



2023 Agency Request Legislation

Possible Licensing Costs* for freshwater smelt, carp, or crawfish:

Annual Freshwater	\$29.50
1-Day Combo**	\$11.35
3-Day Combo**	\$19.05

*For standard residents aged 16-69

**Combination licenses include shellfish and seaweed

Contact information:

Charlene Hurst

Columbia River

Management Unit Lead

charlene.hurst@dfw.wa.gov



In 2022, over 16,000 people participated in a five-hour freshwater smelt fishery that was open on the Cowlitz River. The average catch was more than the 10-pound daily limit and more than 70% of all persons cited by WDFW Enforcement did not have a fishing license.

Freshwater smelt is listed as "Threatened" under the Endangered Species Act.

Licenses are a gateway to knowing the rules and regulations for fisheries in Washington state. Part of the licensing process requires participants to read the annual fishing pamphlet and abide by the rules when fishing, which helps maintain more orderly fisheries.

The pamphlet provides educational resources on regulations and identifying species that impact fisheries and user experience. For example, the correct identification of native and non-native crawfish can affect harvest: there is no daily limit on non-native crawfish, and they cannot be returned to the water, however, there is a daily limit on native crawfish.

Common carp do not currently require a recreational fishing license and may be taken when other fishery seasons are open. Enforcement officers have had trouble monitoring illegal salmon and steelhead fishing in certain locations as individuals claim that they are fishing for carp. Requiring a license for carp will ensure that people are aware of the rules for taking carp and other fish.

This legislation would remove the current exemption from a fishing license for freshwater smelt, carp, and crawfish to allow for better regulation and monitoring of those species. Requiring a fishing license for these species would also further the Department's goals of education and voluntary compliance with resource protection restrictions.

Current combination license holders will not see any increased cost in their license.

1/5/2024