
**Agriculture & Natural Resources
Committee**

HB 1647

Brief Description: Increasing revenue to the state wildlife account by adjusting recreational fishing and hunting fees.

Sponsors: Representatives Springer, Pettigrew, Tarleton, Fitzgibbon, Robinson, Tharinger, McBride and Doglio; by request of Department of Fish and Wildlife.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Adjusts recreational hunting and fishing license, endorsement, stamp, catch record card, and permit fees, and creates new licenses.
- Authorizes the Fish and Wildlife Commission to adopt a surcharge on all license fees to fund maintenance level appropriations from the Wildlife Account.
- Changes age limits for both senior and youth licenses.
- Removes the expiration date for the Columbia River Salmon and Steelhead Endorsement.

Hearing Date: 2/9/17

Staff: Rebecca Lewis (786-7339).

Background:

The Department of Fish and Wildlife (Department) is responsible for the management of the state's fish and wildlife resources, and establishes basic rules and regulations governing the time, place, manner, and methods used to harvest or enjoy fish and wildlife. As a part of this responsibility, the Department issues licenses, tags, endorsements, and permits for hunting and fishing in Washington. Most revenue from licenses, tags, and endorsements is directed either to the Wildlife Account or one of several enhancement accounts.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

The Department collects a dealer fee of \$2 for each license and charter stamp, and \$0.50 for each catch record card, two-pole endorsement, special hunt permit application, transport tag, and multiple season permit application. The Department also has the authority to charge a transaction fee on all licenses issued through the automated licensing system, which is currently 10 percent of the original license cost.

A hunter or fisher that fails to report their harvest is subject to an administrative penalty of no more than \$10. The penalty must be paid before a new hunting license, catch record card, or Dungeness Crab Endorsement may be issued.

Fishing Licenses Issued by the Department of Fish and Wildlife.

Categories of fishing licenses include freshwater licenses, saltwater licenses, and combination licenses. There are several endorsements, stamps, permits, or other surcharges required for particular activities in addition to a fishing license. Fee amounts for fishing licenses, stamps, permits, and endorsements are set in statute. A catch record card is required to fish for salmon, steelhead, sturgeon, or Puget Sound Dungeness crab. There is no charge for the first catch record card, and subsequent catch record cards are \$11 each. A license is not required to fish for carp, smelt, and crawfish.

Individuals age 15 and older must purchase a fishing license. Youth under age 15 are not required to purchase fishing licenses; however to fish for salmon, steelhead, sturgeon, or Puget Sound Dungeness crab, youth must hold a catch record card and, if applicable, a Puget Sound Dungeness crab endorsement. Adults over age 70 qualify for senior rates for certain licenses. The catch record card and crab endorsement are free of charge for youth under age 15.

Columbia River Salmon and Steelhead Endorsement Program.

The Columbia River Salmon and Steelhead Endorsement Program (Endorsement Program) was created in 2009 and was originally called the Columbia River Salmon and Steelhead Pilot Stamp Program. Revenue from purchases funds activities related to continuing and expanding selective fisheries in the Columbia River Basin, such as data collection, fisheries enforcement, monitoring, and evaluation. Individuals age 15 and over must purchase an endorsement in order to fish for salmon and steelhead in the Columbia River or its tributaries. The Endorsement costs \$7.50. The Endorsement Program expires on June 30, 2017.

The Columbia River Salmon and Steelhead Recreational Anglers Board (Board) is comprised of six to 10 volunteer members, appointed by the Director of the Department, who represent the four Fish and Wildlife regions that make up the Columbia River basin. The Board meets twice per year, and advises the Department on activities and expenditures of the Endorsement Program. Endorsement Program-funded project proposals developed by the Department are vetted through Board review, and review in the community in which the proposed project would occur.

Hunting Licenses Issued by the Department of Fish and Wildlife.

There are separate hunting licenses and endorsements for big game, small game, and certain other species for both general season hunting and special hunts. There are separate rates for state residents, nonresidents, and youth under age 16, and those amounts are set in statute.

Special hunting permit applications are available for certain species and are issued based on a weighted point lottery system. Points are based on the application history of each applicant and

accumulate in each species category. The purchase of an application results in one accrued point for the category purchased. When a hunter is selected, the hunter's point total for that category drops to zero. Applicants with more points have a better chance of being awarded a permit. Points may not be transferred between individuals or categories.

Falconry.

Falconry means both training raptors (falcons, eagles, hawks, and owls) to hunt in cooperation with a human, and the hunting with the assistance of trained raptors. A person who hunts with a raptor is called a falconer.

Reduced Rate Hunting and Fishing Licenses.

Certain hunting and fishing licenses are available at reduced rates to certain disabled veterans, and individuals with disabilities. These individuals may receive a fishing license for \$5 and any of the various state hunting licenses for the price that is charged to a youth participant for that license.

To qualify for one of these reduced rates, the individual must be a Washington resident and:

- is an honorably discharged veteran who:
 - is at least 65 years old and who has a service-related disability of any kind; or
 - is of any age and who has a 30 percent or greater service-related disability; or
- regardless of military service, has a disability that results in the permanent use of a wheelchair, or blindness or another visual impairment; or
- has a developmental disability

State-resident members of the Washington State Guard or National Guard who are active full-time guard members or are required to participate in drill training on a part-time basis are eligible for the following hunting license at no cost:

- a small game hunting license;
- a supplemental migratory bird permit; and
- a big game hunting license.

Summary of Bill:

A definition of license is added to include any license, tag, permit, decal, stamp, authorization, and endorsement. The Department is authorized to adopt rules to create, combine, or sell any hunting and fishing licenses at or below existing pricing. The Director of the Department is authorized to offer temporary promotional pricing of hunting and fishing licenses. The 10 percent transaction fee is deleted. The Fish and Wildlife Commission (Commission) may set the transaction fee for licenses issued through automated licensing system. Application fees may not be waived for licenses issued through the automated licensing system.

The age minimum to qualify for senior hunting and fishing license rates is lowered from age 70 to age 65. The definition of "youth" for the purposes of fishing licenses is changed to a person under age 16, and aligns with the definition of "youth" for the purposes of hunting licenses.

The Commission may adopt a surcharge on all license fees by November 1 of each odd-numbered year as the commission deems necessary to fund maintenance level appropriations from the Wildlife Account (Account) such as fish food costs, central service agency rate changes,

and global personnel policies that adjust salaries, health care, and pension benefits. The Commission may establish or increase the surcharge if the projected ending fund balance in the Account is less than 10 percent of the amount appropriated to the Account in the state budget. The commission may decrease or eliminate the surcharge if there is a sufficient fund balance in the Account to fund maintenance level appropriations, and the surcharge may not exceed the percentage increase needed to offset maintenance level costs.

Revenue from the sale of Department merchandise, including clothing and sundries, and promotions, must be deposited into the state Wildlife Account.

Fishing Licenses Issued by the Department of Fish and Wildlife.

Catch Record Cards and Puget Sound Dungeness Crab Endorsements.

Changes are made to fees for catch record cards and Puget Sound Dungeness Crab Endorsements (crab endorsement).

The first catch record card, and each subsequent catch record card, costs \$8.64 for a resident, \$13.18 for nonresidents, and \$4.09 for youth, seniors, and any individuals that qualify for reduced-rate licenses. Temporary one-day and three-day catch record cards are established. Temporary catch record cards cost \$4.09 for residents, \$8.64 for nonresidents, and \$1.82 for youth, seniors or individuals that qualify for reduced rate licenses.

The annual crab endorsement fee is changed from \$7.50 to \$15, and the temporary crab endorsement fee is changed from \$3 to \$10. A youth crab endorsement costs \$7.50 for an annual endorsement and \$5 for a temporary endorsement.

Youth may either buy a catch record card or crab endorsement, or record their catch on a mentor's catch record card or crab endorsement. The youth's catch recorded on a mentor's card or endorsement counts towards the mentor's daily limit.

Fishing license fee changes.

Youth licenses fees are eliminated, and youth under age 16 are not required to purchase fishing licenses. The fee for reduced-rate combination fishing licenses is changed from \$5 to \$6.50. The two-day temporary license is deleted. The license exemption for smelt is removed.

The following changes are made to recreational fishing license fees (these fee amounts do not include dealer or transaction fees):

License Type	Current Fee - Resident	New Fee- Resident	Current Fee - Nonresident	New Fee - Nonresident	Current Fee - Resident Senior age 70+	New Fee - Resident Senior age 65+
Combination license: Fish, shellfish, and seaweed	\$45	\$54	\$108	\$126	\$45	\$54

Saltwater	\$25	\$30	\$52	\$58	\$5	\$8.50
Freshwater	\$25	\$30	\$75	\$90	\$5	\$8
1-Day Combination	\$8	\$16	\$16	\$22	\$8	\$16
3-Day Combination	\$15	\$27	\$30	\$44	\$15	\$27
Shellfish/seaweed	\$10	\$18	\$27	\$47	\$5	\$8
2- Pole endorsement	\$13	\$15	\$13	\$15	\$5	\$6
Puget Sound Dungeness Annual	\$7.50	\$15	\$7.50	\$15	\$7.50	\$15
Puget Sound Dungeness Temporary	\$3	\$10	\$3	\$10	\$3	\$10
Razor Clam	\$8	\$17	\$15	\$31	\$8	\$20
3-Day Razor Clam	\$5	\$13	\$5	\$13	\$5	\$13

The fee for a charter stamp is changed from \$8 to \$11. The charter stamp includes a catch record card and Puget Sound Dungeness Crab Endorsement. A guide stamp for a 1-day temporary combination fishing license costs \$11, and includes a catch record card and Columbia River Salmon and Steelhead Endorsement.

Six percent, rather than \$1, of the revenue from each Dungeness crab endorsement must be used to fund the removal of derelict shellfish gear by the Department or a third party.

Expiration dates for the Columbia River Salmon and Steelhead Endorsement are deleted, and the fee is changed from \$7.50 to \$8.41.

Hunting Licenses Issued by the Department of Fish and Wildlife.

Hunting license fees are increased by 10 percent for all license types, including special season permits. The Commission may establish and assess an administrative fee of up to \$10 per permit for hunters who wish to surrender extra permits prior to the start of the applicable hunting season in order to restore their points. The Commission may authorize a one-time discount of up to \$20 on a hunting license purchase to first-time state-resident hunters who have completed the hunter education program.

A master hunter deer or elk license and a damage deer, bear, or elk license are created, each with a \$20 fee.

A falconry license is created. The fee is \$55 for resident youth, \$115 for residents, and \$240 for nonresidents. A person must have a falconry license, valid for up to two years, to collect or possess birds of prey for falconry.

The Commission may develop a hunting access reservation system and may charge participants a fee of up to \$10 per reservation.

The administrative penalty cap for failing to comply with harvest reporting requirements is raised for hunters to an amount not to exceed \$30. The penalty cap for fishers remains \$10.

Funds Directed to Enhancement Programs.

Portions of revenue for hunting and fishing licenses must be deposited into enhancement program accounts as follows:

- Warm Water Game Fish Account: 5 percent of all freshwater and combination licenses, including temporary combination licenses.
- Recreational Game Fisheries Account: 11 percent of all saltwater and combination licenses, including temporary combination licenses.
- Regional Fisheries Enhancement Group Account: 4 percent of all saltwater, freshwater, and combination fishing licenses, including temporary combination fishing licenses.
- Rockfish Research Account: 2 percent of all saltwater and combination fishing licenses, including temporary combination licenses.
- Eastern Washington Pheasant Account: 5 percent of all small game hunting licenses.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: This bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed, except for section 22, relating to Columbia River Salmon and Steelhead Endorsement, which contains an emergency clause and takes effect June 30, 2017.