

## FISHERIES MANAGEMENT DIVISION EVALUATION 02/28/2023

**PUBLIC HEARING:** Proposal to amend Chapter 4 VAC 20-1090-10 et seq., “Pertaining to Licensing Requirments and License Fees” to provide an option to purchase a multiyear resident recreational saltwater fishing license.

### **ISSUES AND BACKGROUND:**

During the 2022 General Assembly session, Delegate Cordoza introduced HB1112 to require the Commission to sell multiyear resident recreational saltwater fishing licenses. The bill went through several reiterations and was passed by the House on February 15, 2022 (98-Y, 2-N), and the Senate on February 25, 2022 (39-Y 0-N). The bill was approved by the Governor effective July 1, 2022. Given the bill’s effective date was in the middle of the fishing year it was decided to amend the regulation with an effective date with the start of the new calendar year. Unfortunately, other more pressing regulatory changes needed to be addressed and this proposed amendment was delayed until February 2023.

At present, all recreational fishing license sales are conducted through the Department of Wildlife Resources (DWR) or its agents. The saltwater recreational fishing license is \$17.50 for one year from purchase. DWR offers resident multiyear freshwater fishing licenses for two, three, and four years, with a roughly 9% savings for each extra additional year purchased. The saltwater multiyear fishing license fees will follow a similar model and savings, for two, three, and four year licenses (Table 1).

Besides the cost savings, additional benefits of a multiyear license include the convenience of not having to renew each year, and it avoids any potential increase in user fees for the life of the license.

### **STAFF**

**RECOMMENDATION:** Staff recommends the Commission approve amendments to Chapter 4 VAC 20-1090-10 et seq., “Pertaining to Licensing Requirments and License Fees” to create multiyear resident saltwater fishing licenses of two, three, and four years with an associate fee of \$33.50, \$49.50, and \$65.50, respectively. Sales of these licenses will begin for the 2023 fishing year.

A public notice that advertised these proposed amendments is attached to this evaluation. Staff has received no public comment on these issues, at this time.

Table 1. Freshwater resident fishing license fees for multiple years compared to the proposed resident saltwater fishing license fees.

| Resident FW Fishing License |         |            |              | Resident SW Fishing License (Proposed) |         |            |              |
|-----------------------------|---------|------------|--------------|--|---------|------------|--------------|
| Years                       | Fee     | Savings(%) | Savings (\$) | Years                                  | Fee     | Savings(%) | Savings (\$) |
| 1                           | \$23.00 |            |              | 1                                      | \$17.50 |            |              |
| 2                           | \$44.00 | 4.35%      | \$2.00       | 2                                      | \$33.50 | 4.29%      | \$1.50       |
| 3                           | \$65.00 | 5.80%      | \$4.00       | 3                                      | \$49.50 | 5.71%      | \$3.00       |
| 4                           | \$86.00 | 6.52%      | \$6.00       | 4                                      | \$65.50 | 6.43%      | \$4.50       |