

2020 Washington Fisheries Disaster Spending Plan Proposal

NOTE: Initial ex-vessel value and charter trip data were based on WDFW fish ticket database and initial charter trip estimates as of November 2020. A new data pull should be performed for final calculations for all allocations.

Overview

In 2021, Washington Governor Jay Inslee requested that the Secretary of Commerce declare commercial fishery failures due to a fishery resource disaster for 2020 Washington ocean troll and charter salmon fisheries and 2020 Puget Sound commercial salmon fisheries. Ex-vessel value and charter trip data provided to NOAA during their review of the requests estimated losses for those Washington license holders in each of those fisheries relative to the previous five-year period based on ex-vessel value and reduction in estimated number of charter trips. The percentage losses were 54% for the ocean troll, 49% for ocean charter and 77% for Puget Sound commercial. In May of 2023, the Secretary notified the Governor that the ocean salmon fisheries met the requirements for a commercial fishery failure under the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act and were eligible for fishery disaster assistance. NOAA later provided clarification that the declaration was intended to cover ocean and Puget Sound commercial salmon fisheries. NOAA later allocated \$3,445,150 of the \$220 million Congressional fishery disaster appropriation towards the 2020 Washington disasters.

The amount allocated to the 2020 disaster was 66.6% of the estimated ex-vessel value loss for the combined ocean troll and Puget Sound commercial disasters, but failed to include estimated charter losses in the base fishing revenue loss total. The Charter loss estimate was based on a reduction in salmon trips of 49% (9,585 trips in 2020 compared to 2015-19 average of 18,629) multiplied by an average trip prices of \$175, equaling an estimated loss of \$1,582,825. NOAA recommends that fishery disaster funds be used to strengthen the long-term economic and environmental stability of the affected fisheries, through activities like habitat restoration, research, buybacks or job retraining. The amount of funding available in response to the 2020 Washington disasters is small relative to the amount that would be needed to make meaningful progress through activities like those listed above across the affected fisheries. Because of the limited dollars and limited time available to develop more complex spend plan projects, The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) recommends that the funds be used as direct payments to license owners who were affected financially by the disasters. WDFW has sought input from fishing industry representatives for the affected fisheries while developing this spending plan.

WDFW recommends the available relief funds be divided between ocean troll, ocean charter and Puget Sound commercial fisheries proportionally to the estimated ex-vessel value losses as shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Estimated ex-vessel/charter revenue loss for 2020 Washington salmon fisheries relative to 2015-2019 averages

Fishery	Estimated ex-vessel/charter revenue loss	Percent of total loss
Ocean Troll	\$1,317,600	19.5%
Ocean Charter	\$1,582,825	23.4%
Puget Sound	\$3,867,721	57.1%
Total	\$6,768,146	100%

Ocean salmon

Troll

Identify eligible license holders

1. In order to be eligible for the relief program, license owner must have owned a Washington ocean salmon troll license during some portion of the 2020 ocean salmon troll season (May 1 – September 30), and
2. Must have owned a Washington ocean salmon troll license and actively participated in the ocean salmon troll fishery in at least one of the five years prior to the disaster (2015-19), and
3. Washington salmon delivery license holders who did not own a Washington salmon troll license but meet the same license ownership and participation criteria above using only a salmon delivery license are also eligible.

Calculate shares by license holder

Individual payments will be calculated using the following formula:

$$\text{Individual payment} = (a/b)*c$$

Where: a = individual's total ex-vessel value of troll fishery salmon landings from 2015-2019

b = total ex-vessel value for all troll fishery salmon landings by eligible licenses from 2015-2019

c = Total funds available for troll fishery

Charter

Identify eligible license holders

1. Must have owned a Washington ocean charter salmon license during the 2020 ocean recreational salmon season, and
2. Must have a documented paying salmon angler trip using a Washington ocean charter salmon license during the period 2015-2019.
3. License holders will not be allowed to claim another person's paying salmon angler trip history, unless it is included in a valid contract of sale. No two individuals can claim the same paying salmon angler history.

Calculate shares by license holder

- Eligible license owners must submit logs documenting their total paid salmon angler trips for their best year (highest number of trips) between 2015 and 2019.
- Eligible license owners must also submit logs documenting their number of paid salmon angler trips during the 2020 disaster year.
- Applicants should be required to legally attest that their submitted logs are complete and accurate.
- For each license, the reduction in number of salmon trips in 2020 relative to their best year between 2015 and 2019 will be calculated.
- Total lost trips for all eligible license owners who submit applications will be calculated.
- Individual payments will be calculated according to the following formula:

$$\text{Individual payment} = (a/b)*c$$

Where: a = individual's number of lost trips in 2020 relative to best year

b = total lost trips in 2020 relative to best year for all eligible licenses

c = Total funds available for charter license holders

Puget Sound

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife recommends that the criteria below be used to distribute funds for the 2020 disaster. These criteria are similar to the criteria used for previous Fraser sockeye disasters and with industry input developed during development of spend plans for those disasters, but use ex-vessel value for the entire fishery rather than landed sockeye numbers due to the multi-species nature of the 2020 disaster:

Identify Eligible License Owners

1. In order to be eligible for the relief program, individuals must have owned a Puget Sound Purse Seine (PS), Puget Sound Gill Net (GN), or Puget Sound Reef Net (RN) License during some portion of the 2020 commercial season (July – November)
2. Catch history belongs to the individual holding the license at the time of the catch. License holders will not be allowed to claim another person's catch unless it is included in a valid contract of sale. No two license holders can claim the same catch history. Within these restrictions, license holders who sold a license with sockeye catch history may be able to use that catch history in the following situations:
 - a. If a license holder sold a license with qualifying catch history prior to June 30, 2020, but purchased another license that provided the option to participate in the 2020 Puget Sound fishery, their catch history from the license sold can be used in determining their eligibility for this program.
 - b. If a license holder owned multiple licenses during the base period, but sold one of those licenses prior to June 30, 2020, the catch history from the license sold can be used in determining eligibility for this program under the retained license. If the license holder had catch history on the license sold and on the license retained, either history can be used in determining eligibility, but they cannot be combined.

Calculate Shares by Gear Group

Funds for the 2020 Puget Sound commercial salmon disaster will be allocated between license types (gill net, purse seine and reef net) in the same proportions as the average ex-vessel value between license types for the 5 years prior to the disaster (2015-2019).

Puget Sound beach seine fisheries are designated as an emerging commercial fishery, and potential eligibility for disaster relief is unclear. Beach seine fisheries are licensed/permitted through a different process than other Puget Sound commercial salmon licenses, although a limited entry Puget Sound commercial license is required to participate in the beach seine fishery. Regardless of eligibility of an emerging commercial fishery for disaster funding, economic analysis of the beach seine fishery shows that it did not meet the disaster

requirements, in fact ex-vessel value exceeded the average for the five-year period prior to the disaster, so disaster funding will not be allocated to this gear type.

Table X. Puget Sound salmon total ex-vessel values and average & by gear type 2014-2019

Year	GILL NET	PURSE SEINE	REEF NET	Grand Total
2015	\$1,029,045	\$2,412,706	\$125,408	\$3,567,159
2016	\$1,381,993	\$2,316,232	\$31,298	\$3,729,524
2017	\$1,896,682	\$5,302,752	\$104,841	\$7,304,275
2018	\$2,119,823	\$5,601,597	\$603,501	\$8,324,921
2019	\$393,852	\$882,904	\$86,165	\$1,362,921
Grand Total	\$6,821,396	\$16,516,191	\$951,213	\$24,288,800
2015-2019 Average %	28.1%	68.0%	3.9%	100.0%

Calculate Shares by individual license owner

1. Distribute funds to all eligible 2020 license owners by the following methods:

Gillnet: To be eligible, gillnet license owners must have made at least one landing during the base period years of 2015-2019. Funds available to gillnet license holders will be divided equally among eligible gillnet license holders.

Reefnet: To be eligible, license owners must have made at least one landing on their license in 2016, 2017 or 2018. Licenses without at least one landing in one of those three years will not be eligible. Funds allocated to reefnet licenses will be divided equally among all eligible reefnet licenses.

Purse Seine: To be eligible, a purse seine license owner must have made at least one landing on their license in 2020. All eligible purse seine license holders will receive a base payment of \$1,000. Owners with multiple eligible purse seine licenses will only receive one \$1,000 base payment for the 2020 disaster. In addition to that base payment, the license holders will receive a payment based on their proportion of total purse seine catch during the 2015-2019 base period, calculated according to the following formula:

$$\text{Individual payment} = (a/b)*c$$

Where: a = individual's total ex-vessel value from 2015-2019

b = total 2015-2019 ex-vessel value for eligible purse seine license owners

c = Total funds available for purse seine license owners after base payments