

**Chapter 77.80 RCW**  
**PROGRAM TO PURCHASE FISHING VESSELS AND LICENSES**

**Sections**

- 77.80.020 Program authorized—Conditions.
- 77.80.030 Determination of purchase price—Maximum price.
- 77.80.040 Disposition of vessels and gear—Prohibition against using purchased vessels for fishing purposes.
- 77.80.050 Rules—Administration of chapter.
- 77.80.060 Vessel, gear, license, and permit reduction fund.

**RCW 77.80.020 Program authorized—Conditions.** (1)(a) The department may purchase commercial fishing vessels and appurtenant gear, and the current state commercial fishing licenses, delivery permits, and charter boat licenses if the license or permit holder was substantially restricted in fishing as a result of compliance with *United States of America et al. v. State of Washington et al.*, Civil No. 9213, United States District Court for Western District of Washington, February 12, 1974, and *Sohappy v. Smith*, 302 F. Supp. 899 (D. Oregon, 1969), as amended, affirmed, and remanded 529 F. 2d 570 (9th Cir., 1976).

(b) The department may also make such purchases if the license or permit holder was substantially restricted in fishing as a result of compliance with *United States of America et al. v. State of Washington et al.*, 873 F. Supp. 1422 (W.D. Wash. 1994) as affirmed in part, reversed in part, and remanded 157 F.3d 630 (9th Cir., 1998), if the federal government provides funding to the state for the purpose of initiating these purchases.

(2) The department shall not purchase a vessel under this section without also purchasing all current Washington commercial fishing licenses and delivery permits and charter boat licenses issued to the vessel or its owner. The department may purchase current licenses and delivery permits without purchasing the vessel. [2008 c 252 s 2; 1984 c 67 s 1; 1983 1st ex.s. c 46 s 156; 1979 ex.s. c 43 s 1; 1977 ex.s. c 230 s 4; 1975 1st ex.s. c 183 s 4. Formerly RCW 75.44.110, 75.28.510.]

**Legislative finding and intent—1975 1st ex.s. c 183:** "The legislature finds that the protection, welfare, and economic well-being of the commercial fishing industry is important to the people of this state. There presently exists an overabundance of commercial fishing gear in our state waters which causes great pressure on the fishing resources. This results in great economic waste to the state and prohibits conservation and harvesting programs from achieving their goals. This adverse situation has been compounded by the federal court decisions, *United States of America et al. v. State of Washington et al.*, Civil No. 9213, United States District Court for the Western District of Washington, February 12, 1974, and *Sohappy v. Smith*, 302 F. Supp. 899 (D. Oregon, 1969), as amended, affirmed, and remanded 529 F. 2d 570 (9th Cir., 1976). As a result, large numbers of commercial fishermen face personal economic hardship, and the state commercial fishing industry is confronted with economic difficulty. The public welfare requires that the state have the authority to purchase commercial fishing vessels, licenses, gear, and permits offered for sale, as appropriate, in a manner which will provide relief to the individual vessel owner, and which will effect a

reduction in the amount of commercial fishing gear in use in the state so as to insure increased economic opportunity for those persons in the industry and to insure that sound scientific conservation and harvesting programs can be carried out. It is the intention of the legislature to provide relief to commercial fishermen adversely affected by the current economic situation in the state fishery and to preserve this valuable state industry and these natural resources." [1977 ex.s. c 230 s 2; 1975 1st ex.s. c 183 s 2. Formerly RCW 75.28.500.]

**RCW 77.80.030 Determination of purchase price—Maximum price.**

The purchase price of a vessel and appurtenant gear shall be based on a survey conducted by a qualified marine surveyor. A license or delivery permit shall be valued separately.

The director may specify a maximum price to be paid for a vessel, gear, license, or delivery permit purchased under RCW 77.80.020. A license or delivery permit purchased under RCW 77.80.020 shall be permanently retired by the department. [2000 c 107 s 89; 1983 1st ex.s. c 46 s 157; 1975 1st ex.s. c 183 s 5. Formerly RCW 75.44.120, 75.28.515.]

**Legislative finding and intent—1975 1st ex.s. c 183:** See note following RCW 77.80.020.

**RCW 77.80.040 Disposition of vessels and gear—Prohibition against using purchased vessels for fishing purposes.** The department may arrange for the insurance, storage, and resale or other disposition of vessels and gear purchased under RCW 77.80.020. Vessels shall not be resold by the department to the seller or the seller's immediate family. The vessels shall not be used by any owner or operator: (1) As a commercial fishing or charter vessel in state waters; or (2) to deliver fish to a place or port in the state. The department shall require that the purchasers and other users of vessels sold by the department execute suitable instruments to insure compliance with the requirements of this section. The director may commence suit or be sued on such an instrument in a state court of record or United States district court having jurisdiction. [2000 c 107 s 90; 1983 1st ex.s. c 46 s 158; 1979 ex.s. c 43 s 2; 1975 1st ex.s. c 183 s 6. Formerly RCW 75.44.130, 75.28.520.]

**Legislative finding and intent—1975 1st ex.s. c 183:** See note following RCW 77.80.020.

**RCW 77.80.050 Rules—Administration of chapter.** The director shall adopt rules for the administration of this chapter. To assist the department in the administration of this chapter, the director may contract with persons not employed by the state and may enlist the aid of other state agencies. [2008 c 252 s 3; 1995 c 269 s 3201; 1983 1st ex.s. c 46 s 159; 1979 ex.s. c 43 s 4; 1975-'76 2nd ex.s. c 34 s 172; 1975 1st ex.s. c 183 s 8. Formerly RCW 75.44.140, 75.28.530.]

**Effective date—Part headings not law—Severability—1995 c 269:** See notes following RCW 18.16.050.

**Effective date—Severability—1975-'76 2nd ex.s. c 34:** See notes following RCW 2.08.115.

**Legislative finding and intent—1975 1st ex.s. c 183:** See note following RCW 77.80.020.

**RCW 77.80.060 Vessel, gear, license, and permit reduction fund.**

(1) The director is responsible for the administration and disbursement of all funds, goods, commodities, and services received by the state under this chapter.

(2) There is created within the state treasury a fund to be known as the "vessel, gear, license, and permit reduction fund". This fund shall be used for purchases under RCW 77.80.020 and for the administration of this chapter. This fund shall be credited with federal or other funds received to carry out the purposes of this chapter and the proceeds from the sale or other disposition of property purchased under RCW 77.80.020. [2008 c 252 s 4; 2000 c 107 s 91; 1983 1st ex.s. c 46 s 160; 1977 ex.s. c 230 s 5; 1975 1st ex.s. c 183 s 9. Formerly RCW 75.44.150, 75.28.535.]

**Legislative finding and intent—1975 1st ex.s. c 183:** See note following RCW 77.80.020.