

---

**Agriculture & Natural Resources  
Committee**

---

**HB 2505**

**Brief Description:** Increasing participation in recreational fishing and hunting.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Blake, Orcutt, Walsh, Chapman, Dent, Stanford, Muri, Hayes, Eslick, Shea, Tharinger and Young; by request of Department of Fish and Wildlife.

**Brief Summary of Bill**

- Changes the age at which a person qualifies as a "youth" for fishing licenses from age 15 to under age 16.
- Allows the use of temporary freshwater fishing licenses for the lowland lakes fishing season opening day.
- Authorizes the Fish and Wildlife Commission to create multi-year license packages and authorizes the Director of Fish and Wildlife to offer temporary license fee discounts.
- Creates a one-time discount on the purchase of the first hunting license for new hunters upon completion of hunter education training.

**Hearing Date:** 1/17/18

**Staff:** Rebecca Lewis (786-7339).

**Background:**

Licenses.

The Department of Fish and Wildlife (Department) is responsible for managing the state's fish and wildlife resources and establishing 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. Individuals age 15 and older must purchase a fishing license, and there is a reduced

---

*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.*

fee for youth age 15. Youth under age 15 are not required to purchase fishing licenses or endorsements in order to fish.

A person may purchase an annual or temporary freshwater, saltwater, or combination freshwater and saltwater fishing license (combination license). Temporary combination licenses are valid for a period of one to three consecutive days. In addition to a base freshwater or combination license, a Columbia River Salmon and Steelhead Endorsement (Endorsement) is required in order to fish for salmon and steelhead on the Columbia River and its tributaries. An annual freshwater or combination license is required to fish during the first eight days of the lowland lakes fishing season. Only active duty military personnel may fish during the first eight days of the lowland lakes fishing season with a temporary license.

The Fish and Wildlife Commission (Commission) may create and sell combined license packages for hunting or fishing activities at or below the total cost of individual licenses included in the package.

#### Hunter Education.

All individuals born after January 1, 1972, must show proof that they have completed a hunter education course before purchasing a hunting license for the first time. The course must include at least 10 hours of instruction covering firearms and outdoor safety, hunter responsibility, and wildlife management. To receive proof of completion, a person must pass an exam, either in a classroom setting or online, and demonstrate safe firearms handling skills in the field. Members of the United States military and certain law enforcement officers who complete the online hunter education course are exempt from the field firearms skills portion.

#### **Summary of Bill:**

##### Licenses.

The age at which a person qualifies as a "youth" for the purposes of purchasing fishing licenses is changed from age 15 to under age 16, and individuals under age 16 are not required to purchase fishing licenses or endorsements. Temporary combination fishing licenses are valid for the opening day of lowland lakes fishing season. The Commission may authorize multi-year license packages as combined license packages. The Director of Fish and Wildlife may offer temporary promotional license discounts.

##### Hunter Education.

The Commission may offer a one-time \$20 discount on the first hunting license for hunters who have completed Washington's hunter education program.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Requested on January 10, 2018.

**Effective Date:** The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.