



State of Washington  
DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE

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Main Office Location: Natural Resources Building, 1111 Washington Street, Olympia, WA

January 18, 2024

The Honorable June Robinson  
Chair, Senate Ways and Means  
303 John A. Cherberg Building  
Post Office Box 40466  
Olympia, WA 98504-0466

The Honorable Timm Ormsby  
Chair, House Appropriations  
315 John L. O'Brien Building  
Post Office Box 40600  
Olympia, WA 98504-0600

The Honorable Kevin Van De Wege  
Chair, Senate Agriculture, Water,  
Natural Resources, and Parks  
212 John A. Cherberg Building  
Post Office Box 40424  
Olympia, WA 98504-0424

The Honorable Mike Chapman  
Chair, House Rural Development,  
Agriculture, and Natural Resources  
132B Legislative Building  
Post Office Box 40600  
Olympia, WA 98504-0600

Dear Chairs Robinson, Ormsby, Van De Wege, and Chapman:

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (Department) is required to submit a report to the legislature pursuant to RCW 77.32.070 (2)(b) and (3)(b) regarding the harvest reporting requirement, administrative penalty, and amount of administrative penalty collected.

The Washington Fish and Wildlife Commission has the authority to set an administrative penalty for failure to comply with rules requiring hunters and fishers to report harvest or attempted harvest of fish and wildlife. The Commission has adopted rules requiring hunters and fishers who fail to complete their report to pay an administrative penalty of ten dollars before issuing a new hunting license or Puget Sound Dungeness crab catch record card. The administrative penalty per hunter and fisher cannot exceed ten dollars per RCW 77.32.070.

The current completed reporting and complementary survey work are the basis for making estimates of harvest and planning of future fisheries or hunting seasons.

If you have any questions regarding this report, please contact Tom McBride, WDFW Legislative Director, at (360) 480-1472.

Sincerely,

Kelly Sussewind  
Director

# Hunter and Fisher Compliance

## Harvest Reporting and Administrative Penalties

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Washington  
Department of  
**FISH &  
WILDLIFE**

Dec. 31, 2023

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Cover photo by Pete Lolos

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## Background

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) relies on hunter and fisher reporting as a method to assess effort and harvest rates and set future seasons. To incentivize reporting, the Department provides promotions and increased opportunities for hunters and fishers who self-report their harvest in a timely manner.

The Washington Fish and Wildlife Commission (Commission) has the authority to set an administrative penalty for failure to comply with rules requiring hunters and fishers to report harvest or attempted harvest of fish and wildlife. The Commission has adopted rules requiring hunters and fishers who fail to complete their report to pay an administrative penalty of ten dollars before issuing a new hunting license or Puget Sound Dungeness crab catch record card. The total administrative penalty per hunter and fisher cannot exceed ten dollars ([RCW 77.32.070](#)).

Pursuant to [RCW 77.32.070](#) (2)(b) and (3)(b), the Department is required to submit an annual report to the legislature for hunter and fisher compliance with the harvest reporting requirement and the administrative penalties collected. The hunter compliance requirement applies to deer, elk, bear, and turkey licenses as well as the migratory game bird licenses. The fisher compliance requirement is specific to Puget Sound Dungeness crab catch record cards.

# 2022 – 2023 Compliance Data and Penalty Revenue Collected

## Penalties for failure to report

Hunters and anglers pay administrative penalties for non-compliance of reporting requirements in the prior license year. Therefore, the revenue collected reflects non-compliance in the prior year and a purchase in a subsequent year. License year revenue data more accurately measures customer intentions to participate between April and March (the license year) than fiscal year data. Licenses can be purchased as early as the December prior to the start of the license year. Fiscal year revenue can shift between license years based on customer purchase habits.

## Hunter compliance

A hunter must submit a compliance report for each harvest or attempt to harvest. Compliance is measured at the individual report level, and a single hunter may submit all, some, or none of their required reports. These results are the distribution of big game and migratory game bird reporting requirements for license year (LY) 2022 and subsequent penalties collected for non-compliance so far in LY 2023. Big game reports include deer, elk, black bear, and turkey. Migratory bird reports include brant, snow goose, band-tailed pigeon, sea duck, and Canada goose.

For information on hunting and trapping statistics for the 2022 license year, visit the [Department of Fish and Wildlife Game Harvests Reports web page](#).

**Table 1. Hunter reporting compliance rates for license year 2022**

Reporting Compliance – Big Game	Reporting Compliance – Migratory Birds
55.34%	23.26%

**Table 2. Administrative penalties collected in LY 2023<sup>1</sup> for hunter reporting non-compliance in LY 2022**

Amount of Hunter Penalties Collected
\$588,500

<sup>1</sup> LY 2023 started on April 1, 2023, and runs through March 31, 2024. Penalties will continue to be collected until the end of the license year. The amount shown is accurate as of 12/21/2023.

## Fisher compliance

A Dungeness crab catch record card (CRC) is issued when a fisher obtains a Puget Sound crab endorsement from any license vendor. Fishery managers rely on catch record cards to manage the Puget Sound Dungeness crab fishery and plan for future seasons. One CRC is valid for the summer fishing season and another CRC is valid for the fall/winter season.

**Table 3. Fisher reporting compliance rates for the summer season of LY 2022<sup>2</sup>**

Reporting Compliance – Summer
42%

<sup>2</sup> Data has not yet been analyzed for the fall/winter portion of LY 2022. The percent of catch cards reported is accurate as of 11/1/2023.

**Table 4. Administrative penalties collected in LY 2023<sup>3</sup> for fisher reporting non-compliance in LY 2022**

Amount of Fisher Penalties Collected
\$587,760

<sup>3</sup> LY 2023 started on April 1, 2023, and runs through March 31, 2024. Penalties will continue to be collected until the end of the license year. The amount shown is accurate as of 12/21/2023.