

RCW 77.15.370 Unlawful recreational fishing in the first degree

—Penalty—Criminal wildlife penalty assessment. (1) A person is guilty of unlawful recreational fishing in the first degree if:

(a) The person takes or possesses two times or more than the bag limit or possession limit of fish or shellfish allowed by any rule of the director or commission setting the amount of food fish, game fish, or shellfish that can be taken or possessed for noncommercial use;

(b) The person fishes in a fishway;

(c) The person shoots, gaffs, snags, snares, spears, dipnets, or stones fish or shellfish in state waters, or possesses fish or shellfish taken by such means, unless such means are authorized by express department rule;

(d) The person fishes for or possesses a fish listed as threatened or endangered in 50 C.F.R. Sec. 223.102 (2006) or Sec. 224.101 (2010), unless fishing for or possessing such fish is specifically allowed under federal or state law;

(e) The person possesses a white sturgeon measuring in excess of the maximum size limit as established by rules adopted by the department;

(f) The person possesses a green sturgeon of any size; or

(g) (i) The person possesses a wild salmon or wild steelhead during a season closed for wild salmon or wild steelhead.

(ii) For the purposes of this subsection:

(A) "Wild salmon" means a salmon with an unclipped adipose fin, regardless of whether the salmon's ventral fin is clipped. A salmon is considered to have an unclipped adipose fin if it does not have a healed scar at the location of the clipped adipose fin.

(B) "Wild steelhead" means a steelhead with no fins clipped.

(2) Unlawful recreational fishing in the first degree is a gross misdemeanor.

(3) In addition to the penalties set forth in subsection (2) of this section, if a person is convicted of violating this section and the violation results in the death of fish listed in this subsection, the court shall require payment of the following amounts for each fish taken or possessed. This is a criminal wildlife penalty assessment that must be paid to the clerk of the court and distributed each month to the state treasurer for deposit in the fish and wildlife enforcement reward account created in RCW 77.15.425:

(a) White sturgeon longer than fifty-five inches in fork length, two thousand dollars;

(b) Green sturgeon, two thousand dollars; and

(c) Wild salmon or wild steelhead, five hundred dollars.

(4) If two or more persons are convicted under subsection (1) of this section, and subsection (3) of this section is applicable, the criminal wildlife penalty assessment must be imposed against the persons jointly and severally.

(5) (a) The criminal wildlife penalty assessment under subsection (3) of this section must be imposed regardless of and in addition to any sentence, fines, or costs otherwise provided for violating any provision of this section. The criminal wildlife penalty assessment must be included by the court in any pronouncement of sentence and may not be suspended, waived, modified, or deferred in any respect.

(b) This subsection may not be construed to abridge or alter alternative rights of action or remedies in equity or under common law or statutory law, criminal or civil.

(6) A defaulted criminal wildlife penalty assessment authorized under subsection (3) of this section may be collected by any means authorized by law for the enforcement of orders of the court or collection of a fine or costs, including but not limited to vacation of a deferral of sentencing or vacation of a suspension of sentence.

(7) The department shall revoke the fishing license and suspend the fishing privileges of a person assessed a criminal wildlife penalty assessment under this section until the penalty assessment is paid through the registry of the court in which the penalty assessment was assessed.

(8) The criminal wildlife penalty assessments provided in subsection (3) of this section must be doubled in the following instances:

(a) When a person commits a violation that requires payment of a criminal wildlife penalty assessment within five years of a prior gross misdemeanor or felony conviction under this title; or

(b) When the trier of fact determines that the person took or possessed the fish in question with the intent of bartering, selling, or otherwise deriving economic profit from the fish or fish parts.
[2016 c 64 s 1; 2014 c 48 s 13; 2012 c 176 s 22; 2009 c 333 s 17; 2005 c 406 s 3; 2001 c 253 s 38; 1998 c 190 s 19.]