

New Washington State fee for Visiting Boaters (Website application process is shown at the end)

Bill Wilson recently participated in a teleconference call with several officials from Washington State Dept. of Fisheries along with Wayne Gilham of RBAW. In it he got some more information regarding the **Aquatic Invasive Species Fee for visiting boaters** discussed at our recent joint meeting.

The legislation for this fee became effective on October 19, 2017 but the formal launch for this legislation will be April 1, 2018.

The total price of this permit is \$22.00, \$20.00 for the permit and \$2.00 for administration. The permit can be purchased by going online prior to entering Washington State or at any time. There are also a number of locations where the permit can be purchased and these are listed on the Dept. of Fisheries website. **All out of state boats are required to pay this fee and get a permit.** It is not required for any boats transiting through Washington State however. This exception applies as long as the boat is not launched anywhere in Washington

The permit is good for one year from the date of purchase. Since it is a state fee, customs officers have no knowledge of it nor will they ask for your permit or even remind boaters of the need for the permit when entering Washington. For the first year, at least, boaters who are checked and do not have a permit will be given a warning and then have seven days in which to purchase a permit. If checked after the seven days has expired and they still do not have a permit than they will be given a citation and a \$150.00 fine. Upon payment of the fee the boater gets an electronic copy of the permit which can then be printed and kept on the boat so that it can be produced at any time when asked. If purchasing a permit from a smart phone when a printer is not available as would be the case if on a boat, it was suggested to save a screen shot from the phone or save the file on the phone as a .pdf and be able to show it when asked. While there is an electronic record of the purchase of a permit it, apparently is difficult to access, and could impossible due to lack of internet access, so it is the responsibility of a boater to prove that a permit has been purchased

At this time it appears that state fisheries officers are the only one who will be enforcing this legislation and asking to see permits. Some state parks officers are being made aware of the regulations but that is all. State troopers or federal officers are not aware of or understand the legislation and are not involved in any enforcement.

Also, at this time, there are no plans to advertise the existence of this legislation or the need for a permit outside of Washington State. There was some brief discussion of how to do this and Bill suggested Pacific Yachting to which Wayne Gilham suggested writing an article for publishing in PY. Part of their reasoning for not advertising out of state was the cost involved and that was not budgeted. For many boaters it seems likely that the first they will hear of this permit will be when a fisheries officer asks if they have one.

Some of the discussion related to fact that the application for this permit is cumbersome and not at all intuitive. This may be investigated and improved.

There will be a couple of highway checkpoints for trailer boats going into Washington. One will be on I-90 near the Idaho border and the other will be on Highway 395 for boaters entering Washington State.

At the I-90 checkpoint boaters will be made aware of the need for a permit and will be able to purchase one. This ability to purchase will not be an option at the Highway 395 checkpoint due to the lack of an internet connection.

In summary, any boat in/on any body of water in Washington must pay this fee, Enforcement will start on April 1 but there will be a grace period where boaters without the permit will be given a warning and seven days to purchase a permit. If cited for not having a permit the fine is \$150.00. The permit is valid for one year.

Step by Step Process for purchasing online AIS Permit (\$22)

- 1) Go to wdfw.wa.gov website and at the top of the page, hover on the "Licensing & Permits" tab
- 2) The first item down under that tab is "Online Licensing Sales" – CLICK this tab
- 3) You'll now be on a page with a big box at right for WSDFW fishing/hunting license purchasers to go in, type in their ID, access their account, etc. Do NOT use that – go to the box immediately to the left Called "Shop for products that don't require a customer account" – CLICK that box
- 4) You'll now be on a page that lists "Product Categories" and gives you three choices (including Discover Pass) – CLICK on the one labeled "Other"
- 5) You will now be on the page that lets you purchase the AIS Permit for one of three categories (Commercial Transporter, Out-of-State, Seaplane) – Canadians should CLICK on the "add" tab for "Non-Resident Registered Vessel". Then click on the orange square in the top right hand corner which will take you to the "Checkout".