

## **WDFW Commission to Consider Sportfishing Rules, Multi-Season Hunting Permits**

### **Local News**

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OLYMPIA, Wash. - The Washington Fish and Wildlife Commission will consider adopting a new package of sportfishing rules for 2012-13, as well as an increase in the number of multiple season hunting permits issued each year, during a public meeting Feb. 3-4 in Olympia. The commission, a nine-member citizen panel appointed by the governor to set policy for the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW), will convene for its regular meeting Feb. 3-4 in Room 172 of the Natural Resources Building, 1111 Washington St. S.E. The meeting is scheduled to begin at 8:30 a.m. both days. A complete meeting agenda is available on the commission's website at <http://wdfw.wa.gov/commission/meetings.html>. During the two-day meeting, the commission will consider adopting 18 sportfishing rules, which were developed with public input and discussed at the commission's December and January meetings.

The proposals range from closing steelhead fisheries earlier in a number of rivers in the Puget Sound area to allowing anglers to fish with two poles on the Pend Oreille River and the lower Spokane River. All changes proposed by WDFW are posted at [http://wdfw.wa.gov/fishing/regulations/rule\\_proposals/](http://wdfw.wa.gov/fishing/regulations/rule_proposals/). In other action, the commission will consider a bid to increase the number of multiple season hunting permits issued each year. Since 2006, WDFW has conducted annual drawings for multiple-season hunting permits, which allow a certain number of hunters to participate in all general hunting seasons for deer and elk. Without the special permit, hunters must choose among archery, muzzleloader or modern firearm seasons. WDFW has proposed increasing the number of deer permits from 4,000 currently to 8,500, and the number of elk permits from 850 to 1,250. State wildlife managers told the commission in January that increasing permit levels will expand hunting opportunities without posing a risk to deer and elk populations. Also during the February meeting, the commission will consider a 165-acre land acquisition in Okanogan County for fish and wildlife habitat. The commission also will receive briefings on the 2011 Puget Sound recreational and commercial crab fishing seasons, changes to the recreational clam and oyster seasons on Puget Sound beaches, the Wildlife Program, the Colockum elk herd, sanitary shellfish enforcement, and the inland fish stocking strategy and marketing plan.