

Newsletter

Fall 2023



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All the info for those on the go...

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Be part of a solution

OR & WA seek nominations for Columbia River fishing advisory groups

Fishery managers from Washington and Oregon are seeking nominations for advisors to fill positions on the recreational and commercial advisory groups that provide input on fishing seasons on the Columbia River.

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) and Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) are accepting nominations for appointees to three-year terms on the Columbia River Commercial Fishing Advisory Group and Columbia River Recreational Fishing Advisory Group through Nov. 3, 2023. The new terms begin in January 2024 and end in December 2026.

The two groups meet two to four times per year to develop recommendations for salmon, steelhead, sturgeon and smelt fisheries. The recreational advisory group focuses on recreational fisheries jointly managed by Washington/Oregon from Buoy 10 upstream to Highway 395 at Pasco. The commercial advisory group focuses on lower Columbia River commercial fisheries (mainstem and Select Areas). Members are expected to participate within the North of Falcon season-setting process for salmon fisheries, Columbia River Compact/Joint State hearings and advisory group meetings. "These advisory groups provide an important connection between the public and the states of Washington and Oregon in order to provide fishing opportunities," said Ryan Lothrop, the WDFW Columbia River fishery manager.

Up to 20 applicants from Washington and Oregon will be chosen for each advisory group, representing a wide array of fishing interests. Learn more about these groups. Advisors will be selected based on their fishery experience, willingness to engage in the management process, geographic and diverse affiliation representation, and their ability to communicate with fishery managers and other organizations. Individuals may self-apply or be nominated by a group or another individual; nominees must be willing to serve if selected.

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INFO

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Email or Mail?

This edition of the newsletter has been distributed primarily via email. If we have your email address on file, you will receive only the email version. If not, you will be mailed a paper copy. Please notify us if you have a preference, or if your email address needs to be updated.

Apology Letters

Published as special conditions at sentencing:

Dear Oregon Hunters and Guides,

I am writing to you today to address my years of guiding illegally and convey my regret, apologies to all impacted. These are my detailed thoughts and a third attempt at this letter. I hunted and guided for years - this turned into a bigger operation and it got carried away, resulting in me knowingly hunting/packing in multiple pack trips, accepting money for all of it and I am sickened, upset and humiliated that I was a part of this, letting it come in between my family and friends as it did. The implications of my actions took away from the Oregon Hunters and Guides in ways that I will explain.

I took local work away from guides as this is their livelihood, how they make their money. I knowingly did this when it would impact greatly their business and the local environment as this area is a trophy hunting area in Oregon. I was taking away work from the Guides/hunters who were performing services/hunting honestly. They were all doing what the laws required and I was not, knowingly. The hunting area is a highly coveted pristine area in Oregon. I targeted this area and carried on a guide business knowing it would impact the local hunters and guides with no regard to others' rights. I abused my hunting privilege. I never attempted to become legal as other guides did. This affected their business greatly. I am sorry for the impact this has created to the OR hunters and Guides.

I am working diligently to put this behind me. I am grateful for the opportunity to explain my thoughts/regrets and apologize and move forward by accepting the plea agreement. I am working, creating an honest living, saving to pay off my fines and also adding my extra time to a nonprofit for my community service....

I recognize the affects, fallout, and implications regarding all involved. I have been apologetic in all ways this has impacted the community and my family. In closing, I am regretful, remorseful and will work daily at putting this behind me. I am truly regretful/sorry in many ways. Please accept my final apology.

Respectfully, Caleb L. Richmond

To the hunters, fishermen, and outfitting guides of Oregon and the OSMB,

After I first received my Guide license in 2019, COVID hit and while quarantined, I was remiss in letting my guide licesnse expire, but after the pandemic settled down this year, I provided a couple guided fishing trips without thinking about my license. I was just excited to fish. As many of you are, I am also passionate about the great outdoors of Oregon and its natural resources and love to shame my enthusiasm with people that come to visit and want to enjoy what Oregon has to offer.

I should have been more diligent in keeping my guide license current and up-to-date... I apologize to the guiding community for my actions and am sorry if I took business away from other guides that use that river. I have certainly learned my lesson to be more focused in always making sure that my guide license is current. I apologize that I was not more cautious in the past.

Sincerely, Vencil Overland

To the hunters, fishermen, and outfitting guides of Oregon and the OSMB,

I fist would like to apologize to you all for my actions. I should have been more diligent with my guide license. From this day forward I will ensure that I, and anyone who works with me directly, will comply with all rules and regulations set by the OSMB and state of Oregon... I should have been more diligent in keeping track of associated guides with the company having their license current. I apologize to the guiding community for my actions and am sorry if this had an impact on any individuals. I have now been educated on the term "employee" as it is used with the OSMB and that independent associated guides are deemed employees as seen by the OSMB... and that it is also my responsibility to check the valid guide license.

I have the utmost respect for the outdoors and want to ensure that it is being used lawfully and respectfully. In the future I will make sure that guides who are associated with my company have a current license. I apologize that I was not more diligent in the past. It can say with 100% certainty that this will not happen again.

Thanks, Sharon Allison



Specialized Information for the Outfitter Guide Community

The Outfitter Guide newsletter is a bi-annual publication which is the cornerstone of the Outfitter Guide communications program. Its purpose is to cut through the clutter and provide important communications between the OG community and the Marine Board. If you have comments, feel free to submit them at: outfitter_guide@oregon.gov.

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Report Illegal Guides & Outfitters
503-378-2633

Recent Disciplinary Actions

Name	Date	Action	Reason
Ronnie Davis	6/8/23	Cond'l/Susp from Hunt Prog	Federal Permit revocation
Kyle Dodson	4/24/23	Conditional	USCG withholding MMC
Charles Arnell	6/2/23	Conditional	Pending Case Disposition
Brian Dixon	1/18/23	Conditional	Pending Case Disposition
Eric Swanson	4/14/23	Conditional	Pending Case Disposition

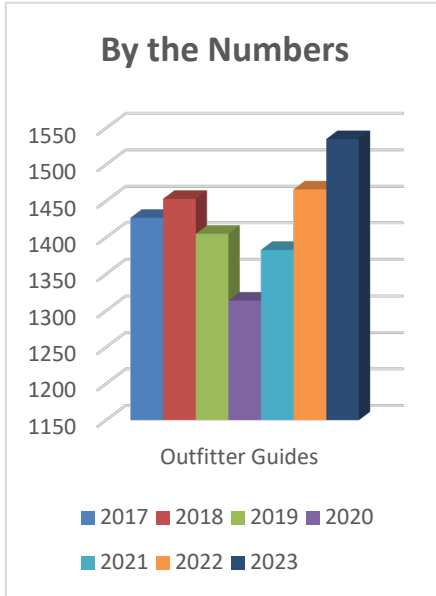
Law Enforcement Update



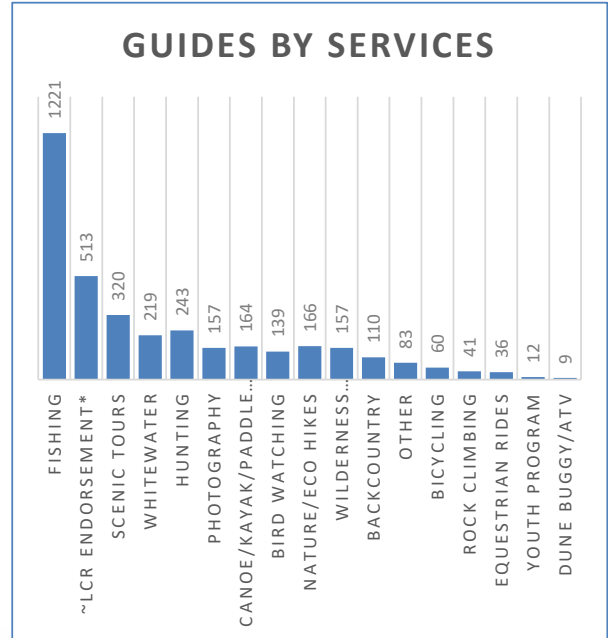
- On October 17, 2022, the F&W SIU team investigated an illegal hunting guide in Jackson County, OR. During a hunt with clients, numerous violations occurred. The next day, the Rogue Valley F&W team and SIU served a search warrant on the suspect’s residence in Central Point. Numerous items were seized including a firearm used during the hunt, numerous trail cameras, phones, computer, bait, a fresh and frozen turkeys and other items. The individual was charged in Jackson County with six counts of Fail to Register as an Outfitter Guide, Taking Crippled or Helpless Wildlife, two counts of Aiding/Assisting or Counseling or Sharing in Proceeds of Wildlife, Taking Wildlife in Violation of Wildlife Law, Using Bait to Hunt Black Bears and Violation of Wildlife License/Tag Requirements.
- In August of 2022, SIU was contacted by the OSMB about a guide who was guiding illegally on the Rogue River. SIU located the subject who had just finished an illegally guided trip. The subject had altered 2022 OSMB Guide Decals affixed to his boat. While the subject was illegally guiding, OSP contacted the guide who was claiming he was legitimate. The subject was cited and released criminally for Forgery II and Guiding without a License. The subject has a warrant for his arrest.
- In January 2023, the SIU received a complaint of a subject illegally guiding duck hunters on Sauvie Island. Through investigative means, it was believed the subject had forged their 2023 OSMB guide decals. Warrants were obtained for the subject’s phone and to search their boat for evidence of Guiding without a License and Forgery. The guide was contacted in the field with paying duck hunters. The subject’s phone and guide stickers were seized pursuant to

- the warrant. Investigation revealed the subject had made his own forged guide stickers and had been guiding illegally for some time. The subject was criminally cited for five counts of Fail to Register as an Outfitter Guide and Forgery II. Court case is still pending.
- In September of 2023, SIU received a complaint of a subject illegally guiding customers by horseback in Deschutes County. The subject was contacted while illegally guiding on public ground and denied it was a guided trip at first. Eventually, the subject admitted to guiding clients for profit. The subject was criminally cited for Guiding without a License.
 - In September 2023, the Oregon State Marine Board informed the SIU of a subject who forged a CPR/First Aid card on their 2023 Guide Application. Investigation revealed the subject used his 2021 CPR/First Aid card by altering the current dates of the certification on a digital copy and resubmitting it with his current guide application. The subject admitted to doing this to speed up the process to become an active guide. The subject was cited criminally for Forgery II.
 - UPDATE: In August 2021, SIU received a tip that an unlicensed guide, Tanner Bonawitz was offering fishing trips on the Columbia River. He was advertising through social media and other online sources. Bonawitz was contacted by OSP in the company of paying clients. During the investigation another individual, Loran Bonawitz attempted to pay the clients to leave the area and not speak with the trooper. Tanner Bonawitz refused to return the money paid for the trip. Both individuals were charged with failing to register as an Outfitter Guide. Tanner Bonawitz plead guilty and was sentenced to 12 months bench probation, a 3-year angling license suspension, and \$740 in restitution and fines including payment to the OOGA TIP fund. Loran Bonawitz plead guilty and was sentenced to a 3-year angling license suspension, and \$740 in restitution and fines to the TIP fund.

Outfitter Guide Newsletter



Arizona	2
California	37
Colorado	8
Idaho	62
Indiana	1
Montana	7
Nevada	4
N Carolina	1
N Jersey	1
Oregon	1325
Texas	1
Utah	1
Washington	82
Wyoming	4
Total	1536



Upcoming Events

November 1st: Renewals begin for 2024 season
November 2-4: Oregon Outdoor Recreation Summit -
 The Mill Casino Hotel, North Bend

November 9th: Mid-Willamette Valley Tourism Summit
 Salem Convention Center
November 30th: Oregon Dark Sky Tourism Learning
Community Meeting 10:30-12 Held virtually [industry.traveloregon.com/darkskies](https://traveloregon.com/darkskies)

New Relief Opportunity

Governor Kotek announced that the U.S. Secretary of Commerce has determined that a commercial fishery failure occurred during 2018, 2019 and 2020 due to a fishery resource disaster, affecting Oregon Chinook Salmon Fisheries. This determination is in response to a request from Governor Kate Brown in October 2021.

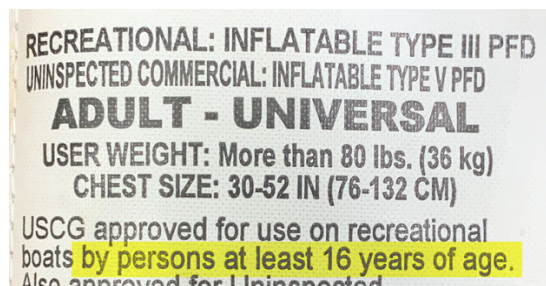
Approved fishery disaster determinations make these fisheries eligible for funding from current fishery disaster appropriations to aid in the recovery of affected communities, restore the fishery, and/or prevent future disasters. "This determination is incredible news for commercial fishers who have been waiting for years to find out whether or not they can receive support from the federal government," Governor Kotek said. "I am also hopeful for a future determination for our recent fisheries disaster declaration request."

NOAA Fisheries, the federal agency in charge of the stewardship of U.S. national marine resources, will notify award recipients of their eligibility for funding and provide guidance on the development of applications for federal financial assistance.

In April 2023, Governor Tina Kotek requested that the U.S. Department of Commerce make an expedited declaration of a federal fishery resource disaster for ocean commercial salmon fisheries for 2023. That request is still active and has not yet been determined.

Did You Know? A reminder...

- **Engine Cut-off Switch** - Its been over 2 years since this new law took effect. Operators of all PWCs and all boats under 26' equipped with an engine cut-off switch must use them while at planing speed. Electronic engine cut-off switches which give the operator more room to move may be used as well.
- **Clean, Drain, Dry & Pull the Plug** - Don't forget the basics to keep aquatic invasive species out of our waterways. Always drain water from your boat on land before you leave the waterbody. Clean off all plants or mud on boat, motor and trailer, and PULL THE PLUG if your boat has one - it's the law!



- **Kids & Inflatable Life Jackets** - Don't make the mistake of allowing kids under 16 years old to wear inflatable life jackets. The USCG has NOT approved them for use on youth (check the label on the underside) and federal law penalties can be as high as \$5000. Inflatables have a high failure rate when not maintained correctly and are not buoyant without inflation.

Got Questions? Check out our website: Boat.Oregon.gov