

Western Washington University Western CEDAR

Salish Sea Ecosystem Conference

2018 Salish Sea Ecosystem Conference (Seattle, Wash.)

Apr 5th, 10:30 AM - 10:35 AM

Soundwatch: eighteen years of monitoring whale watch vessel activities in the Salish Sea

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https://cedar.wwu.edu/ssec/2018ssec/allsessions/145

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The Whale Museum's Soundwatch Boater Education Program

Photo credit: Jeanne Hyde

What is Soundwatch?

Soundwatch Boater Education Program was created by The Whale Museum in 1993. It's mission is to prevent vessel disturbance to killer whales and other marine wildlife in the Central Salish Sea.

The Soundwatch Boater Education Program is a vessel monitoring and public education outreach program.



Methods

Soundwatch educates and monitors vessels on the water gathering data on vessel numbers, vessel interactions with marine mammals from May-September, 10am-5pm, during the whale watch season in the Haro Strait region of the Salish Sea.



Photo credit: Jeanne Hyde

Education materials



The Kavak Education & Leadership Program (K.E.L.P.). informs kavakers about marine wildlife regulations and quidelines with the aim to reduce human-powered vessel disturbance to all marine wildlife, including Southern Resident orcas, in the San Juan Islands.

Human-powered vessels have the unique challenge of limited maneuverability and a variety of safety concerns that require special consideration to remain in compliance with federal laws and to reduce the overall risks of disturbing marine wildlife.

GUIDELINES FOR KAYAKERS WHEN ORCAS ARE PRESENT

The Kavakers' Code of Conduct is a set of San Juan Island orca specific quidelines meant to be used along with regional Be Whale Wise Marine Wildlife quidelines and current Federal Vessel Laws.

> Do not launch from shore if you are unable to maintain 200 vards from the orcas.

Paddle to shore or further offshore to maintain 200 yards to the side & 400 yards out of their path.

If within 400 yards of orcas, kayakers should paddle toward shore, secure themselves (ideally in kelp beds), raft up, stop paddling, and wait until the orcas are 400 vards away.

If offshore of orcas & within 400 vards, raft up for safety in boat traffic (preferably kayakers will always be inshore of boat traffic).

Adjust your plan of action according to the whales' direction of travel and the state & federal laws.

Maintain a 100 yard distance from marine mammals.

www.whalemuseum.org







PUBLIC LANDS BOTTOMFISH RECOVERY AREA MARINE PRESERVE

VOLUNTARY MOTOR BOATEXCLUSION ZONE

Marine Preserves

Regulation: Closed to all shellfish & bottomfish activities. (See WDFW Marine Rules 7 for exact locations.) Salmon Fishing Closure: No salmon fishing within 300 yards of Yellow & Low Islands to reduce rockfish mortality.

National Wildlife Refuges Boaters are advised to stay 200 yards away to avoid disturbing marine mammals & birds.

Bottomfish Recovery Zone Guideline: No bottomfishing within 1/4 mile of shore to protect & restore regional fishing.

Voluntary Motor Boat Exclusion Zone Guideline: Remain 1/4 mile offshore when orcas are present.

Guideline: 1/2 mile no go zone at Lime Kiln Point State Park when orcas are present.

Sensitive Areas

Areas marked are for seal haul-outs & seabird nesting sites. Eelgrass beds provide critical habitat for juvenile fish. Please avoid disturbing sediments & vegetation.

Seeing killer whales and other marine wildlife in their natural environment can be a thrilling experience. in our socitement, we converting forget that our presence has an effect on wildlife and their habitat. Aust like us, marine mammals seed space to find lood, choose mates, mine process, and along and real

> When we get too-close, approach too fast, or make too much exist, we may be disrupting these activities and causing the animals unseconsary stress. In some cases, use may be threatening their lives. Set an example for others, and help protect our spectacular marine





hale

Paddlers and Viewers

www.bewhalewise.org

and in case of the

(Reunest 2016)

REGULATIONS FOR KILLER WHALES IN U.S. MATERS

WHERE do federal regulations to protect killer whales apply! In inland waters of Washington State, east of the entrance to the Strait of Asan de Fuca and south of the US/Canada boundary

WHAT do the regulations require? Except for specific exemptions, it is unlewful for any person to: Cause a vessel to approach, in any manner, within 200 yards (182.9 metres) of any killer whole. Position a vessel to be in the path of any killer whale at any point located within 400 yards (365.8 metros) of the whale.

WHO do the regulations apply to? All motorized and monometarized unsuch (including harafs and paddlebcard)), with exceptions to maintain sufe manipation and for certain types of an achtgovernment vessels in the course of official duties. ships in the allopsing lates, research vessels under permit, and sessiels lawfully engaged in commercial as treaty lodion fishing that are actively setting. retrieving, or dozely tendeng fishing gran

WILY did NG/A adopt regulational Southern Resident Lifter whates were listed as endangeved in 2005. Westel imports were identified as one of the thrush. These regulations implement an action in the recovery plan and are compared to protect all killer wholes by reducing impacts from vessels. Southern Residents are akin listed as endangered under the Species at Risk Act TRANS-BOUNDARY GUIDELINES FOR THE UNITED 8. STAY on the OFFSMORE side of whales when they STATES AND CANADA APPLYTO ALL MARINE are traveling close to shore MAMMALS AND BRDS 9. ALWAYS avoid going through groups of porpoium

1. DO NOT APPROACH or position your vessel closer than 200 metres/yords to any killer whale in the U.S. DO NOT APPROACH or get closer than 100 m purds to any other marine manunals or birds, whether on the water or on brod.

2. BE CAUTIOUS, COURTIOUS and QUIET when around areas of known or suspected marine wildlife activity, in the water or at hauf-outs and hird colonies. on land especially from May to September during breeding, neuting and seal pupping seasons.

3. LOOK in all directions before planning your approach or departure from viewing wildlife.

4. SLOW DOWN: reduce speed to less than 7 knots when within 400 metros/uards of the searest marine manimal to reduce your engine's noise and vessel's

S.ALWAYS approach and depart from the side. moving parallel to the animal's direction of travel. If the animatic are approaching you, cautiously move out of the way and avoid abropt course changes DO NOT approach from the front or from behind. 6. PLACE ENGINE IN NEUTRAL and allow animab

to pass if your vented is not in compliance with the approach regulation or guideline (#1).

7. PAY ATTENTION and move away, slowly and country of y at the first sign of discurbance or agitation.

CANADA/B.C. GULF ISLANDS: To move or small arthrest

Inherits & Ontare Canada 2 C Marcal Reporting 34.7 Motime . 1-810-81-818

REPORT MARINE MAMMAL & SEA TURTLE DENTINES:

E.C. Cetaceae Dightings Network - 866-672-9660 or sighting see that put tog formelle added also any White Report togs available on Faller and Google Pay

Fisheries & Cicrans Canada inwwisenado caren fisheries

Robson Bight (Michael Bigg) Ecological Jeserver anewarth povbcas/bcparks/acs_reserve/mbsanb_at.html

Itrativitich: www.stratestatich.org at 1-258-596-7723

US/INLAND WA WATERS: To report a manne

TO REPORT MARINE MAMMAL SIGHTINGS

With Subscript, Office for Law Federations,

Download the doloins and adule 411 and

The Whale Museum Hotline (WA State):

Inferiorcanetwork.org or 1-868-675-2638

NEED MORE INFORMATIONS

Antibustian halomana and an 1.803-CA2-BEED

Entanglements 1-877-707-8425

trandings: 1-866-767-6114

Onca Network (WA States:

North Mond Marine Marsaul Stewarthing Association

NEED MORE INFORMATION!

econishini

www.nimmsd.org

800-813-1964

DO YOUR PART TO PROTECT MARINE WILDLIFE FROM HARASSMENT AND DISTURBANCE

FOLIOW THESE GUIDELINES AND ALL LOCAL LAWS The laws:

BE WHALE WISE!

Regulations in Canada and the U.S. prohibit

the harassment and disturbance of marine mammals, Many species are threatened. or endangered and subject to additional protections under the Endangered Species Art IUS Land the Sporles at Risk Art (Canada)

What is a disturbance?

Disturbance is when we interfere with an animal's ability to hunt, feed, communicate, socialize, rest, breed, or care for its young.

These are critical life processes, necessary for healthy marine wildlife populations.

Soundwatch Boater Education Program www.wholemuseum.org or 1-360-378-4710 ext. 33 NOAA Rohenes, West Coast Region: http://www.westcoast.fuberies.moost.acs NCIAA Roberters, Office of Pestected Hericanory erww.runth.noatt.gov.tw/







Marine Wildlife Laws & **Guidelines for Boaters**.

supprise tailettide.



wildlife encounter, and reduce the risk of distarbing (

or dolphins and hold course and reduce speed

10. LIMIT your viewing time to 30 minutes or less. This

will reduce the currulative impact of all vessels and

11. DONOT datash, sain with more feed or track

potentially sirk, stranded or entangled animal, contact

any marine wildlife. If you are concerned about a

Dromes/Ummanmed Alexad's Vehicle or System

It is illegal to harm or disturb wildlife. To prevent

disturbance from an unmanned aerial vehicle (UNII)

drone) operators must use extreme caution. UAV/

Funt, feed, communicate socialize, rest, breed, or

care for its young. Fly during daelight hours, keep

techniclogy... Know and follow all local regulations

1. CHECK your nautical charts for the location of

2. ABIDE by posted restrictions or contact a local

Marine Protected Areas, Wildlife Releges,

reduce the cumulative impact. This is rapidly evolving

doones may interfere with an animal's ability to

gradually to discourage how or stein-siding.

give consideration to other viewers.

your local stranding network.

your drone in sight and limit your

Ecological Reserves and Parks

authority for further information.

warious protected areas.

(UAV/UAS) Guidance

Why do we need guidelines?

The diversity and complexity of marine life in the intend and counted waters of British Columbia and Washington is bruly extraordinary.

It is a fingile world. Pollution, global climate chang

and other impacts are taking their toll at all levels of

the coastal food web. Many species of marine wildli

such as the endancemed Southern Resident killer

Data sheets

Recreational vessel contact data

Vessel and Whale behavior data

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Results-entire dataset

Soundwatch commercial vessel data 1998-2015.





Non-Sig trend. Kayaks: Sig trend since 2012



Photo credit: Jill Berger

Closer look at Kayaks: Sig trend since 2012



Total Vessel Incidents



Year

I. Types used all years



I. Types not used all years Incident categories not used all years



Kayak incidents

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- Significant upward trends:
- Within 880 m of Lime Kiln
- In the path of whales
- Under power within 0-100 m of whales
- In the Path (formerly Parked in the path of whales)
- Fast within 400 m
- 1st Approach head on, behind, or on shore
- kayaks spread out

Enforcement





Conclusions

From 1998-2015 show slight increases in boats and recent increases in kayaks engaging in whale watching in turn there are increases in some incident types.

Long-term increasing trends in incidents are those inshore of whales and in the path of travelling whales placing boats near SRKWs

Education and enforcement matters! Recommend continuation and expansion of shore and water-based boater education as well as increased enforcement to accommodate the still growing popularity of wildlife viewing.

Photo credit: TWM

Thanks!

