

SEPA SUPPLEMENTAL ORCA

ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST

Purpose of checklist:

This SEPA supplemental Orca checklist is designed to help project proponents and government agencies identify when a project needs further analysis regarding adverse effects on ESA (Endangered Species Act) listed Southern Resident Killer Whales (*Orcinus orca*).

Governmental agencies use this supplemental orca checklist to help determine whether there are vessel traffic impacts to the Southern Resident Killer Whale (*Orcinus orca*) population from vessel traffic in marine waters* of the state. This supplemental information is also helpful to determine if available avoidance, minimization, or compensatory mitigation measures will address the probable significant impacts or if an environmental impact statement will be prepared to further analyze the proposal. *Marine areas are waters within the boundaries of Washington, including Puget Sound, Hood Canal, the Strait of Juan de Fuca, the San Juan Islands, the Strait of Georgia, and the Pacific Ocean.

Questions – Vessel (general): ([help](#))

1. What is (are) the primary type(s) of vessels that will be used as a result of this project (e.g., cargo, ferry, tug, tanker, etc.)?
2. What frequency of vessel traffic is expected as a result of this project (e.g., the anticipated number of transits per year, etc.)?
3. What is the expected operating speed of the vessels while transiting in the marine waters of the state?

Questions – Vessel (timing): ([help](#)):

1. Are vessel transits expected to be relatively uniform across the year, or are seasonal increases/decreases expected? If so, during what times of the year?
2. What are the expected range of hours of transits for the vessels as a result of the project in Puget Sound and/or entry into the Columbia River (daytime, nighttime, both, etc.)?

Questions – Vessel (travel routes and anchorage/queuing): ([help](#))

1. What are the primary waterways of vessel transit in the marine waters of the state?
 Strait of Juan de Fuca
 Haro Strait
 Rosario Strait

- ___ Puget Sound
- ___ Columbia River
- ___ Outer Coast
- ___ Other - please describe: _____

2. What are the designated anchorage areas this project expects to utilize and how distant are they from the project?
3. Will any unusual queuing dynamics be needed to support operations (e.g., reliance on just-in-time arrivals, multiple berthing's per "vessel call" to load/unload cargo, etc.)?

Questions – Vessel (Noise): ([help](#))

1. Will the vessels be using something other than conventional propellers for propulsion?
2. Do the vessels or facilities participate in Green Marine? If so, at what level do they report on underwater noise?
3. Will the vessels voluntarily participate in the Enhancing Cetacean Habitat and Observation (ECHO) Program and/or Quiet Sound's voluntary slow-down if they pass through those areas?
4. Will the vessels' transducers (for chart plotting) use low power and/or broadband technology (like chirp systems) or be able to switch to frequencies above 150 kHz?
5. Do the vessels or their pilots plan to use near real-time whale alerts (e.g., Whale Report Alert System) around the clock to raise situational awareness and modify their course or speed around orcas when safe to do so?
6. What operational measures will the vessels take to reduce underwater noise?
7. How else will potential increases in underwater noise be mitigated?

Questions – Vessel (maintenance, support needs): ([help](#))

1. Does the project have a plan or requirement for vessels to perform annual (or more frequent) propeller and hull cleaning maintenance?
2. Will the vessels avoid the use of acoustic anti-fouling systems, such as ultra-sonic devices, which emit high frequency sound?
3. What type(s) and number of support vessels (such as tugs for escorts or barges for fuel) will be used to support operations; where will they come from and at what time (daytime, nighttime, both, etc.)?
4. Will your oil spill contingency plan meet the requirements of WAC 173-182-540 to ensure oil spill response resources for Southern Resident Killer Whale deterrence requirements are being met?