

HOUSE BILL REPORT

2SSB 6330

As Reported By House Committee On:

Natural Resources
Appropriations

Title: An act relating to fish and wildlife licenses.

Brief Description: Modifying provisions concerning recreational fish and wildlife licenses.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Ways & Means (originally sponsored by Senators Oke, Jacobsen, Swecker, Spanel, Loveland and Rasmussen).

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Natural Resources: 2/25/98, 2/27/98 [DPA];
Appropriations: 2/28/98 [DPA(NR/APP)s].

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES

Majority Report: Do pass as amended. Signed by 10 members: Representatives Buck, Chairman; Sump, Vice Chairman; Thompson, Vice Chairman; Regala, Ranking Minority Member; Butler, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Alexander; Anderson; Eickmeyer; Hatfield and Pennington.

Minority Report: Without recommendation. Signed by 1 member: Representative Chandler.

Staff: Linda Byers (786-7129).

Background:

Hunting Licenses

A person who wants to hunt in Washington must purchase either a hunting license or a combination hunting and fishing license. A combination license is for residents and costs \$29. A hunting license is \$15 for residents and \$150 for nonresidents.

A person who wants to hunt deer, elk, bear, cougar, sheep, mountain goat, moose, or wild turkey must buy a separate transport tag in addition to one of the above hunting licenses. The fees for the transport tags are as follows:

	<u>Residents</u>	<u>Nonresidents</u>
Deer	\$18	\$60
Elk	\$24	\$120
Bear	\$18	\$180
Cougar	\$24	\$360
Mountain goat	\$60	\$180
Sheep	\$90	\$360
Moose	\$180	\$360
Wild turkey	\$18	\$60

Also in addition to either the hunting license or the combination license, a supplemental license, permit, or stamp is required to hunt for quail, partridge, pheasant, or migratory waterfowl, to hunt with a raptor, or to hunt with a dog. These additional fees are as follows:

Hound permit	\$12
Eastern Washington upland game permit	\$10
Western Washington upland game permit	\$35
Falconry license	\$36
Migratory waterfowl stamp	\$6

A special hunting season permit is required to hunt in a special season. The application fee to participate in a special hunting season is \$3.

Fishing Licenses

The fishing licenses a person must have depends on whether the person wants to fish for "food fish" such as salmon or "game fish" such as steelhead. Recreational food fish licenses are found in the Fisheries Code along with licenses for harvesting shellfish and seaweed while game fish license provisions are in the Wildlife Code.

A personal use food fish license allows a person to fish for, take, or possess food fish for personal use from state waters or offshore waters. The fees for this license are as follows: for a resident 15 years old or older but less than 70 years old, \$8; for a resident 70 years of age or older, \$3; and for a nonresident, \$20. A three-consecutive-day license is \$3.

A personal use shellfish and seaweed license allows a person to fish for, take, dig for, or possess seaweed or shellfish for personal use from state waters or offshore waters

including national park beaches. The fees for this license are as follows: for a resident 15 years old or older but less than 70 years old, \$5; for a resident 70 years of age or older, \$3; and for a nonresident, \$20. A three-consecutive-day license is \$5.

In the Wildlife Code, a fishing license allows a person to fish for game fish throughout the state. The fee for this license is as follows: for a resident 15 years of age or older but less than 70 years old, \$17; for a resident 70 years of age or older, \$3; for nonresidents under 15 years old, \$20; and for nonresidents 15 years of age or older, \$48. A person who wants to fish for steelhead must buy an additional license. The fee for a steelhead license is \$18. If a person is under 15 years of age, that person may instead buy a juvenile steelhead license for \$6. The department also offers one-day and three-day fishing licenses. The fee for a one-day license is \$3 for residents and \$7 for nonresidents. The fee for a three-day license is \$9 for residents and \$17 for nonresidents.

Free Licenses

In the Fisheries Code, any of the recreational fishing licenses are issued free of charge to the following individuals:

- (1) Residents who are honorable discharged veterans of the United States armed forces and who are 65 years of age or older with a service-connected disability;
- (2) Residents who are honorably discharged veterans of the United States armed forces with a 30 percent or more service-connected disability;
- (3) A person who is blind;
- (4) A person with a developmental disability; and
- (5) A person who is physically handicapped and confined to a wheelchair.

In the Wildlife Code:

- (1) A resident 65 years of age or older who is an honorably discharged veteran of the United States armed forces having a service-connected disability may receive a hunting and fishing license free of charge;
- (2) A resident who is an honorably discharged veteran of the United States armed forces with a 30 percent or more service-connected disability may receive a hunting and fishing license free of charge;
- (3) An honorably discharged veteran who is a resident and is confined to a wheelchair may receive a hunting license free of charge; and
- (4) A person who is blind, or a person with a developmental disability or a physically handicapped person confined to a wheelchair may receive a fishing license free of charge.

Funding of Enhancement Programs

A number of specific enhancement programs are funded by special fees or surcharges which can only be put toward these specific programs. Examples include the dollar surcharge on recreational food fish licenses, the special recreational surcharge for recreational fishers in Lake Washington, the warm water game fish surcharge, and the eastern Washington pheasant surcharge.

In 1996, the Legislature directed the Fish and Wildlife Commission to develop proposed legislation for the 1998 legislative session to simplify, consolidate, and modernize the recreational fishing and hunting license program.

Summary of Amended Bill:

Hunting Licenses

With regard to big game, the department offers a choice of five big game "packages" with the following fees:

<u>Package</u>	<u>To Hunt</u>	<u>Resident</u>	<u>Nonresident</u>	<u>Youth</u>
#1	Deer, elk, bear, cougar	\$66	\$666	\$33
#2	Deer and elk	\$56	\$560	\$28
#3	[Deer or elk], bear, cougar	\$46	\$460	\$23
#4	Deer or elk	\$36	\$360	\$18
#5	Bear and cougar	\$20	\$200	\$10

Each big game license includes one transport tag for each species purchased in that package. A hunter may not purchase more than one license for each big game species except as authorized by rule of the commission.

If the commission authorizes a two-animal big game limit, the fees for the second animal are as follows:

<u>Second Animal</u>	<u>Resident</u>	<u>Nonresident</u>	<u>Youth</u>
Elk	\$20	\$200	\$10
Deer	\$20	\$200	\$10
Bear	\$10	\$100	\$5
Cougar	\$10	\$100	\$5

The application fee to enter the drawing for a special hunting permit is \$5 for residents, \$50 for nonresidents, and \$3 for youth. If the commission does authorize a special permit hunt for goat, sheep, or moose, the permit fees are as follows:

<u>To Hunt</u>	<u>Resident</u>	<u>Nonresident</u>	<u>Youth</u>
Mountain goat	\$100	\$1,000	\$50
Sheep	\$100	\$1,000	\$50

Moose \$100 \$1,000 \$50

A small game hunting license is required to hunt for all wild animals and wild birds except big game. This license includes one transport tag for turkey. The fees associated with this license are as follows:

	<u>Resident</u>	<u>Nonresident</u>	<u>Youth</u>
Small game hunting license	\$30	\$150	\$15
If purchased in conjunction with a big game package	\$16	\$80	\$8
Three-consecutive-day license		\$50	
Additional turkey tag	\$18	\$60	\$9

If a person wishes to hunt western Washington pheasant, the person must buy a western Washington pheasant permit along with the small game hunting license, at a cost of \$36 for the resident and nonresident full season option, \$18 for the youth full season option, and \$20 for the three-day option. "Migratory bird" means migratory waterfowl, and coots, snipe, doves, and band-tailed pigeon. A person who wishes to hunt migratory birds must affix a migratory bird stamp to the appropriate hunting license. The fee for the stamp for hunters is \$6 for residents and nonresidents and \$3 for youth. The fee for the stamp for collectors is \$6.

Fishing Licenses

A personal use shellfish and seaweed license is required for all persons other than residents or nonresidents under 12 years of age to fish for, take, dig for, or possess seaweed or shellfish for personal use. The revised fees for this license are as follows: for a resident, \$7; for a nonresident, \$20; and for a senior, \$5. The commission must authorize the director to issue designated harvester cards to persons with disabilities. The commission must adopt rules governing the conduct of persons with disabilities who fish and harvest shellfish and the conduct of designated harvesters who assist with the harvesting.

A personal use saltwater, freshwater, combination, temporary, or family fishing weekend license is required for all persons 12 years of age or older to fish for or possess fish taken for personal use from state waters or offshore waters. The fees for these fishing licenses are as follows:

<u>License</u>	<u>To Fish for</u>	<u>Resident</u>	<u>Nonresident</u>	<u>Seniors</u>
Combination	Fish, shellfish, seaweed	\$36	\$72	
Saltwater	Fish from saltwater	\$18	\$36	\$5
Freshwater	Fish from freshwater	\$20	\$40	\$5
Two-day	Fish from state waters and offshore waters	\$6	\$6	

A new option is a family fishing weekend license. This license allows a maximum of six anglers to fish for or possess fish taken from state waters or offshore waters: one resident and five youth, two residents and four youth, or one resident, one nonresident, and four youth. The fee for this license is \$20. The license is only valid during periods as specified by rule of the department.

The commission may adopt rules to create and sell combination licenses for all hunting and fishing activities at or below a fee equal to the total cost of the individual license contained within any combination.

Reduced-Rate Licenses

All hunting licenses will be issued at the reduced rate of a youth hunting license for the following individuals:

- (1) A resident 65 years old or older who is an honorably discharged veteran of the United States armed forces having a service-connected disability;
- (2) A resident who is an honorably discharged veteran of the United States armed forces with a 30 percent or more service connected disability; and
- (3) An honorably discharged veteran of the United State armed forces who is a resident and confined to a wheelchair.

A combination fishing license will be issued at the reduced rate of \$5 to the following individuals:

- (1) A resident who is an honorably discharged veteran of the United States armed forces with a 30 percent or more service-connected disability;
- (2) A person who is blind;
- (3) A person with a developmental disability; and
- (4) A person who is physically disabled and confined to a wheelchair.

Funding of Enhancement Programs

The existing special fees and surcharges are removed. Instead, the commission must adopt rules to continue funding current enhancement programs at levels equal to the participation of licensees in each of the individual enhancement programs. All enhancement funding will continue to be deposited directly into the individual accounts created for each enhancement.

With regard to revenues from sales of migratory bird stamps, the department will determine the number of waterfowl hunters and the number of nonwaterfowl migratory bird hunters. Revenue derived from the sale of the stamp to waterfowl hunters will be used for migratory waterfowl projects. Revenue from the sale of stamps to persons hunting only nonwaterfowl species will be used for nonwaterfowl migratory bird projects. Revenue from stamp sales to stamp collectors will be used for migratory waterfowl projects.

Other Provisions

A number of new definitions are added to the statute, including "senior" to mean a person 70 years old or older, and "youth" to mean a person 12 years old or older but under 16 years old for fishing and a person under 16 years old for hunting. The "license year" is defined to run from April 1 to March 31. There are additional provisions dealing with commission rule-making, record-keeping, scientific permits, the revoking of hunting licenses, and commission authority to adopt rules designating waters where either a freshwater or a saltwater license is valid.

The department may sell 15-month prorated shellfish, fish, and small game licenses to accommodate the change in the license year. This authority applies only to the period beginning January 1, 1999, and ending April 1, 2000.

Amended Bill Compared to Second Substitute Bill: The amended bill adds language regarding the conduct of persons with disabilities who fish and harvest shellfish and their designated harvesters and provides additional specificity on the distribution of revenue from the sale of migratory bird stamps between waterfowl and nonwaterfowl projects. The amended bill removes a section in the underlying bill that exempted from public disclosure personal information on license holders in the department data bases. The amended bill also moves up the effective date on certain provisions dealing with the migratory bird stamp so that all of the sections on migratory birds take effect immediately and makes technical corrections.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date of Amended Bill: Sections 1 through 30, 34 through 36, 38 through 42, and 44 of this act take effect January 1, 1999. Section 10, 24, 31 through 33, 37, 43, and 45 of this act take effect immediately.

Testimony For: The department has done its best to simplify the recreational license system. One part of this effort is the bill; the other part is the purchase of the servers to make the system work. Dealers will also benefit from this and will be able to pilot the new machines. With the combination fishing license at a better price, this may encourage more freshwater/warmwater fishing while the salmon stocks recover. The department has worked cooperatively with the charter boat associations. It is good to have the two-day license option.

Testimony Against: The department data base will be an important public record, for example to make sure that people are not being favored in the hunts determined by lottery. Without a change in the section on disclosure, this will cut out average citizens who want to know what the department is doing.

Testified: Betty Buckley and Maria Hug, Department of Fish and Wildlife; Barb Lindsay, Northwest Sportfishing Industry Association; Ed Owens, Westport and Ilwaco Charter Boat Associations; and Mark Cedergreen, Westport Charter Boat Association (all in favor); Rowland Thompson, Allied Daily Newspapers of Washington (in favor with concerns); and Allan Woodbridge, Western Fish and Wildlife, Washington State Rifle and Pistol, and Washington Property Rights Alliance (in favor with amendment).

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Majority Report: Do pass as amended by Committee on Natural Resources as such amendment is amended by Committee on Appropriations. Signed by 27 members: Representatives Huff, Chairman; Alexander, Vice Chairman; Clements, Vice Chairman; Wensman, Vice Chairman; H. Sommers, Ranking Minority Member; Gombosky, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Carlson; Cody; Cooke; Crouse; Dyer; Grant; Keiser; Kenney; Lambert; Linville; Lisk; Mastin; McMorris; Parlette; Poulsen; Regala; D. Schmidt; Sehlin; Sheahan; Talcott and Tokuda.

Minority Report: Without recommendation. Signed by 4 members: Representatives Doumit, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Benson; Chopp and Kessler.

Staff: Jeff Olsen (786-7157).

Summary of Recommendation of Committee on Appropriations Compared to Recommendation of Committee on Natural Resources: A new section was added which makes the bill null and void unless specific funding is provided in the Omnibus Appropriations Act by June 30, 1998.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date of Amended Bill: Sections 1 through 30, 34 through 36, 38 through 42, and 44 of this act take effect January 1, 1999. Section 10, 24, 31 through 33, 37, 43, and 45 of this act take effect immediately. However, the bill is null and void unless funded in the budget.

Testimony For: The Department of Fish and Wildlife's proposal would simplify and modernize the hunting and fishing license system. A major component of the plan is modernization, including the purchase of a \$1.1 million computer system. The funds would be used to purchase a server for eastern and western Washington. A magnetic credit card system would be used to track hunting and fishing license purchases. The

new system will improve the process of selling and purchasing licenses, and allow the department to better manage information regarding licenses.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Doug Erickson, Department of Fish and Wildlife.