

# QUIET SOUND

## 2024-25 Admiralty Inlet Voluntary Large Commercial Vessel Slowdown

### A collaborative effort to reduce underwater noise for endangered whales

Admiralty Inlet and Puget Sound are critical habitat for the endangered Southern Resident killer whales (SRKW). During the fall and winter, these killer whales swim, rest and forage for salmon in these waters. Underwater noise is identified by Canada and the United States as one of the main threats to killer whales, as it interferes with their ability to hunt, navigate, and communicate.

The [Quiet Sound program](#) began with the goal of reducing the acoustic impacts of large commercial vessels on these endangered whales in Washington. Since 2022, Quiet Sound has worked with a coalition of federal, state, tribal, port, maritime industry, scientist, and NGO representatives to implement a [seasonal voluntary slowdown](#) for vessels transiting through Admiralty Inlet and north Puget Sound. **In 2023-24, 71% of vessel transits slowed, leading to a 50% reduction in underwater noise intensity when whales were present** (full report here). Below are the parameters for the 2024-25 slowdown.

### Slowdown Parameters for 2024-25

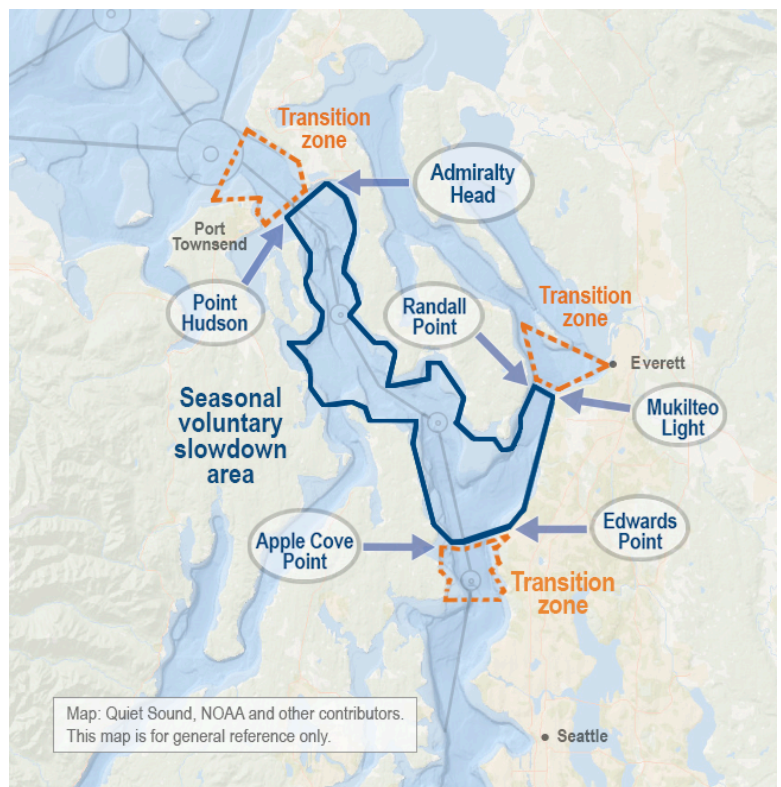
**Dates: 3 September 2024\* - 12 January 2025**

The slowdown will begin at 0001 PST the day after SRKW are confirmed in the slowdown zone anytime after September 3, 2024. The slowdown has a fixed end date of 2359 PST January 12, 2025.

### Location: Admiralty Inlet and north Puget Sound

The voluntary vessel slowdown takes place in the inbound and outbound shipping lanes within these boundaries:

- Northwest boundary of the slowdown: a line drawn between Pt Hudson (48.117264, -122.748907) and Admiralty Head (48.154217, -122.679503)
- Northeast boundary of the slowdown: a line drawn between Randall Pt (47.983237, -122.352871) and the Mukilteo Lighthouse (47.948181, -122.308043)
- Southern boundary of the slowdown: a line drawn between Apple Cove Pt (47.815535, -122.480885) and Edwards Pt (47.803340, -122.394924)



The slowdown area excludes Hood Canal. For a full-size map of the slowdown area [click here](#).

## Speed Targets:

When it is safe and feasible, ships are encouraged to transit the slowdown area at or below the following speeds through water:

**14.5 knots** - speed through water or less for **vehicle carriers, cruise ships, and container vessels**

**11.0 knots** - speed through water or less for **general cargo, bulkers, and tankers.**

**10.0 knots** - speed through water or less for **tugs running lite (not towing, pushing or responding to an emergency).**

*The slowdown does not include recommendations for fishing or recreational vessels.*

## Turn off Ultrasonic Anti-Fouling Systems:

In the slowdown area, please turn off ultrasonic anti-fouling systems on vessels to further reduce noise pollution in the frequencies that killer whales use to hunt and communicate.

## Benefits to Participants

Participating fleets are eligible for recognition certifications, which can be used for ESG metrics and to meet a criterion in the Underwater Noise performance indicator for those with a Green Marine certification. Please complete this [Intent to Participate survey](#) to receive information about your fleet's participation rate.

## Monitoring and Reporting

Quiet Sound will monitor multiple elements to determine the success of the slowdown:

- Underwater noise levels will be measured during and after the slowdown period.
- Whale presence will be recorded and reported out to mariners in real time through the [Whale Report Alert System](#).
- AIS data and pilot feedback will be used to track vessel participation.
- We will monitor rates of vessel overtaking to ensure there are no impacts to maritime safety and commercial vessels moving into tribal fishery areas.

During the slowdown, periodic newsletters will go out via email with updates on the program. After the slowdown ends, all of the data will be analyzed for a final report on the results of the trial slowdown area.

## Whale Alerts and Awareness for Commercial Mariners

Endangered whales can be found outside this slowdown area and in the area beyond the dates of the slowdown. Quiet Sound encourages mariners to sign up for the Whale Report Alert System (WRAS) to receive text alerts when you are within 10 nm of a verified whale sighting. If you belong to a government or professional marine organization, or are a pilot or member of the bridge crew of a ship, please contact the WRAS Project Manager at [WRAS@ocean.org](mailto:WRAS@ocean.org) to request access to WRAS.

Quiet Sound gratefully acknowledges all the partners who are working to provide Washington mariners with real-time whale locations, including: [Ocean Wise](#), [Orca Network](#), [Acartia](#), [Conserve.io](#), and all the members of the public who report sightings.

Quiet Sound encourages mariners to take the "[Whales in our Waters](#)" online training to learn how to identify and share waterways with whales. It is administered by the Vancouver Fraser Port Authority's ECHO program. Those who complete the 60-75 minute tutorial receive a certificate.

## How Can the Public Help This Initiative?

Members of the public can help commercial mariners avoid whales by reporting whale sightings through:

- Orca Network, [www.orcanetwork.org/report-sightings](http://www.orcanetwork.org/report-sightings), [sightings@orcanetwork.org](mailto:sightings@orcanetwork.org) or 866-ORCANET (672-2638).
- The WhaleReport app (available on [Apple](#) or [Google](#) devices)
- The Whale Alert app (available on [Apple](#) or [Google](#) devices)
- The U.S. Coast Guard Cetacean Desk at (206) 217-ORCA (6722) or in the Puget Sound VTS designated traffic channels (5A, 14).
- Mariners in Canadian-managed waters may report sightings to the Canadian Coast Guard Marine Mammal Desk at (833) 339-1020.

## For More Information:

- Learn more about Quiet Sound: [quietsound.org](http://quietsound.org)
- Stay up to date on the voluntary vessel slowdown: [quietsound.org/admiralty-inlet-slowdown](http://quietsound.org/admiralty-inlet-slowdown)
- Sign up for the Quiet Sound slowdown newsletter [here](#)
- Questions? Contact us at [info@quietsound.org](mailto:info@quietsound.org). Pilots with questions about the slowdown can text or call Quiet Sound at (360) 218-2307 from 8 am to 5 pm.
- Learn more about concurrent slowdowns for whale protection in Canadian waters on the [ECHO](#) site.

## Acknowledgements:

Quiet Sound recognizes the essential contributions of the [Leadership Committee and working groups](#) who provided input on the seasonal slowdowns. We also thank the [ECHO](#) program for their continued mentorship and partnership in operationalizing these programs. [Puget Sound Pilots](#) are playing a pivotal role in the on-water success of this effort. The [Marine Exchange of Puget Sound](#) is providing AIS data, and the Marine Exchange and [Pacific Merchant Shipping Association](#) have been key partners in communicating the slowdown to the maritime industry.

We thank all the tribal governments who considered our proposal to put forward this program for vessels traveling through their usual and accustomed fishing areas.

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Funding for the slowdown and whale reporting services is provided by the Washington State Legislature, the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, the Northwest Seaport Alliance, Port of Seattle and Port of Tacoma. The Port of Seattle provided translation services and printing for informational handouts for mariners.