

ADDITIONAL K.E.L.P. GUIDELINES

All paddlers pledge to abide by these voluntary Guidelines to help preserve & protect our marine environment.

1. Human-powered vessels may launch if whales are at least 1/2 nm from launch site.
2. Paddle on the inshore side of whales. If paddling in a group, all paddlers will stay close together.
3. When navigating the Voluntary Exclusion Zone, paddlers should stay within 100 yards of the shore where possible.
4. To avoid being in the path of the whales, paddlers should start moving out of the path of oncoming whales well before the whales are within 400 yards.

In some cases, paddlers may need to stay where they are, or move closer to shore, to avoid being within 300 yards of whales & to avoid being in the path of the whales.

5. If whales are approaching within 300 yards of shore, paddlers move into shore as close as possible (ideally in kelp beds), raft up, secure themselves, and stop paddling until the whales have passed by.

Paddlers will avoid headlands.

6. **If paddlers have taken all measures and still find themselves unexpectedly out of compliance with the laws, they will:**
Paddle out of the path of oncoming whales, 400 yards from the whales, immediately stop paddling & raft up until the whales have passed.

7. Paddlers shall avoid disturbing haul-out areas for seals/sea lions and/or sea bird nesting sites by paddling in at least a 100 yard arc whenever possible.

Avoid making noise, direct eye contact, and sporadic movements.

May through October is the most sensitive time of the year for breeding seals, sea lions, and nesting birds.

8. Paddlers will maintain a 200 yard distance from any National Wildlife Refuge. No landings are permitted except at designated areas.

ALL MARINE MAMMALS ARE PROTECTED FROM HARASSMENT OR DISTURBANCE UNDER THE U.S. MARINE MAMMAL PROTECTION ACT AND THE CANADIAN FISHERIES ACT.

Maintain a 100 yard distance from all marine mammals (i.e., humpbacks, minke, harbor seals, sea otters, Steller sea lions). Do not disturb, move, feed, or touch any marine wildlife, including seal pups. If you are concerned about a potentially sick or stranded animal, please contact the local Stranding Network Hotline.

Southern Resident Killer Whales have additional protections as an Endangered Species under the U.S. Endangered Species Act and as a Species-at-Risk under the Canadian Species-at-Risk Act.

In Washington State waters, all killer whales are protected under RCW 77.15.740

NEED MORE INFORMATION?

The Whale Museum's Soundwatch Program

www.whalemuseum.org/pages/soundwatch-boater-education-program

Be Whale Wise

<http://bewhalewise.org>

NOAA Fisheries, West Coast Region

<https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/region/west-coast#protected-marine-life>

Washington's Vessel Regulation Protecting Southern Resident Killer Whales

<https://wdfw.wa.gov/species-habitats/at-risk/species-recovery/orca>

TO REPORT MARINE MAMMAL STRANDINGS/

SIGHTINGS: 1-800-562-8832 OR

hotline@whalemuseum.org

TO REPORT A MARINE MAMMAL DISTURBANCE OR HARASSMENT:

**U.S. NOAA Fisheries, Office for Law Enforcement
1-800-853-1964 or www.bewhalewise.org
Washington Dept. of Fish and Wildlife Enforcement
1-360-902-2936**

The Kayak Code of Conduct Additional Guidelines was crafted collaboratively by The Whale Museum & the San Juan Island Kayak Association with input from WDFW & NOAA Fisheries.

Be Whale Wise SOUNDWATCH



K.E.L.P.

The Kayak Education & Leadership Program (K.E.L.P.) informs kayakers and other paddlers about marine wildlife regulations and guidelines in the San Juan Islands with the aim of reducing human-powered craft disturbances to all marine wildlife, including Southern Resident Killer Whales.

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

FEDERAL VESSEL REGULATIONS IN THE INLAND WATERS OF WASHINGTON DECLARE THAT IT IS UNLAWFUL TO*:

- Cause a vessel to approach, in any manner, any killer whale within 300 yards.
- Position a vessel to be in the path of any killer whale at any point located within 400 yards.

The law applies to all types of boats, including motor boats, sailboats, kayaks, and paddle boards.

**Some exceptions apply, including vessel safety and certain types of vessels.
For details: www.bewhalewise.org*



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SAN JUAN ISLAND

ALL RESPONSIBLE PADDLERS OF ANY HUMAN-POWERED VESSELS:

- Are aware of and strive to follow all local, state, and federal laws, and the *Be Whale Wise Guidelines* governing behavior around killer whales, other marine wildlife, and in Marine Protected Areas (see map).
- Have a trip plan before leaving shore. This includes knowing the area's boating laws, accessible public landing areas, safety issues, and environmental conditions.

Map Index Description

Marine Reserves

Regulation: Closed to all shellfish & bottomfish harvest. See WDFW Marine Area 7 rules for exact locations. **Salmon Fishing Closure:** No salmon fishing within 300 yards of Yellow and Low Islands to reduce rockfish mortality.

National Wildlife Refuges

Boaters are to stay 200 yards away to avoid disturbing marine mammals & birds.

Bottomfish Recovery Zones

Guideline: No bottom fishing within 1/4 mile offshore to protect and restore regional fishing.

Voluntary Exclusion Zone

Extends from Mitchell Bay to Cattle Point. Remain 1/4 mile offshore at all times, year-round; 1/2 mile "No Go Zone" in Lime Kiln Point State Park area at all times, year-round.

Sensitive Areas

Are marked for seal haul-outs & seabird nesting sites. Additional Sensitive Areas not marked on the "Area Detail" map include **Eelgrass Habitat**; eelgrass provides critical habitat for juvenile fish. Please avoid disturbing sediments and vegetation.



When flown, the **Whale Warning Flag** indicates that whales are in the area. Paddlers should increase their vigilance and prepare to adjust course.



MAP INDEX

- NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE 
- SENSITIVE AREA 
- PUBLIC LANDS 
- BOTTOMFISH RECOVERY AREA 
- MARINE RESERVES 
- VOLUNTARY EXCLUSION ZONE 