



Washington's **WILD**Future

FISHING LICENSE FEE PROPOSAL



License revenue is critical to maintaining and increasing fishing opportunities

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) is considering options for increasing fishing and hunting license revenue to help close the gap between future expenditures and projected funding.

Increased revenue also will help the department respond to anglers' desire to maintain and enhance opportunities. The proposal outlined here would generate about \$12 million per year.

A key goal of the proposal is to set fees that more accurately reflect fisheries management costs, including the relatively high cost of managing salmon, steelhead, and other fisheries in waters where some fish stocks are protected under the federal Endangered Species Act.

The proposal also would reduce barriers for youth and senior anglers; improve species management and data collection; and more closely align with fees in neighboring states. Finally, the proposal would modestly increase fees for popular, low-cost fisheries and help keep pace with inflation, to avoid significant periodic increases in the future.

How would the proposal alter the current recreational fishing license structure?

- **It would align license fees to reflect the cost of providing fishing opportunities.** Some recreational fisheries, such as salmon and steelhead, are more expensive to manage than others, such as inland lake



trout and warm-water species. These fee options would reflect those differences by setting higher rates for fisheries that cost more to manage.

- **Senior citizens would qualify for discounted fees at age 65** instead of the current 70. The qualifying age for senior hunting licenses is already set at 65, so this change would ensure consistency across both types of licenses.
- **More young people would be able to fish for free.** Washingtonians recognize the importance of increasing the number of young people who participate in outdoor recreation. Currently, the requirement to purchase a license begins at age 15. This proposal would raise the threshold to age 16, and the department would offer free licenses to those 15 and under. A new proposal would allow youth fishers to record their catch on a mentor's catch record card (within applicable bag limits) or purchase a separate catch record card at half-price and have their own bag limit.

- **Anglers would purchase catch record cards for specific species.** The department uses catch cards to track the harvest of select fish species. Currently, a catch record card is provided free of charge for these species. The proposal would establish individual catch record cards for four species. Halibut and sturgeon cards would cost \$11.50; salmon and steelhead cards would cost \$17.
- **Columbia River Salmon/Steelhead Endorsement.** The price of the endorsement would increase by \$1 to match the price charged in Oregon. New funding would support a grant program to enhance salmonid fishing opportunities and habitat improvements.
- **Non-residents would pay higher fees.** Washington draws more than 100,000 non-resident anglers every year, many drawn to the state by several premier fisheries that are unique within the Lower 48 states. The department's proposal is designed to capture additional out-of-state revenue without setting rates so high that they would discourage vacationers from coming to the Evergreen State.
- **Inflation.** The proposal would provide for an inflation adjustment every two years. This would allow WDFW to maintain ongoing operations without having to seek larger increases every few years to address the erosion of buying power.

Fishing License Fee Proposal for 17-19

Resident License	Current Out-the-Door	Proposed Out-the-Door	Non Resident License	Current Out-the-Door	Proposed Out-the-Door
Angling Combo (Saltwater, Freshwater & Shellfish)	\$55.35	\$64.92	Angling Combo (Saltwater, Freshwater & Shellfish)	\$124.65	\$144.12
Annual Freshwater	\$29.50	\$34.12	Annual Freshwater	\$84.50	\$101.00
Annual Saltwater	\$30.05	\$33.57	Annual Saltwater	\$59.75	\$65.19
Annual Shellfish	\$17.40	\$26.20	Annual Shellfish	\$36.10	\$58.10
Catch Card Salmon	\$0.00	\$17.00	Catch Card Salmon	\$0.00	\$22.50
Catch Card Steelhead	\$0.00	\$17.00	Catch Card Steelhead	\$0.00	\$22.50
Catch Card Sturgeon	\$0.00	\$11.50	Catch Card Sturgeon	\$0.00	\$17.50
Catch Card Halibut Puget Sound	\$0.00	\$11.50	Catch Card Halibut	\$0.00	\$17.50
Puget Sound Crab Annual	\$8.75	\$18.50	Puget Sound Crab Annual	\$8.75	\$18.50
Puget Sound Crab Temp	\$3.80	\$13.00	Puget Sound Crab Temp	\$3.80	\$13.00
Razor Clam Annual	\$17.10	\$24.00	Razor Clam Annual	\$21.80	\$39.40
3-Day Razor Clam	\$9.70	\$18.50	3-Day Razor Clam	\$9.70	\$18.50
Columbia River Endorsement	\$8.75	\$9.75	Columbia River Endorsement	\$8.75	\$9.75
Two-pole	\$14.80	\$16.50	Two-pole	\$14.80	\$16.50
1-Day Temp (Combo) Res	\$11.35	\$19.82	1-Day Temp (Combo)	\$20.15	\$28.07
3-Day Temp (Combo) Res	\$19.05	\$32.08	3-Day Temp Non-Res	\$35.55	\$50.62