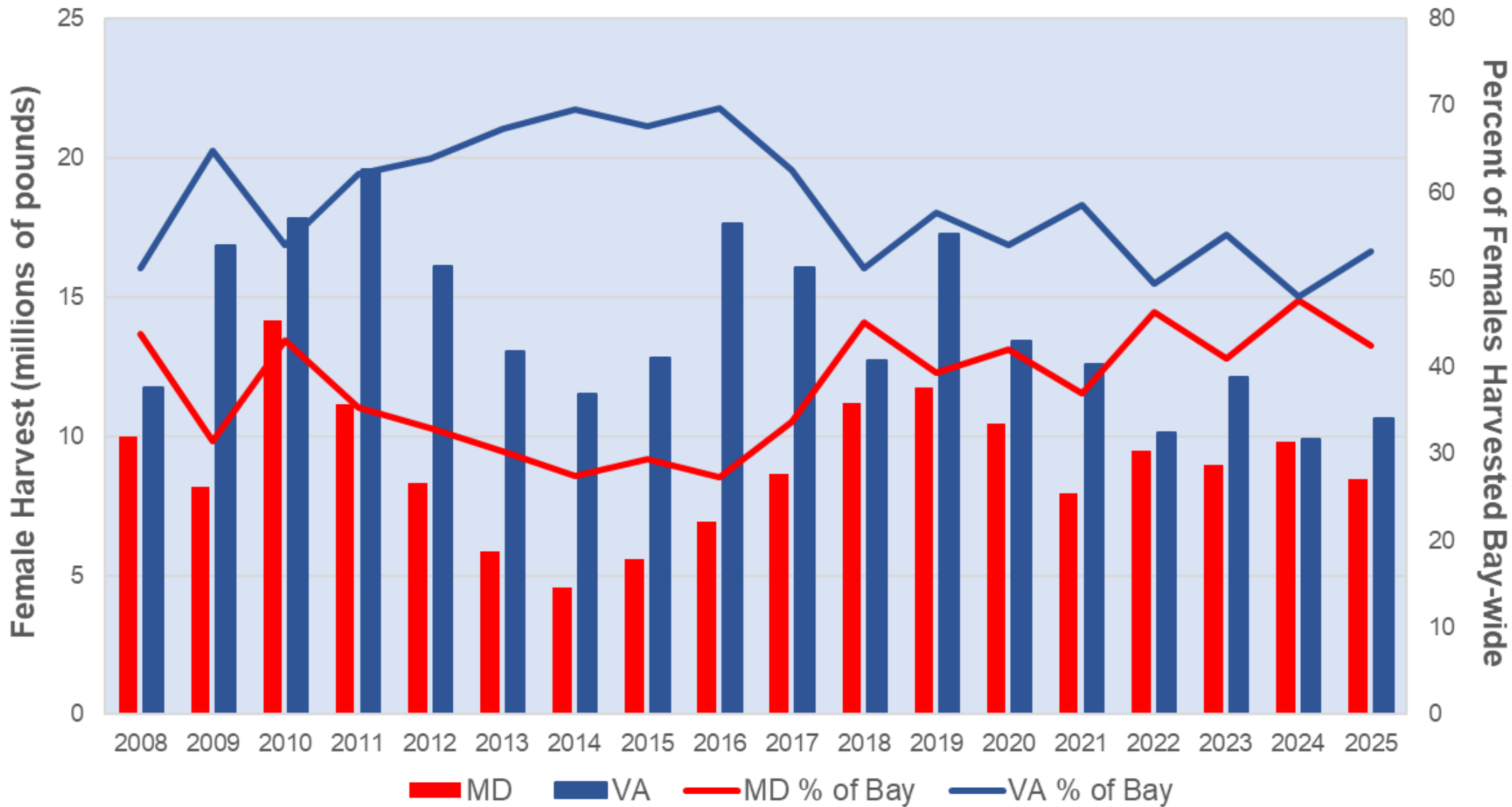
Number of Juvenile Crabs (x mil)



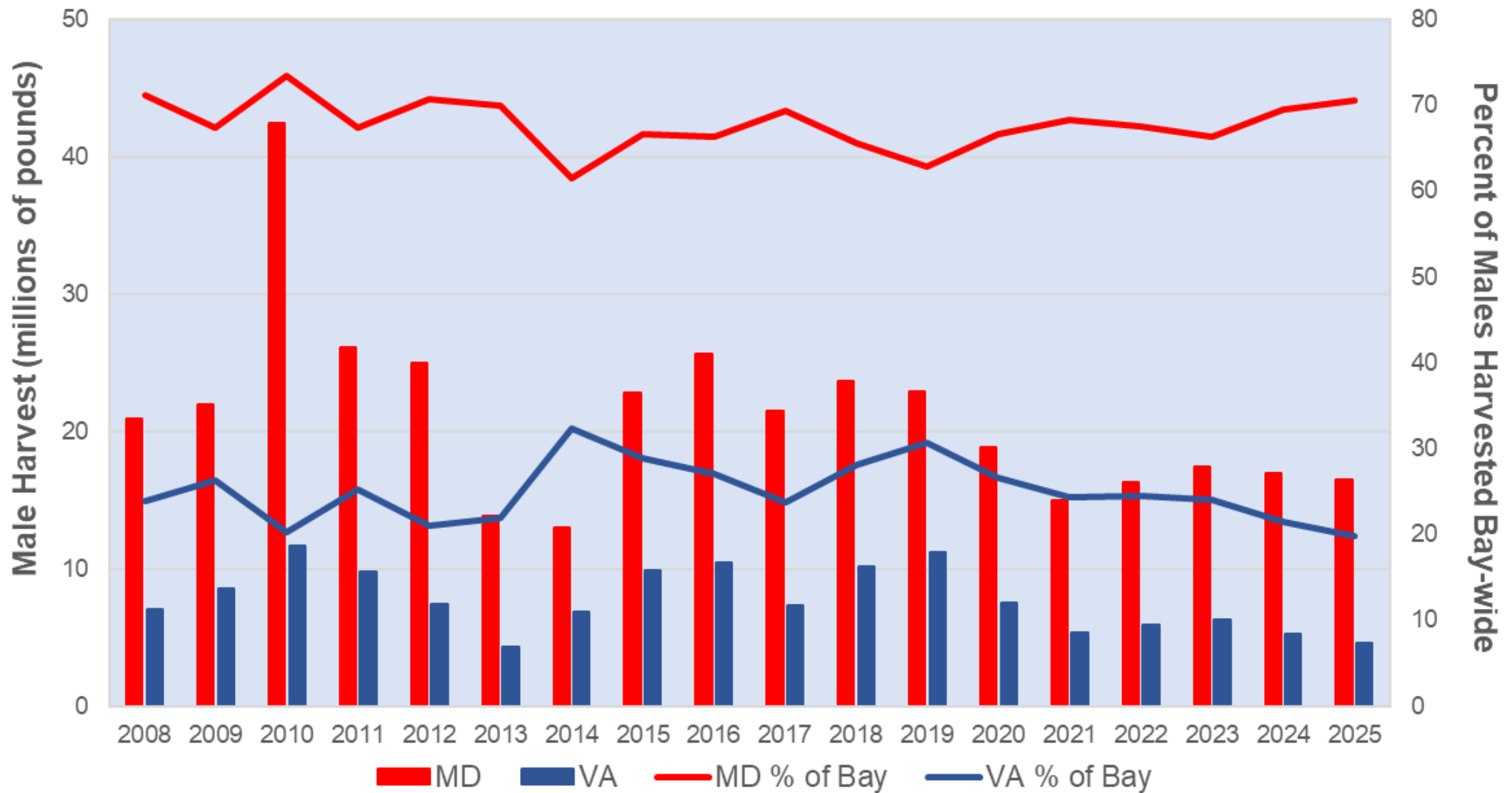
## Bay-wide Commercial Blue Crab Harvest



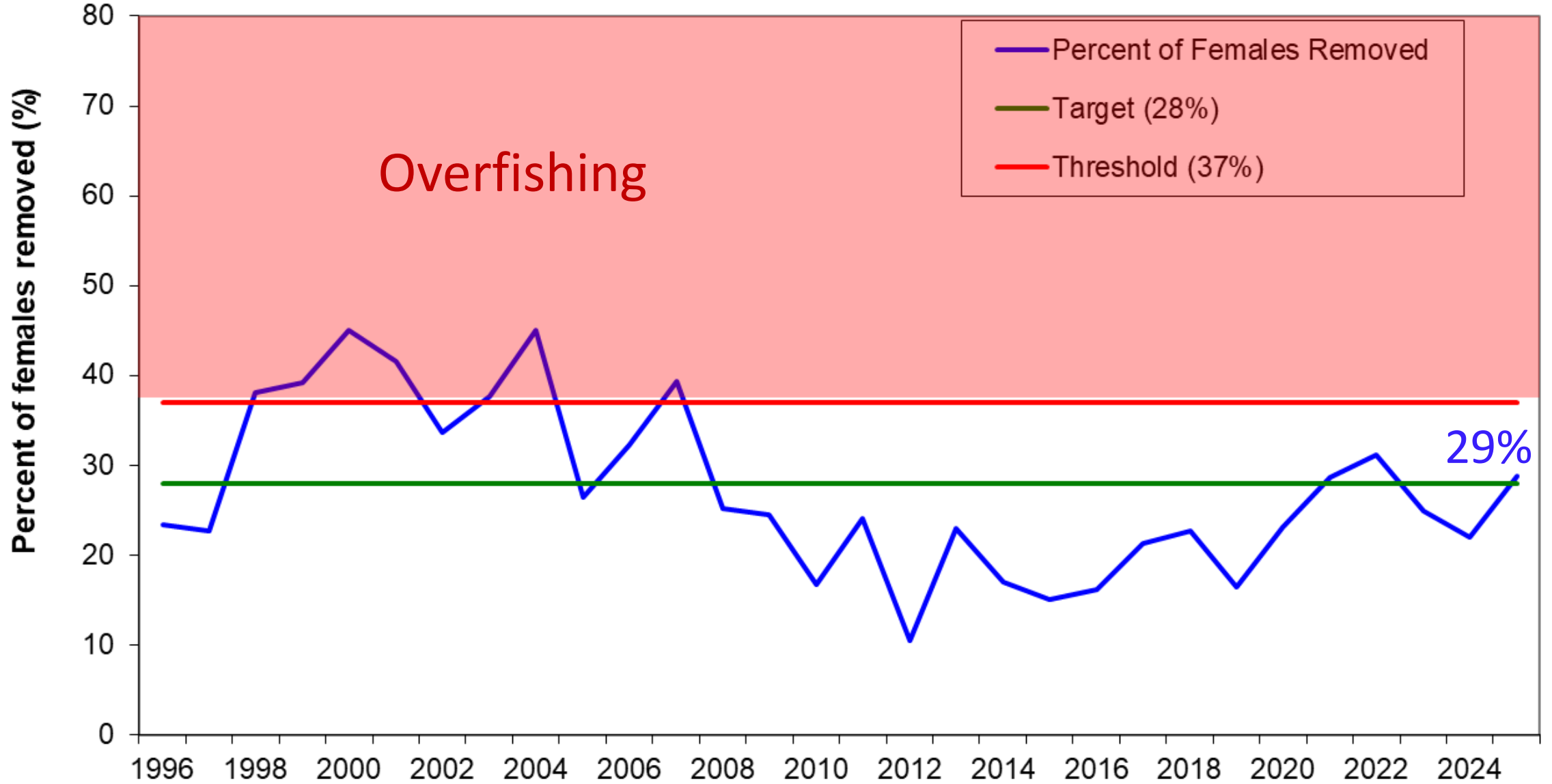
# MD, VA Female Harvest



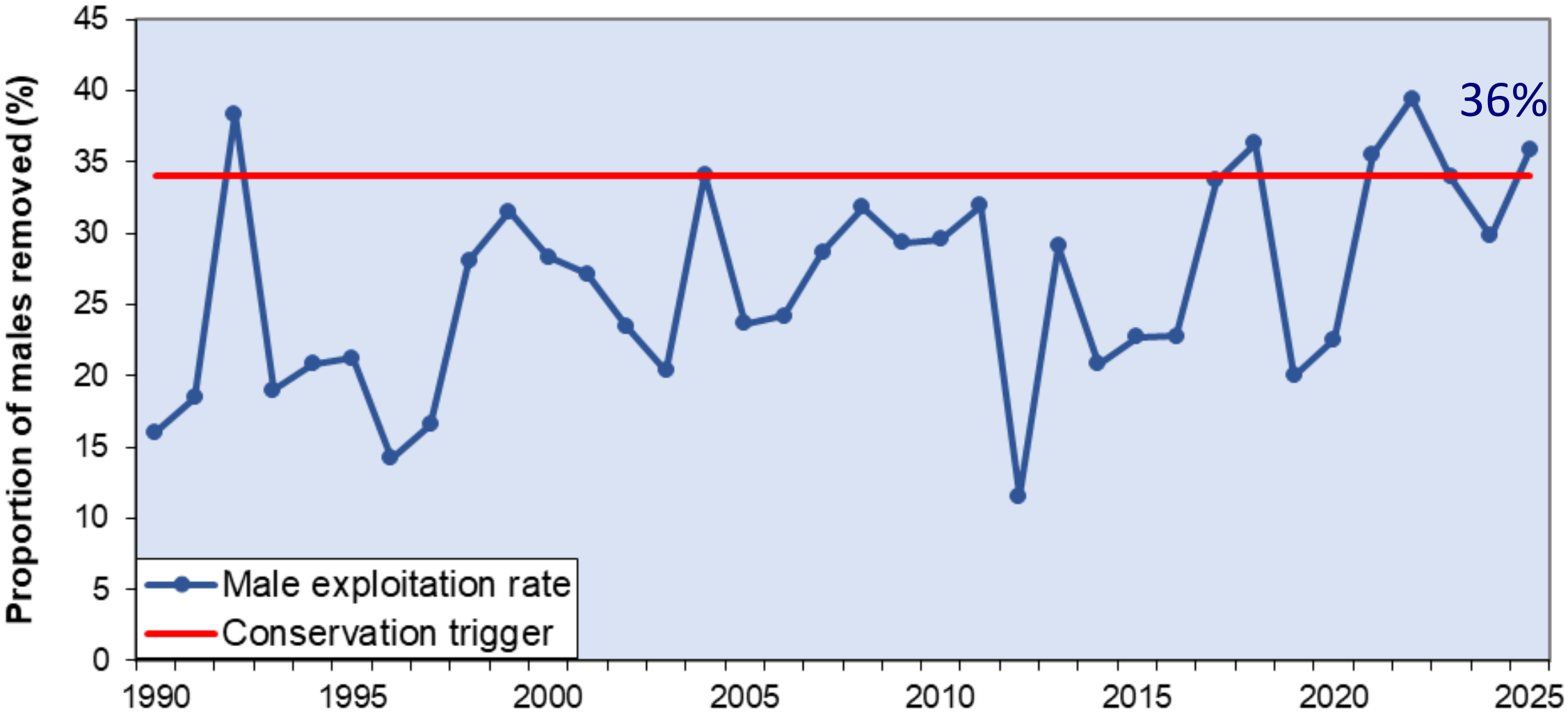
# MD, VA Male Harvest



# Female Exploitation Rate



# Male Exploitation Rate





**QUESTIONS?**

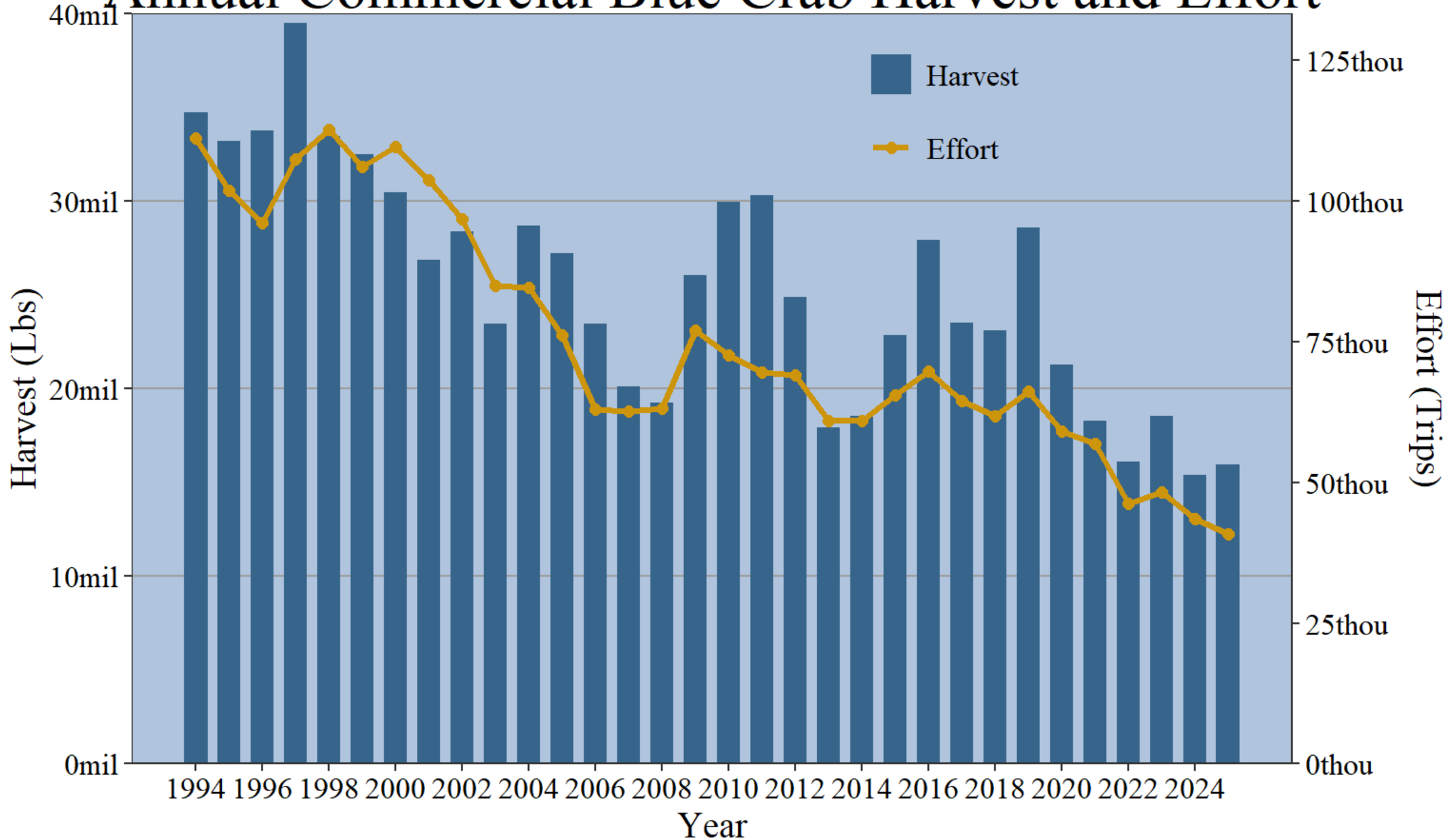
# 2025 Virginia Harvest\*

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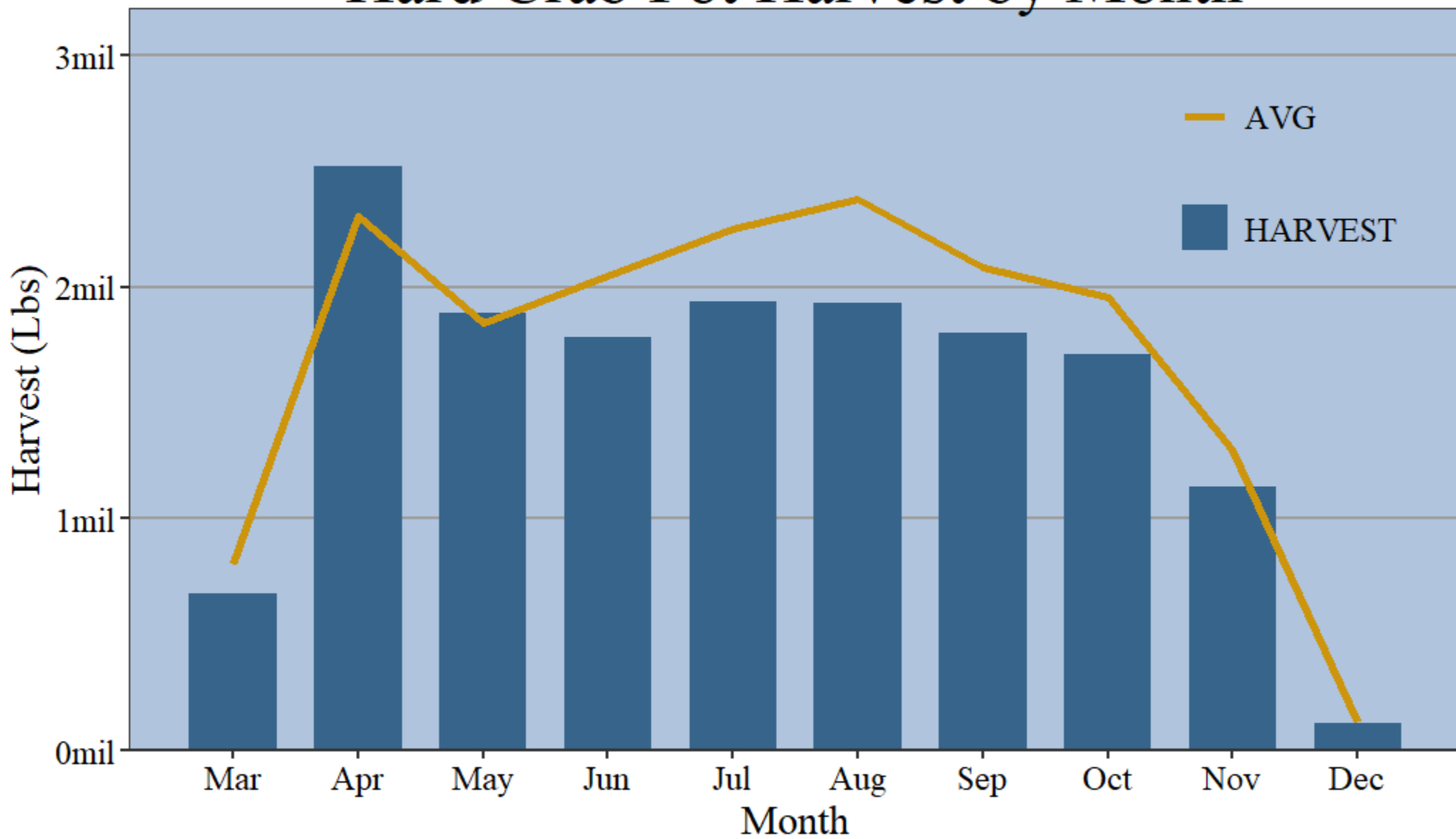
- Harvest: 15,941,125 lbs (4% increase)
  - Hard crab pots: 97%
  - Peeler pots: 2.7%
  - Other gears: 0.1%
- Dockside Value: \$36,816,322 (4% increase)
- Harvesters: 716 (4% decrease)
- Trips: 40,800 (6% decrease)

\*All 2025 Harvest data is preliminary

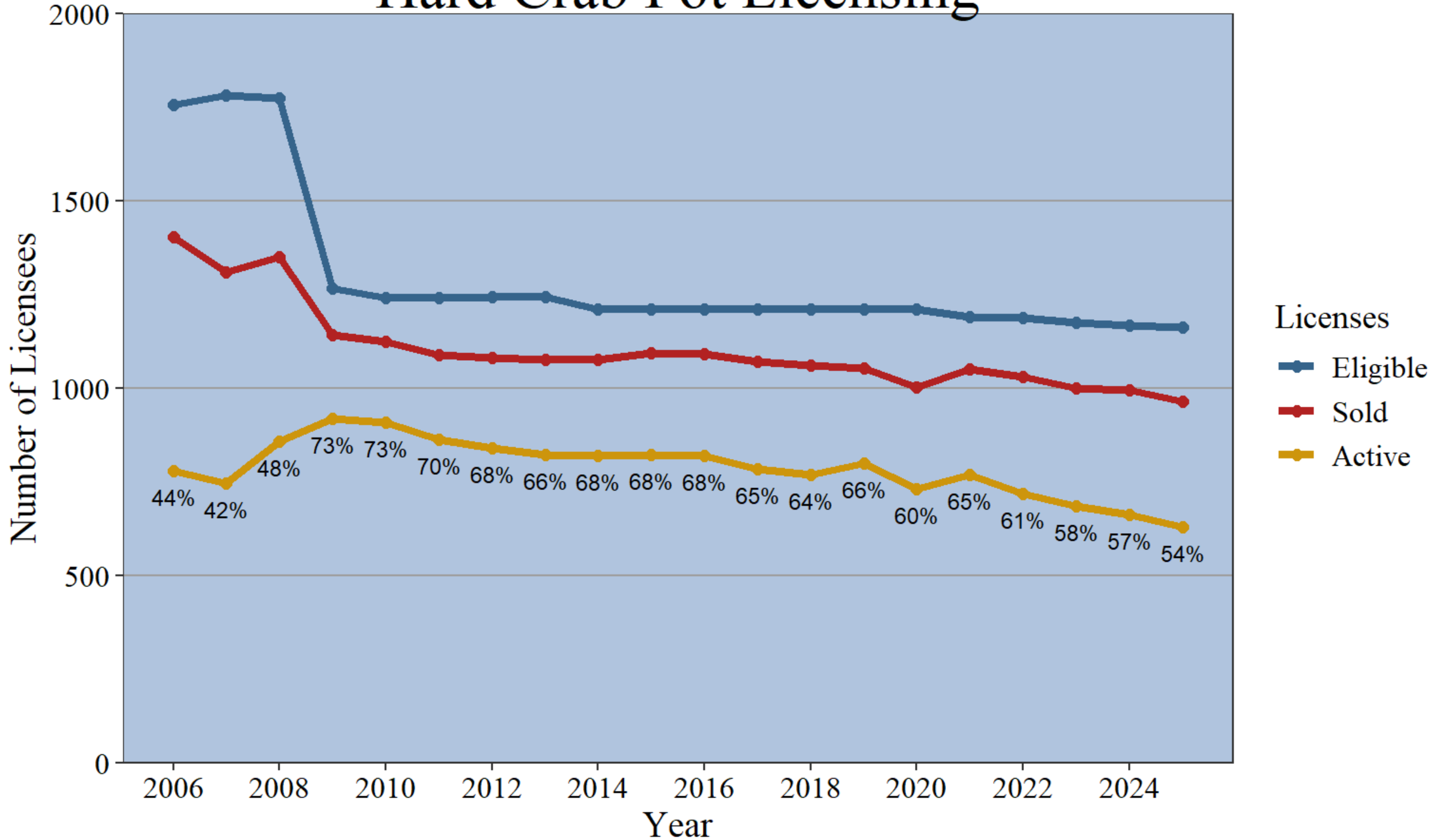
# Annual Commercial Blue Crab Harvest and Effort



# Hard Crab Pot Harvest by Month



# Hard Crab Pot Licensing



MONTH	POUNDS			TRIPS			HARVS		
	2024	2025	2026	2024	2025	2026	2024	2025	2026
3	750,871	676,162	289,398	1,586	1,314	849	259	216	163
4	1,844,976	2,555,369	1,860,694	4,512	4,453	3,468	392	378	294
5	1,677,514	2,010,233		6,506	5,916		524	502	
6	2,099,918	1,838,129	0	7,099	6,047	0	544	510	0
7	2,295,872	2,032,621	0	7,324	6,791	0	564	518	0
8	2,209,434	2,000,391	0	6,305	6,014	0	520	498	0
9	1,680,533	1,849,088	0	4,549	4,782	0	444	447	0
10	1,533,309	1,720,481	0	3,212	3,222	0	322	328	0
11	1,176,109	1,140,278	0	2,084	1,988	0	198	206	0
12	130,605	118,375	0	289	273	0	75	74	0
Total	15,399,140	15,941,125	2,322,259	43,466	40,800	4,768	744	717	322

Confidential data removed

% of Licensees who have reported			
Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr
99	94	88	71

2026 Data are preliminary.

# 2026-27 Season and Bushel Limits

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- Status quo
  - Hard Crab Pot: March 17 – December 19 (Saturday)
  - High bushel limit: May 16 – October 31
  - Peeler pot and other gears: April 15 – October 15
- Closure of winter dredge fishery

# Timeline

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- May 13: CBSAC reviewed winter dredge survey results
- May 18: VA and MD press release
- May 27: Results presented at CMAC
- June 23: Commission meeting for 2026-2027 season and bushel limits, dredge closure



# Bushel Limits

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Crab Pot License Type	May 16-Oct 31	Mar 17-May 15, Nov 1-Dec 19
Up to 85 pots	10	8
Up to 127 pots	14	11
Up to 170 pots	18	14
Up to 255 pots	29	22
Up to 425 pots	47	36

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