



AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY

ISSUE 1

Mandatory Electronic Fish Ticket Reporting and Removal of Listed *Ad valorem* Fees

BACKGROUND

In 2009, the Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission launched an electronic fish ticket system to improve how commercial fish landings are reported along the West Coast. This system was designed to provide faster, more accurate data for managing fisheries that operate under quotas.

Oregon was the first state to adopt this system, giving fish dealers the option to submit landing reports electronically instead of using paper tickets provided by ODFW. This shift made the reporting process more efficient and allowed dealers to report landings in real time.

Soon after, NOAA Fisheries mandated electronic reporting for all West Coast Individual Fishing Quota (IFQ) fisheries. As a result, most commercial fish landings began being reported electronically and in near real time.

Building on this success, ODFW expanded electronic reporting requirements to include non-treaty Columbia River commercial fisheries, Oregon Dungeness crab, and bay clams. In 2025, Ocean Troll Salmon landings were also added to the list. Today, most commercial fishery data is submitted within 24 hours of landing—compared to delays of up to four weeks under the old paper system.

While electronic reporting remains optional for some smaller fisheries—like bait shrimp, razor clams, and Limited Fish Sellers—many dealers have voluntarily adopted the system because it simplifies monthly reporting and meets requirements from ODFW and Oregon’s commodity commissions. Currently, over 99% of all commercial landings in Oregon (by weight) are reported electronically.

Additionally, following the passage of House Bill 2342 during the 2025 Oregon Legislative Session, which updated commercial ad valorem fee rates (as defined in ORS 508.505), ODFW is proposing a housekeeping change to Oregon Administrative Rule 635-006-0215. The proposed update would remove the specific fee rates from the rule and instead reference the statute directly. The agency is also updating the Limited Fish Seller rule, OAR 635-006-0132, to reflect the current practice of reporting their catch prior to sales from their vessels.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

Fish Ticket staff have been working with fish dealers that are currently using paper fish tickets to inform them of the upcoming changes and to help them convert to electronic reporting. All fish dealers using paper tickets have been made aware of the new requirements for electronic reporting or have already converted to electronic reporting.

In anticipation of the Commission consideration of the proposed rules, the department published notice of the proposed rulemaking (Attachment 2). Additionally, the public has an opportunity to provide comment prior to (in writing) or (orally) during the hearing that occurs at the Commission meeting.

ANALYSIS

Today, more than 99% of all fish and shellfish caught commercially in Oregon are reported using an electronic system developed by the Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission. This shift has been driven by a combination of required reporting for certain fisheries and strong outreach and training efforts by ODFW staff.

Thanks to modern technology, fish dealers can now access the system from anywhere along the Oregon coast using smartphones, tablets, or computers. Compared to the old paper-based system, electronic reporting is faster and allows fishery managers to monitor landings in near real time. This timely data helps managers make informed decisions and potentially open up more fishing opportunities that would otherwise be missed due to delays in receiving paper tickets.

In 2025 alone, ODFW received over 22,000 fish tickets—95% of which were submitted electronically. Of the 291 licensed wholesale fish dealers, bait dealers, and limited fish sellers in Oregon:

- 194 use electronic reporting exclusively,
- 19 still use only paper tickets,
- and 7 use a mix of both.

Previously, paper tickets were printed through a private vendor, but that company has since gone out of business. If paper tickets are needed again, ODFW would have to go through a new bidding process, and printing costs are expected to be higher since no new books have been printed since 2017.

Currently, treaty tribes are exempt from mandatory electronic reporting under Oregon Administrative Rule 635-006-0210. However, all tribal members who submit fish tickets are already using the electronic system. If paper ticket supplies run low, ODFW will work with tribal dealers to explore options.

Given the widespread use of the electronic system and the benefits it provides, ODFW is proposing to make electronic reporting mandatory for all Oregon commercial fisheries.

OPTIONS

Option 1. Adopt the proposed rules and regulation changes as recommended by staff in Attachment 3.

Option 2. Modify the proposed rules.

Option 3. Reject the proposed rule and regulation changes.

ISSUE 2

Allow Catcher/Processors and Motherships to Land Commercial Fish into Oregon

BACKGROUND

The purpose of Issue 2 is to establish rules that would enable catcher/processors and motherships to land fish into Oregon ports.

The West Coast Pacific Hake (or whiting) fishery is comprised of mid-water trawl vessels from various ports along the west coast that deliver to shoreside processors or motherships. Motherships (MS) are at-sea processing ships that do not have the capability to catch fish. Additionally, there are Catcher/Processors (CP's) that actively fish for Hake and process the catch on board the same vessel. Both MS's and CP's are based out of the state of Washington and fish off the coast of Oregon during time periods when the majority of the hake stock biomass is in those areas. Under current Oregon Administrative Rule, pounds of fish landed must be reported based on condition at time of landing, either whole or dressed, and weighed using an Oregon Department of Agriculture (ODA) certified scale. However, this isn't practical for MS's and CP's which weigh catch onboard the vessel at sea prior to processing the fish. Therefore, current Oregon rules result in these vessels transiting their catch back to Washington where this practice of offloading finished product using vessel weights is allowed under Washington rule, costing both fuel and lost fishing time (4-5 days). These vessels participate in a highly regulated and monitored sector of the federal groundfish fishery; all catch is weighed at sea using scales that meet federal requirements and verified by federal observers (200% coverage) onboard the vessel. ODFW staff has confirmed with ODA that the scales used on MS's or CP's are appropriate for landing commodities in Oregon. The at-sea sectors are in the process of applying for a Federal Exempted Fishing Permit (EFP) to allow at-sea processing of hake south of 42° N. Lat. (the OR/CA border), which is currently prohibited. If that EFP is approved, there could be additional interest in offloading into Oregon ports, particularly Coos Bay.

In 2024, ODFW was approached by one of the CP companies inquiring into the possibility of amending our rules to allow them to land into Oregon ports. By landing into Oregon ports, these vessels would not have to transit back to Washington to unload and could fish more efficiently off the Oregon coast. Oregon ports would receive an economic benefit through the purchase of fuel, groceries, equipment, dock fees and other vessel related expenses. By allowing MS's and

CP's to land into Oregon, ODFW would also see an economic benefit through the collection of *ad valorem* fees from each offload.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

Staff has been working directly with the MS and CP companies to develop rules that would enable them to land into Oregon. During the fall of 2024, staff worked with these companies to develop temporary rules that allowed catcher/processors to land their catch in Oregon. These companies expressed interest in continuing to land in Oregon.

In anticipation of the Commission consideration of the proposed rules, the department published notice of the proposed rulemaking (Attachment 2). Additionally, the public has an opportunity to provide comment prior to (in writing) or (orally) during the hearing that occurs at the Commission meeting.

ANALYSIS

In 2024, three catcher/processor vessels from one company made landings into the port of Coos Bay during the West Coast Pacific Hake fishery. Each vessel purchased the required Oregon Vessel Licenses, personal commercial licenses for the fishing crew, as well as Wholesale Fish Dealers licenses to report the landed catch to ODFW. This resulted in more than \$12 million of hake products being offloaded in Oregon yielding over \$36 thousand in *ad valorem* fees for ODFW. These vessels also paid dock fees to ports, purchased groceries and fuel and other vessel operation related expenditures from local businesses.

The success of these rule amendments has resulted in these companies wanting to continue to use Oregon ports to land their product into. Staff proposes rules to make these changes permanent.

OPTIONS

Option 1. Adopt the proposed rule change as recommended by staff in Attachment 3.

Option 2. Modify the proposed rule change.

Option 3. Reject the proposed rule change.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: ISSUE 1

Option 1. Accept the proposed rule and regulation changes as recommended by staff in Attachment 3, with an effective date of January 1, 2026.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: ISSUE 2

Option 1. Adopt the proposed rule change as recommended by staff in Attachment 3, with an effective date of January 1, 2026.

Option 2. Modify the proposed rule change.

Option 3. Reject the proposed rule change.

DRAFT MOTION:

I move to amend OAR Chapter 635 Divisions 004, 005, and 006 as proposed by staff in Attachment 3.

EFFECTIVE DATE: January 1, 2026