



Transportation and Economic Analysis
Environmental Policy

November 15, 2019

To whom this may concern:

The Government of Canada is committed to protecting the Southern Resident Killer Whale by putting measures in place to reduce underwater vessel noise which has been identified as a key threat to the protection and recovery of this endangered species.

In 2017, the Vancouver Fraser Port Authority, Enhancing Cetacean Habitat and Observation (ECHO) Program, in close collaboration with the marine industry, and with the support of government agencies in Canada and the United States implemented a voluntary vessel slowdown trial in Haro Strait. Implemented through the months of July to October, the Haro Strait slowdown showed significant underwater noise reductions and was repeated with modifications for the 2018 SRKW season.

Additionally, supported by the U.S. Coast Guard, Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO), Transport Canada, and the Canadian and U.S. marine transportation industry, the ECHO Program led a voluntary trial in 2018 to study how laterally displacing vessels away from known Southern Resident Killer Whale feeding areas would affect the underwater noise levels in those areas. The lateral displacement trial in the Strait of Juan de Fuca commenced on August 20th and concluded on October 31st 2018.

In 2019, enhanced measures were implemented by the ECHO Program to help protect the SRKW, including another voluntary vessel slowdown trial from July 6th to October 15th in an expanded area that included both Haro Strait and Boundary Pass, and a modified inshore lateral displacement trial requesting that tugs and barges transiting in the Canadian inshore area of the Strait of Juan de Fuca move south of known killer whale feeding areas between June 17th and October 31st, 2019. Further background information on these initiatives, prepared by the ECHO Program, can be obtained by clicking on the following link:

<http://www.portvancouver.com/environment/water-land-wildlife/echo-program/>

Recognizing that more needed to be done to address physical and acoustic disturbance to SRKW, in May 2019 the Government of Canada announced additional measures to protect the SRKW. Specifically, the Minister of Transport issued an *Interim Order for the Protection of Killer Whales (Orcinus orca) in the*

Waters of Southern British Columbia under the *Canada Shipping Act, 2001*, which was in effect from June 1st to October 31st, 2019. Under this order, vessels throughout the critical habitat of the SRKW, including recreational boats and whale watching vessels, were required to stay at least 400 metres away from all killer whales, with exception of commercial whale watching companies who obtained authorization from the Minister of Transport, to approach Transient killer whales up to 200 metres. In addition, in order to maximize protections in three key areas, interim sanctuary zones were created off Pender Island, Saturna Island, and at Swiftsure Bank where no vessel traffic was permitted subject to certain exceptions for emergency and Indigenous vessels. Further information on these measures, can be obtained by clicking on the following link: <https://www.tc.gc.ca/eng/mediaroom/interim-order-protection-killer-whales-waters-southern-british-columbia.html>.

Additionally, voluntary measures were announced that included asking vessels in certain areas to reduce their speed to less than 7 knots when within 1,000 metres of killer whales, turning off echo sounders when safe to do so, and turning engines to neutral idle if a whale is within 400 metres.

Transport Canada is interested in understanding the impact these measures have on local communities and supply chains. Results from these studies will inform Southern Resident Killer Whale protection measures in the coming years. Transport Canada has hired Hatfield Consultants Partnership (Hatfield) to conduct this study, and a member of Hatfield team will be contacting you to seek your views and any relevant information you may be able to share. With respect to all of the above measures, this may include but is not limited to questions on:

The nature of your economic activities;

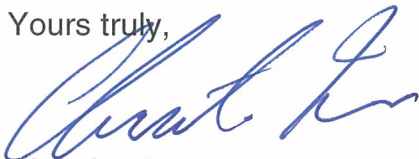
- The issues and constraints the mandatory speed reduction and/or lateral displacement caused you;
- A qualitative and quantitative assessment of the speed reduction and/or lateral displacement impact on your operations;
- Any steps your business or organization has taken to mitigate the impact of the speed reduction and/or lateral displacement; and
- Any suggestions you may have on potential improvements to the measures that would reduce its impact on your operations.

Information and data collected by Hatfield are protected under Section 7 of the *Privacy Act (CANADA)* or related provincial privacy acts. Your information will be used exclusively for the development of government policies and measures. Any publication will contain aggregate information only and cannot be traced back to a specific company or organization.

As indicated, a member of Hatfield team will be contacting you to engage on this work. We strongly encourage you to take part in this study and appreciate your time and effort as this work will inform future measures for the protection and recovery of the Southern Resident Killer Whale.

Should you have any questions about the study or want to know how your information will be included in the final report, you may contact Robin Sydneysmith of Hatfield at 604-365-8285 and rsydneysmith@hatfieldgroup.com or Émile Allie of Transport Canada at 613-993-9029 and emile.allie@tc.gc.ca.

Yours truly,



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