

SENATE BILL REPORT

SHB 1626

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

Committee Activity: Agriculture, Water, Natural Resources & Parks: 2/22/22.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Provides authority for the Fish and Wildlife Commission to issue electronic licensing documents including licenses, permits, tags, stamps and catch record cards.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE, WATER, NATURAL RESOURCES & PARKS

Staff: Jeff Olsen (786-7428)

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.

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

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 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.

Creates Committee/Commission/Task Force that includes Legislative members: No.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife sold over 1 million hunting and fishing licenses last year. Approximately 27 percent of 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 and move licenses to our cell phones. Transaction fees can be used to cover the costs of implementing the change. People will enjoy this change and enforcement staff will be able to view licenses on mobile devices. Customers will still have the option to have a physical license. 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.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Tom McBride, WDFW.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: No one.