

## Commercial Salmon Quick Reporting WAC Potential Revision

1/26/23

Commercial catches of salmon in Washington, along with catches of other foodfish and shellfish, are tracked by fish receiving tickets completed by buyers at the time of purchase. [WAC 220-352](#) covers all the details of reporting and recordkeeping requirements. When fish are landed commercially a fish ticket is completely by a buyer, with four copies of the ticket are generated. Two are kept by the buyer for their records, one is given to the fisher, and one must be received by WDFW no later than the sixth working day after the ticket was completed. Fish tickets include information on the license holder, boat name, fishing gear used, date, catch area, and number, pounds and value of each species landed, among other things – a full list of required information is listed in [WAC 220-352-040](#). The fish receiving tickets and database housing the data from those tickets comprise our system for tracking commercial catch.

By the late 1990's, the department saw the need to obtain commercial landing data for salmon fisheries in a timelier manner for in-season management of fisheries. A "Quick Reporting" system was developed and implemented to address this need. This system requires buyers to submit some information on fish landed by phone, FAX or email before 10 AM the day after the landing/purchase of fish, for any fisheries that are designated in the WAC as "Quick Reporting required." The required information for a quick report is much more limited than the full fish ticket, and includes the fish receiving ticket number, date, gear, catch area, species, and number and pounds of fish landed. While these quick reports can later be matched to the fish ticket to obtain information on individual vessels, no information currently required through quick reporting can be linked to individual vessels until the fish receiving ticket is received by WDFW, although some buyers do just submit the full fish ticket via email immediately to meet the Quick Reporting requirement. Quick reporting requirements are found in different WAC sections for different fisheries. As an example, Puget Sound salmon requirements are found in [WAC 220-352-325](#), and Coastal salmon troll requirements are found in [WAC 220-352-330](#).

Managing to quotas and catch shares in our commercial salmon fisheries in more recent years has gotten more difficult as margins for error have gotten smaller. In the long term, the Fish Ticket system will move to electronic reporting and will likely eliminate the lag in more detailed information being received by fishery management staff. In the interim, WDFW staff have the need to be able to track landings to the individual vessel level in a shorter time frame than what the current fish ticket / quick reporting systems allow. Recent ocean troll seasons have included measures like weekly vessel landing limits of as few as 10 fish, and last season's South Puget Sound chum fishery was conducted as a limited participation opportunity with a small subset of 5 purse seine and 10 gillnet vessels selected to participate each week. Having information included in quick reports that made each landing identifiable to vessel in these fisheries would allow Department staff to make in-season catch estimates and projections with more certainty much sooner than the current rules allow, as we would be able to match up landings reported to vessels that were observed participating in each fishery. This change would not require collection of any additional information, but would only require transmission of information already being collected the day after fish are purchased. Staff would like to initiate rulemaking to explore modification of the Quick Reporting rules to require additional information for Puget Sound and Coastal Troll salmon fisheries. This is a minor rule change that does not seem to rise to the level needing a Commission process, and staff would like the Commission to consider delegating authority to the Director to undertake rule-making.

Proposed Motion Language:

In order to improve the ability of the Department to assess catches more quickly and accurately during fishing seasons, I move that the Commission delegate authority to the Director to undertake rule-making for Quick Reporting requirements for Coastal salmon troll and Puget Sound commercial salmon fisheries in [WAC 220-352-330](#) and [WAC 220-352-325](#).