



**Quiet Sound Vessel Operations and Incentives WG Meeting Minutes**

March 09, 2022

Revised meeting notes v.3/25/22

Action Items	Who	By When
Create and share OrcaMaster report showing SRKW presence between Admiralty Inlet and Port of Tacoma	Alexis Haifley	4/20/22
Overlay vessel traffic over seasonal SRKW map	Workgroup co-chairs, Marine Exchange	4/20/22
Send WG members dB reduction analysis	Orla Robinson	4/20/22
Send members key metrics that show the positive impact of a voluntary slowdown	Orla Robinson	4/20/22
Explore if there is a voluntary slowdown in Puget Sound, would an extended voyage have repercussions for pilot fatigue?	Workgroup co-chairs, Puget Sound Pilots	4/20/22
Inspect whether or not the Cpt. of a vessel sets the RPM to a certain speed without current or speed over ground?	Workgroup co-chairs	4/20/22
Share information about ECHO incentives with group	Orla Robinson	4/20/22
Invite NOAA to next meeting	Angel	4/20/22

Acronyms: QS - Quiet Sound, WG - Work Group, LC - Leadership Committee, SRKW - Southern Resident Killer Whale

**Agenda**

- Group introductions and operating procedures (what to expect as we work together)
- What we know, and don't know, about SRKW location by season and in real time
- A review of the different parameters to consider when designing a slowdown
- Incentives

# QUIET SOUND

- A discussion of what information this group needs to have in hand in order to develop a recommendation

## Introductions

- Rachel Aronson, Quiet Sound Program Director, Washington Maritime Blue
- Mike Moore, Vice President at Pacific Merchant Shipping Association
- John Veentjer, Past Executive Director of the Marine Exchange of Puget Sound and current Chair of the Puget Sound Harbor Safety Committee
- Patrick Gallagher, Executive Director of the Marine Exchange of Puget Sound
- Alexis Haifley, Sightings Coordinator and GIS data analyst for The Whale Museum
- Kevin Bartoy, Environmental Stewardship and Sustainability Program Manager, WA State Ferries
- Orla Robinson, Former ECHO program manager and now advisor
- Laird Hail, Director of Puget Sound Traffic Services, US Coast Guard
- Regan Nelson, Senior Advocate, Oceans Program, Marine Mammal Protection Project at the Natural Resources Defense Council
- Jon Sloan, Senior Manager of Environmental Programs at the Port of Seattle
- Jason Jordan, Director of Environmental Planning for the Northwest Seaport Alliance, and Port of Tacoma

## Operating Procedures key reminders

- QS charter is a set of guidelines that the LC approved
- QS will ensure that meetings are well organized and planned
- Notes and deliverables will be shared in a timely fashion by QS
- WG members who share data with QS will still own their data
- All WG members will be recognized for their work and participation
- In case of a conflict of interest, check in with the Co-Chairs and QS Program Director to help resolve
- Please advise Co-Chairs and QS Program Director of any outside inquiries (especially media or elected officials) regarding the WG in order to have a coordinated message with similar language
- One of the roles of this work group is to put forth a recommendation to the LC. The LC is the decision-making body for QS so any proposals made by this group will go on to the LC for review.

## SRKW Location Examination

- The Whale Museum is supported by NOAA and WDFW to create a report called the Orca Master that only tracks SRKWs. The Orca Master is comprehensive sightings map that shows SRKW locations historically.
  - The Orca Report shows seasonality, days, and times for all the Salish Sea.

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- Orla suggests that due to the SRKW's recent changes in behavior, we look at the historical data and the data over the past five years to ensure there is consistency.
- Based off of vessel traffic and SRKW presence, QS program Director's preliminary suggestion is a seasonal voluntary slow-down between Admiralty Inlet and Everett
- Mike Moore offers to speak with Marine Exchange to discuss overlaying vessel traffic onto SRKW seasonal maps in order to examine speed profiles during the SRKW's migratory pathway. This could help the WG focus on a slow-down area and recommendation for the LC.

## **A review of the different parameters to consider when designing a slowdown**

- Rachel suggests looking at the parameters that ECHO used to establish their slowdowns in Swiftsure Bank and Haro Strait. Once the parameters are established the LC can help us refine them.
  - What will be the duration of the slowdown? Will it be a seasonal slowdown?
  - How will the start – end happen? Will it be static or dynamic? Or will it be real time?
  - What is the best geographic location?
  - What is the goal of the speed?
  - What is the participation goal?
  - What is the reduction goal?
  - Will we track the pilot reported participation through the slowdown?
  - Will we track the speed through water participation?
  - What vessels are part of the recommended slow down? (e.g. cargo, cruise, tug, ferry, etc.)
- Orla suggests not setting goals for this slowdown since we will not know what we will be able to achieve during this trial.
- Question for ECHO: has ECHO ever considered a slowdown based on real-time ORCA presence and not historical data on seasonal presence?
  - ECHO has historically pursued seasonal slowdowns because an effective real-time slowdown would need: relatively certain knowledge of real-time whale location, and ability to communicate with the bridge of all vessels in real time. While these are being worked on, they're not there yet.

## **A discussion of what information this group needs to have in hand in order to develop a recommendation**

- Biological Benefit and Impact to industry – Orla Robinson

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- Once a geographical area is chosen, it would be important to look at the industry impact from the perspective of how many vessels would potentially go into excess hours and how many minutes would they be delayed?
- By implementing a mitigation options evaluation ranking system and assigning scores to it could help in identifying the best slow-down option.
- The workgroup also recommended additional data/resources:
  - Biological expertise to help support the evaluation process.
  - Transit profiles to explore if a slowdown would avoid pilot fatigue and excess hours.

## **Slowdown brainstorm input from group:**

- Seasonal slowdown possibilities
  - BC Coast Pilots have updated their systems to collect information on vessels' intent to participate in voluntary slowdowns. By having a mandatory question during the booking process that provides a participation response, dispatch officers are able to record participation or not.
  - Orla suggests seeking out the agents' participation before the trial since they deal with the majority of bulk vessels.
  - The agents are key to having the captains participate which will then lead to pilot participation.
  - The pilots can also offer consistency and encouragement for participation.
- Real-time slowdown
  - Kevin stated WSF could not do the seasonal slowdown but will take actions in real time when SRKWs are present.
  - WSF strongly supports this and does operate under such provisions currently and is assessing the effective noise reduction of these measures currently for our fleet.
  - Orla asks, how much benefit are we going to yield in terms of the soundscape reduction if we consider a slowdown in a WSF route?

## **Incentives- Preliminary Conversation**

- The group had a high level of interest in creative incentives, such as a preferential docking slot, a combined transboundary incentive, or others. However, Rachel reminded the group that Quiet Sound has little-to-no budget for monetary incentives for this first trial.
- Orla mentioned that ECHO is working to have multiple ports offer incentives for vessels that participate in their program which could lead to a higher participation rate due to the multiple incentives offered.

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- Jon mentioned that the attorneys at the Port of Seattle are concerned about the gift of government. There might be other ways to offer incentives, but it needs to be structured the right way.
- Mike states he will inquire with Long Beach and LA, about if and how they offer incentives while avoiding the gift of public funds.

## **Other questions.**

- Do pilots adjust their RPM speed beyond what is on their card?
- Is there already an acoustic model in existence for Puget Sound?
  - Quiet Sound thinks no, but will investigate.

## **Next Meeting Date**

**5/4/22**