



# Strengthening charter stamp laws

HB 1341 & SB 5464



## Problem:

Under state law, charter boat operators and fishing guides can purchase multiple fishing license stamps – each good for one day of fishing – from Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW). The boat operators and fishing guides can then re-sell these stamps to anglers who arrive at the dock without a valid fishing license, avoiding delays in the day's fishing trip.

However, some charter boat operators and guides have avoided purchasing the proper number of stamps by intentionally reissuing previously used licenses to different customers.

Several investigations by WDFW Police officers have uncovered this activity, resulting in thousands of dollars – \$10,000 in one case alone – of lost fishing license revenue that should have gone to the state.

Unfortunately, these cases could not be prosecuted because of deficiencies in state law.

## Proposed solution:

WDFW proposes adding a new section to the Fish and Wildlife Enforcement Code (Chapter 77.15 RCW) to make it a crime for licensed game fish guides, food fish guides, or charter boat operators to fail to perform duties required under RCW 77.32.430 or violate any department rule regarding the sale, possession, issuing, or reporting of temporary fishing licenses, temporary short-term charter stamps, or catch record cards. Violation of this section is a gross misdemeanor.

The charter boat and guide fishing industry supports WDFW's proposal to create a criminal penalty associated with reissuing charter stamps.

## Benefits:

The goal is to discourage this behavior and help ensure the state does not lose revenue from licensing the industry's clients. In addition, the proposed changes would level the playing field for charter boat operators and fishing guides who properly license their clients.



## Contact Information:

### Mike Cenci

WDFW Enforcement Deputy Chief  
360-581-3305  
mike.cenci@dfw.wa.gov

### Ann Larson

WDFW Legislative Liaison  
360-902-2226  
ann.larson@dfw.wa.gov

[wdfw.wa.gov](http://wdfw.wa.gov)

