

Columbia River Basin Endorsement

Highlights:

- Required for salmon, steelhead or sturgeon fishing on all rivers and tributaries in the Columbia River Basin.
- Cost is \$9.75 for an annual endorsement or \$1 per day for a daily licenses.
- The endorsement helps fund the transition of non-tribal commercial gill nets out of the mainstem Columbia River into enhanced off-channel areas, freeing up additional salmon and steelhead for sport fishing.
- No angler dollars are planned for commercial buyouts, purchase of alternative gear, or other reimbursements to commercial fishermen.

When, where and how much

Beginning Jan. 1, 2014, all anglers fishing for salmon, steelhead or sturgeon (catch-and-release and retention) in the Columbia River Basin will be required to purchase a Columbia River Basin endorsement.

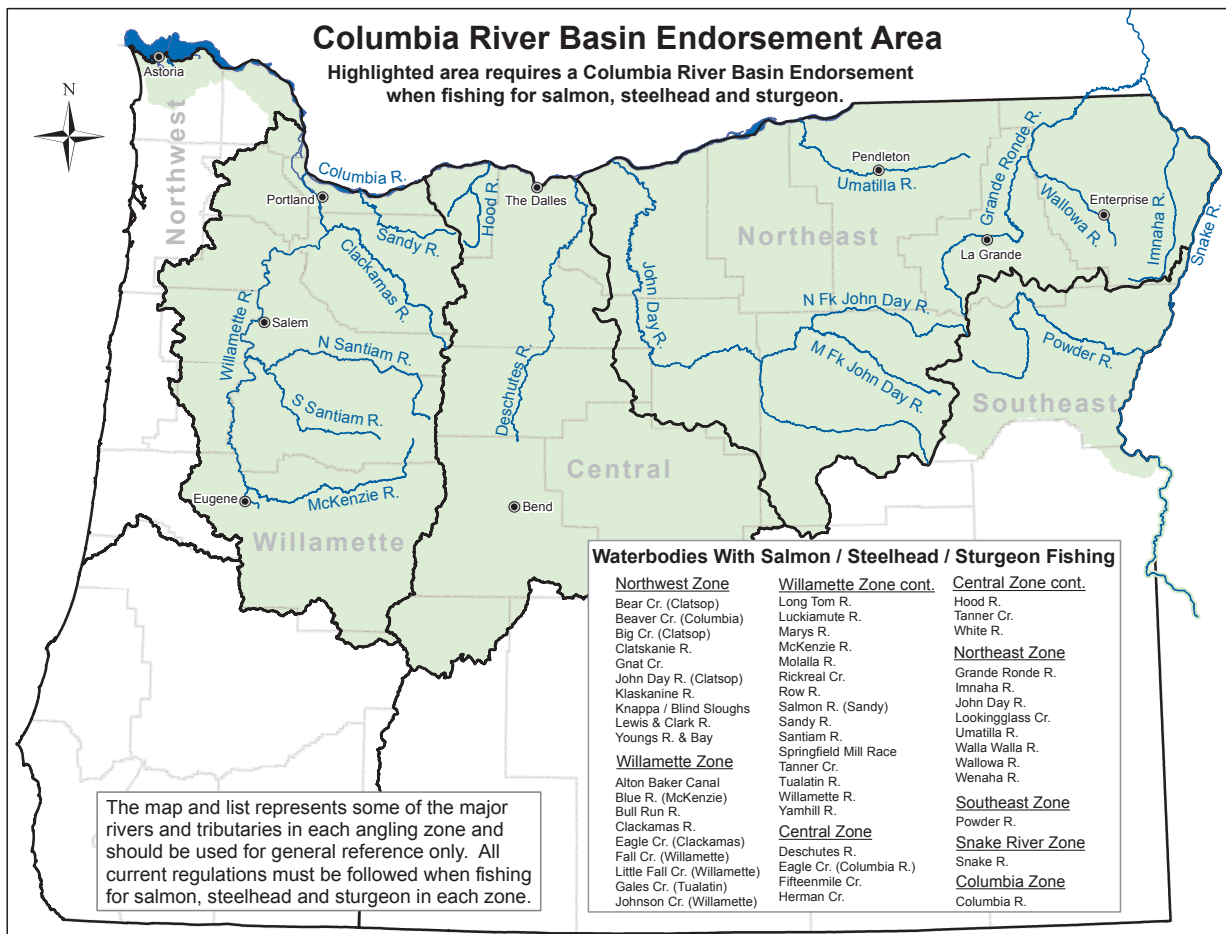
The endorsement will be in addition to a fishing license and Combined Angling Tag. The cost is \$9.75 a year when purchased with an annual fishing license, or \$9.75 plus a \$2 agent fee when purchased separately. The cost is \$1 per day for daily fishing licenses.

The endorsement is required on all rivers and tributaries in Oregon that ultimately empty into the Columbia River. This includes:

- Columbia and Snake rivers,
- All rivers and tributaries in the Willamette, Central and Northeast zones (as described in the Oregon Sport Fishing Regulations booklet), and
- Those rivers in the northern section of the Northwest Zone that drain into the Columbia River.
- See map and list of some the major rivers and tributaries below.

The endorsement may be purchased wherever fishing licenses are sold, including ODFW offices that sell licenses, authorized license dealers and on the ODFW website. It will go on sale beginning Dec. 1, 2013.

Anglers with a resident disabled veteran, resident pioneer, and resident and non-resident youth under 14 licenses will be issued a free endorsement upon request. They will need an endorsement to fish for salmon, steelhead or sturgeon in the Columbia River Basin.



Reason for endorsement

The endorsement helps fund the transition of non-tribal commercial gill nets out of the mainstem Columbia River, freeing up additional salmon and steelhead for sport fishing. This is part of a package of Columbia River fish management and reform actions adopted by the Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission and their Washington counterparts. The package includes a higher priority for sport fishing in the mainstem Columbia River, improved commercial fishing with gill nets in off-channel areas of the lower Columbia River, use of alternative commercial fishing gears and techniques in the mainstem lower Columbia River, and improved fish conservation by better targeting of hatchery runs.

The endorsement is a key part of Senate Bill 830, which was passed by the Oregon Legislature and signed into law in 2013 with the support of several sport fishing organizations.

SB 830 deposits money from the endorsement in a Columbia River Fisheries Enhancement Fund to help enhance fisheries, optimize the economic benefits of fisheries and advance native fish conservation.

SB 830 also created a separate Columbia River Fisheries Transition Fund to provide financial assistance to individual commercial fishermen affected by the new law – including the potential purchase of alternative gear. This fund received state general funds appropriated by the Legislature and does not use any money from the endorsement fund.

Additional information

What if I'm just fishing catch-and-release, especially when sturgeon retention is not allowed?

If you're fishing for salmon, steelhead or sturgeon within the Columbia River Basin – catch-and-release or retention – the endorsement is required.

Do I have to buy an endorsement at the same time I buy my fishing license?

The endorsement can be purchased separately at any time during the year. However, there will be an additional \$2 transaction fee for endorsements sold separately.

Do I need an endorsement for every hatchery tag I buy?

No. An annual endorsement covers a year of fishing, regardless of the number of hatchery tags.

What about salmon or steelhead seasons that open later in the year under emergency regulations?

If the river is in the Columbia River Basin and you are fishing for salmon, steelhead or sturgeon, you will need the endorsement regardless of when or how the season was set.

Is the endorsement permanent?

Under SB 830, the Columbia River Fisheries Enhancement Fund, along with the endorsement, is set to expire in 2021.

What is meant by the Columbia River Basin?

The Columbia River Basin includes all rivers and tributaries that drain into the Columbia River, including the Snake River and its tributaries. It does not include coastal rivers or some rivers in central and southern Oregon. See the attached map for details.

How much money will the endorsement raise?

ODFW estimates sales of the endorsement (annual and daily combined) will be about \$1 million a year.

Does this take into account the number of anglers who may just stop fishing for salmon, steelhead and sturgeon rather than pay the additional fee?

Yes. Our economic analysis does predict some anglers will decide not to fish for salmon, steelhead or sturgeon in the Columbia Basin – either because they stop fishing for these fish or because they choose to fish in places that do not require the endorsement.

How will the changes on the lower Columbia River benefit salmon, steelhead and sturgeon anglers fishing in mainstem and tributary areas above Bonneville Dam and Willamette Falls?

The endorsement is part of a larger suite of management changes that was negotiated in order to remove commercial gillnets from the lower river. Once the harvest reforms are completed we expect there will be benefits to:

- 1) Wild fish: Removal of less selective gillnets will allow mainstem fisheries to target more hatchery fish and thus reduce the number of hatchery fish on wild fish spawning grounds.
- 2) Anglers above Bonneville Dam and Willamette Falls: Providing a higher priority to sport fishing in the mainstem Columbia River will free up more fish for sport anglers, including sport fisheries above Bonneville Dam and Willamette Falls.