

Senate Bill 1509

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SUMMARY

The following summary is not prepared by the sponsors of the measure and is not a part of the body thereof subject to consideration by the Legislative Assembly. It is an editor's brief statement of the essential features of the measure **as introduced**. The statement includes a measure digest written in compliance with applicable readability standards.

Digest: The Act stops the lottery for Columbia River gillnet fishing permits. The Act directs an agency to create a short-term program for buying the permits from willing sellers. The Act directs an agency to report on a due date on creating a long-term version of the program. The Act goes into effect when the Governor signs it. (Flesch Readability Score: 63.2).

Eliminates the lottery for Columbia River gillnet vessel permits.

Directs the State Fish and Wildlife Commission to establish a Columbia River gillnet vessel permit purchase program that ends on January 2, 2026.

Directs the State Department of Fish and Wildlife to report to interim committees of the Legislative Assembly that relate to natural resources, on or before September 15, 2024, on establishing a Columbia River gillnet vessel permit buyback program.

Declares an emergency, effective on passage.

A BILL FOR AN ACT

1
2 Relating to Columbia River fisheries; creating new provisions; amending ORS 508.778; repealing ORS
3 508.792; and declaring an emergency.

4 **Be It Enacted by the People of the State of Oregon:**

5 **SECTION 1. ORS 508.792 is repealed.**

6 **SECTION 2.** ORS 508.778 is amended to read:

7 508.778. [*Except as provided in ORS 508.792, no*] **On or after the effective date of this 2024**
8 **Act**, new vessel permits [*shall*] **may not** be issued.

9 **SECTION 3. (1) As used in this section:**

10 (a) **"Columbia River gillnet vessel permit"** means a permit required by ORS 508.775.

11 (b) **"Inactive permit"** means a Columbia River gillnet vessel permit not used for Columbia
12 **River salmon landings in any calendar year from 2021 to 2025.**

13 (2) **The State Fish and Wildlife Commission shall establish a program to purchase inac-**
14 **tive permits. Under the program, the State Department of Fish and Wildlife may:**

15 (a) **Solicit voluntary offers from holders of inactive permits;**

16 (b) **Rank offers according to price and 2021 to 2025 average annual Columbia River salmon**
17 **gillnet landings;**

18 (c) **Purchase inactive permits based on the lowest price per average annual landings first;**
19 **and**

20 (d) **Accept offers of no more than \$20,000.**

21 (3) **The department shall retire all inactive permits purchased under subsection (2) of this**
22 **section.**

23 (4) **Notwithstanding ORS 508.793, a person may not transfer or sell an inactive permit**
24 **except as provided in subsection (2) of this section.**

NOTE: Matter in **boldfaced** type in an amended section is new; matter [*italic and bracketed*] is existing law to be omitted. New sections are in **boldfaced** type.

1 (5) A person that sells an inactive permit to the department under subsection (2) of this
2 section may not hold a Columbia River gillnet vessel permit after the date on which the in-
3 active permit was sold.

4 (6) The commission may adopt rules as needed to implement this section.

5 **SECTION 4.** Section 3 of this 2024 Act is repealed on January 2, 2026.

6 **SECTION 5.** (1) As used in this section:

7 (a) “Active permit” means a Columbia River gillnet vessel permit used for Columbia
8 River salmon landings in any calendar year from 2021 to 2025.

9 (b) “Columbia River gillnet vessel permit” means a permit required by ORS 508.775.

10 (c) “Inactive permit” means a Columbia River gillnet vessel permit not used for Columbia
11 River salmon landings in any calendar year from 2021 to 2025.

12 (2) On or before September 15, 2024, the State Department of Fish and Wildlife shall re-
13 port, in the manner described in ORS 192.245, to interim committees of the Legislative As-
14 sembly that relate to natural resources on the Columbia River gillnet fishery.

15 (3) The report must include, but need not be limited to:

16 (a) An analysis of Columbia River gillnet vessel permit holders, separated by mainstem
17 and Select Area Fishery Enhancement Project areas, that distinguishes between active per-
18 mits and inactive permits, as determined by salmon landings, other fish landings and value
19 estimates, since 2017.

20 (b) The number and species of smolts released in the Select Area Fishery Enhancement
21 Project areas.

22 (c) Estimates of the escapement of endangered and wild salmon stocks and of the number
23 of hatchery-reared salmon available for recreational angling, based on Columbia River com-
24 mercial gillnet landings since 2017.

25 (d) A description of annual revenues from Columbia River endorsement fees.

26 (e) Recommendations on transitioning to live release selective fishing gears or other
27 gears that may benefit wild salmon conservation.

28 (f) A description of options for structuring a Columbia River gillnet vessel permit
29 buyback program, including a reverse auction system.

30 (g) Estimates of the level of funding needed to buy back active permits and inactive
31 permits offered by willing sellers.

32 (h) Recommendations on any changes to statutes, rules and funding levels that would be
33 needed to implement a buyback program that is intended to retire active permits and inac-
34 tive permits and reduce gillnet harvest levels in mainstem fisheries, including potential
35 measures to prohibit persons who sell active permits or inactive permits under the program
36 from reentering the Columbia River gillnet fishery.

37 (i) Analysis of how well a Columbia River gillnet vessel permit buyback program would
38 complement the Columbia River license reduction program operated by the Washington De-
39 partment of Fish and Wildlife.

40 (4) All recommendations in the report must be consistent with all fishery management
41 agreements between tribes and the State of Oregon.

42 **SECTION 6.** This 2024 Act being necessary for the immediate preservation of the public
43 peace, health and safety, an emergency is declared to exist, and this 2024 Act takes effect
44 on its passage.