

Columbia River Buyback Proviso Implementation Update

October 2022

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Buyback Proviso Language

(65) \$14,400,000 of the general fund—state appropriation for fiscal year 2023 is provided solely for the department to reduce the number of nontribal commercial gillnet fishing licenses on the Columbia River through a voluntary buy-back program.

(a) Until November 30, 2022, the department may pay up to \$25,000 each for licenses that have been inactive since 2019 and up to \$120,000 each for licenses that have been active since 2019. After November 30, 2022, the department may pay up to \$20,000 each for licenses that have been inactive since 2019 and up to \$96,000 each for licenses that have been active since 2019. It is the intent of the legislature that this will be the last appropriation made to buy back licenses for the Columbia River gillnet fishery.

(b) For all licenses purchased, the department shall calculate the reduced impacts to wild and endangered stocks based on the most recent five-year average of harvest and reserve those impacts for conservation through increased wild salmonid escapement or mark selective fisheries capable of harvesting surplus hatchery-reared salmon where needed to meet federal genetic protection requirements for wild salmon populations in a manner consistent with state-tribal fishery management agreements.

(c) The department must make recommendations to the legislature for any necessary changes in statute, regulations, or program funding levels to transition lower Columbia River mainstem gillnet fisheries to alternative, selective fishing gears, including pound nets or other gears capable of benefitting wild salmon conservation through mark-selective harvest practices. The recommendation must be submitted to the appropriate committees of the legislature by December 1, 2022.



Buyback Proviso Implementation Timeline

✓ April Final budget signed Notice to license holders

📄 May Application materials sent to license holders

❓ June - Sept Information sessions

✉️ Sept 19 DUE: Acceptance of Purchase and Retirement/ Declaration of Intent

🔄 Oct 31 DUE: Acceptance of Purchase and Retirement for active licenses

🔄 Jan – May Potential Round Two

📄 June 30 Funds expire Last checks must be paid



Program Structure

Implementation approach

- Make sure program is voluntary and accessible to all interested license holders
- Follow directives stated in the Legislative proviso

Separate tracks for active and inactive licenses

- Inactive – fixed price at \$25,000 (max price in proviso)
- Active – price based on interest \$70,000 - \$120,000 (final price based on number of applicants interested)

For the purposes of the program

- Active – license was in active status 2019, 2020 OR 2021
- Inactive – license was on waiver 2019, 2020 AND 2021
- 2022 license status does not impact eligibility
- Landings do not impact eligibility



How to apply?

Inactive License Holders

- ✓ Fill out and return Acceptance of License Purchase and Retirement form by Sept 19, 2022 along with W-9 to WDFW Fiscal Office, Dept. of Fish & Wildlife, PO Box 43160, Olympia WA 98504-3160

Active License Holders

- ✓ Fill out and return Declaration of Intent form by Sept 19, 2022 to WDFW Fiscal Office, Dept. of Fish & Wildlife, PO Box 43160, Olympia WA 98504-3160
- ✓ Receive final price and paperwork from WDFW in late September
- ✓ Fill out and return Acceptance of License Purchase and Retirement form and SWV registration form by Oct 31, 2022



Communications and Outreach

Communications Tools

- Website: <https://wdfw.wa.gov/licenses/commercial/columbia-river-license-reduction>
- Program description
- Frequently Asked Questions

Public meetings

- Virtual
- In-person

Direct contact with all CR-WB CR-GH license holders



Buyback Info- sessions Meeting Schedule

THURSDAY, JUNE 2, 2022

Virtual information session

5-7 p.m.

Held via Zoom

Meeting materials

[Presentation](#)

TUESDAY, JUNE 14, 2022

Longview

5-7 p.m.

In-person meeting

Lower Columbia College, Main Classroom 145

1600 Maple Street, Longview, WA 98632

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 15, 2022

Ilwaco

5-7 p.m.

In-person meeting

Ilwaco Community Center

158 1st Avenue North, Ilwaco, WA 98624

TUESDAY, SEPT. 6, 2022

Ridgefield

5-7 p.m.

Hybrid (Virtual/in-person) meeting

[Attend via Zoom](#)

WDFW Ridgefield Office

5525 S 11th Street, Ridgefield, WA 98642

Dial-in: 253-215-8782

Meeting ID: 848 7727 0223

Passcode: 354250

WEDNESDAY, SEPT. 7, 2022

Raymond

5-7 p.m.

In-person meeting

Timberland Library

507 Duryea Street, Raymond, WA 98577

THURSDAY, SEPT. 8, 2022

Ilwaco

5-7 p.m.

In-person meeting

Ilwaco Community Center

158 1st Avenue North, Ilwaco, WA 98624



WA Commercial Salmon Gillnet License Quick Stats

*Active declaration forms are not legally binding, license holders must opt in with a final application postmarked by Oct 31, 2022. The final number of active applicants will not be known until early November when final applications are received.

Total licenses	240
Total active (active 2019, 2020 or 2021)	179
Total active w/ CR landings	91
Total active w/o CR landings	88
Total active declaration forms received (final apps due Oct 31)	153 (114 WB, 39 GH)
Total inactive (on waiver 2019, 2020 and 2021)	61
Total inactive w/ CR landings	5
Total inactive w/o CR landings	56
Total inactive applications received	18 (13 WB, 5 GH)



Next Steps

**Oct.–
Nov.** Assist license holders through application process, work with OFM and fiscal to process payments.

**Nov.–
Dec.** Work on subsection c report to legislature on alternative gear and ECF.

**Jan.–
May** Potential round two buyback offering (if funds remain after round one).

June Final payments must be paid for round two, do sub b calculation of harvest constraints.

Emerging Commercial Fishery

