

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SHB 1626

As Passed House:
February 11, 2022

Title: An act relating to updating the authority for the fish and wildlife commission to adopt rules implementing electronic licensing practices.

Brief Description: Updating the authority for the fish and wildlife commission to adopt rules implementing electronic licensing practices.

Sponsors: House Committee on Rural Development, Agriculture & Natural Resources (originally sponsored by Representatives Chapman, Shewmake, Ryu, Leavitt, Bronoske, Rule and Tharinger; by request of Department of Fish and Wildlife).

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Rural Development, Agriculture & Natural Resources: 1/12/22, 1/25/22 [DPS];
Appropriations: 2/3/22, 2/4/22 [DPS(RDAN)].

Floor Activity:

Passed House: 2/11/22, 97-0.

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Specifies the Fish and Wildlife Commission's authority to issue and create rules for granting licenses, permits, tags, stamps, and catch record cards extends to the issuance, use, and display of electronic licensing documents.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON RURAL DEVELOPMENT, AGRICULTURE & NATURAL RESOURCES

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 15 members: Representatives Chapman, Chair; Shewmake, Vice Chair; Chandler, Ranking Minority Member; Dent, Assistant Ranking Minority Member;

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Fitzgibbon, Klicker, Kloba, Kretz, Lekanoff, McEntire, Morgan, Orcutt, Ramos, Schmick and Springer.

Staff: Jessica Cable (786-7290) and Rebecca Lewis (786-7339).

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Majority Report: The substitute bill by Committee on Rural Development, Agriculture & Natural Resources be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 33 members: Representatives Ormsby, Chair; Bergquist, Vice Chair; Gregerson, Vice Chair; Macri, Vice Chair; Stokesbary, Ranking Minority Member; Chambers, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Corry, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; MacEwen, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Boehnke, Caldier, Chandler, Chopp, Cody, Dolan, Dye, Fitzgibbon, Frame, Hansen, Harris, Hoff, Jacobsen, Johnson, J., Lekanoff, Pollet, Rude, Ryu, Schmick, Senn, Springer, Steele, Stonier, Sullivan and Tharinger.

Staff: Dan Jones (786-7118).

Background:

The Fish and Wildlife Commission (Commission) is responsible for establishing policies to preserve; protect; and perpetuate wildlife, fish, and shellfish, and their habitat by providing opportunities for recreational and commercial harvesting of fish and wildlife in a manner that does not impair the long-term survival of the species. As part of this responsibility, the Commission sets hunting and fishing season dates and distributes and creates rules for issuing licenses, permits, tags, stamps, and raffle tickets.

A recreational license is required to hunt, fish, or take wildlife or seaweed. Most licenses require a person have physical possession of the license or the license-specific Internet or telephone authorization number. For example, catch record cards and transport tags must be in the physical possession of the holder.

Licenses and permits may be purchased at the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife's website or at an authorized license dealer. When purchased online, the Commission mails the licensee a physical license or permit. Most licenses must be signed by the licensee, contain the licensee's personal identification information, and, if required, be accompanied by a valid catch record card.

Summary of Substitute Bill:

The Commission's authority to issue and create rules for granting licenses, permits, tags, stamps, and catch record cards extends to the issuance of electronic licensing documents as well as the ability to use, display, and present such documents to agency staff in an electronic format.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony (Rural Development, Agriculture & Natural Resources):

(In support) Many of the required permits purchased last year were purchased online, but a physical document is often required so licenses are still mailed and printed at home. This bill will help modernize the licensing system by telling the Commission to adopt rules about electronic licensing. People will enjoy this change and enforcement staff will be able to view licenses on mobile devices. Oregon and Alaska have implemented similar policies that worked well. The proposed substitute bill was in response to the gambling commission's concerns about electronic raffles in electronic formats, so the substitute bill struck raffle tickets from the bill.

(Opposed) None.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony (Appropriations):

(In support) The Department of Fish and Wildlife's (DFW) existing transaction fees and dealer fees likely cover any costs associated with the modernization of licensing practices. If not, the DFW would likely come back with a budget request. Moving to electronic licensing will save money in the long haul.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying (Rural Development, Agriculture & Natural Resources): Tom McBride, Department of Fish and Wildlife.

Persons Testifying (Appropriations): Tom McBride, Department of Fish and Wildlife.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying (Rural Development, Agriculture & Natural Resources): None.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying (Appropriations): None.