

Introduction of the term Traffic Control Zone and formalization of Fraser River Traffic Control Zone procedures

Background

Under the *Canada Marine Act*, all Canada Port Authorities may establish practices and procedures within their jurisdiction to be followed by ships and establish safety control zones for safe boating and recreational activities. The Vancouver Fraser Port Authority is the federal agency responsible for maintaining the safe and efficient movement of marine traffic within the Port of Vancouver and has had navigational and safe boating regulations in place within its jurisdiction for a number of years to ensure the safety of all port users.

On February 13, 2018 the port authority issued a notice of amendment regarding:

1. the change in reference from Movement Restriction Areas (MRA) to Traffic Control Zones (TCZ) and
2. the formalization of mostly existing practices and procedures for marine vessel traffic control and safety in the Fraser River

The proposed amendments were developed in collaboration with the Pacific Pilotage Authority (PPA), the Fraser River Pilots (FRP) and the broader marine community. Following the 30-day public comment period, the port authority reviewed and considered all feedback before making updates to the practices and procedures. The final changes reflect the port authority's commitment to promoting safety on the water for commercial traffic and recreational boaters alike and can be found in the [Port Information Guide](#).

Overview:

The port authority received 53 email responses received during the 30-day comment period between February 13 and March 14, 2018. This consideration report summarizes comments received along with the port authority's response to comments pertaining to the introduction of the term Traffic Control Zone and formalization of Fraser River Traffic Control Zone procedures.

**Human-powered or pleasure craft vessels include, but are not limited to, kayaks, canoes and stand up paddleboards.*

**The TCZ-4 is the same as the deep-sea transit route.*

Summary of issue or interest	Summary of comments received	Response from Vancouver Fraser Port Authority
<p>Access by human-powered vessels in the south arm of the Fraser River from the river mouth to New Westminster</p> <p><i>46 comments</i></p>	<p>The boundaries of TCZ-4 restrict the ability for human-powered vessels to cross the channel. Instead of requiring vessels to have adequate mechanical power to access areas or cross the Fraser River, consider provision of defined crossing points under controlled conditions or requiring such vessels to have adequate floatation and safety gear.</p>	<p>Human-powered or pleasure craft vessels can cross the TCZ-4, but we ask that extreme caution is taken when doing so and to cross only if necessary and when not impeding larger vessels.</p> <p>The intent of the requirement that Tier 2 vessels must be under adequate mechanical power when transiting TCZ-4 is to ensure that all Tier 2 vessels transiting the TCZ-4 (specifically in an upriver or downriver direction, as opposed to crossing the TCZ-4) are capable of safely navigating in the prevailing circumstances (i.e. strong river currents).</p> <p>Human-powered pleasure craft vessels in general do not have sufficient mechanical power (i.e. engine) to take the appropriate action to avoid collision with larger vessels under these conditions. For this reason, we encourage paddling to occur as close to the shoreline as safe and practical, and to cross the channel only if necessary and when not impeding larger vessels.</p> <p>When Tier 2 vessels are required to cross the TCZ-4, they should comply with the Collision Regulations, specifically where it states <i>"a vessel should not cross a narrow channel or fairway if such crossing impedes the passage of a vessel which can safely navigate only within such channel or fairway."</i></p> <p>Additionally, and consistent with other best practices contained within the Collision Regulations, they should cross the TCZ-4 as nearly as practicable at right angles to the</p>

		<p>general direction of traffic flow, for safety purposes.</p> <p>Language will be added to the TCZ-4 to clarify these requirements.</p>
	<p>Boundaries of TCZ-4 are too far reaching and in some cases, extend from shore to shore, completely restricting passage by human-powered vessels such as kayaks.</p>	<p>The Fraser River South Arm Traffic Control Zone (TCZ-4) comprises an area extending for a maximum of 61 metres either side of the charted deep-sea navigation channel or the shoreline, whichever is least. The TCZ-4 does not include areas such as Deas Slough, Steveston Harbour and the South Arm Islands.</p>
	<p>Request for access to be left open or be made more lenient for human-powered vessels along the Fraser River. Some of these areas include Deas Slough, Steveston Harbour, the South Arm Islands, and other similar areas.</p>	<p>In areas where the shoreline is the TCZ-4 boundary, we ask that human-powered vessels navigate as close to the shoreline as is safe and practicable.</p> <p>This language will be added to the TCZ-4 to provide clarification to operators of human-powered pleasure craft vessels.</p>
<p>Definitions and maps</p> <p><i>13 comments</i></p>	<p>Request for a chart, similar to the one for vessels using First Narrows, showing corridors, boundaries, crossing areas and routes as a resource for users. The boundaries, specifically the width of the proposed TCZ-4 is currently unclear to operators of pleasure craft.</p>	<p>To better illustrate the TCZ-4 boundaries, the port authority will add images using a more appropriate scale to the Port Information Guide to provide greater clarity of the boundaries of the TCZ-4 with respect to the broader geography of the Fraser River (new images shown below).</p> <p>An alternative reference is our Fraser River Safe Boating Guide, which clearly shows the 'deep-sea transit route' which accurately reflects the TCZ-4 boundaries. It is important to note the TCZ-4 practices and procedures are applicable only in this area, and do not apply to areas such as Steveston, Ladner, Deas Slough, and other areas outside of the 'deep-sea transit route'.</p>

	<p>The proposed regulation states that Tier 2 vessels including fishing vessels, pleasure craft and sailing vessels, when transiting TCZ-4 “must be under adequate mechanical power.” However, one can argue that human-powered vessels are normally considered to be adequately powered without the use of mechanical assistance. Can you clarify whether the proposed procedures discourage the use of these vessels in the TCZ-4?</p>	<p>Adequate mechanical power can be defined as a vessel, including those engaged in towing or fishing, having sufficient engine power (i.e. horsepower) to safely navigate and avoid collision under the prevailing circumstances of the Fraser River (i.e. tidal, river and Freshet currents, wind, presence of ice and/or floating debris, etc.).</p> <p>The intent of the requirement is to ensure that all Tier 2 vessels transiting the TCZ-4 (specifically in an upriver or downriver direction, as opposed to crossing the TCZ-4) are capable of safely navigating in the prevailing circumstances (i.e. strong river currents).</p> <p>Human-powered pleasure craft vessels in general do not have sufficient mechanical power (i.e. engine) to take the appropriate action to avoid collision with larger vessels under these conditions. For this reason, we encourage paddling to occur as close to the shoreline as safe and practical, and to cross the channel only if necessary and when not impeding larger vessels.</p>
<p>Collaboration process <i>4 comments</i></p>	<p>The notice of amendment indicates that the port authority worked in collaboration with the Pacific Pilotage Authority (PPA), the Fraser River Pilots (FRP) and the broader marine community on the proposed amendments. We are unaware of any consultation with members of the paddling or kayaking community. Given the historical significance that paddle-craft travel has had on the Fraser, this should be considered.</p>	<p>The Port Authority worked in collaboration with the federal authorities responsible for vessel operations within the deep-sea navigation channel. The TCZ-4 procedures are comprised of mostly existing procedures that are being published in an effort to increase transparency into how vessels are expected to operate within these important navigation channels. In most cases, paddle-craft do not operate within the deep-sea transit route (TCZ-4).</p>

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		<p>The purpose of the notice of amendment is to bring notice of proposed practices and procedures to the attention of those likely to be affected, including the paddling and kayaking community.</p> <p>During the 30-day notice period, comments are accepted and taken into consideration by the port authority prior to the practices and procedures taking effect.</p>
	<p>Impact to businesses such as those in Steveston and the Delta Rowing Club on Deas Slough does not seem to have been considered.</p>	<p>The TCZ-4 practices and procedures do not apply to areas such as Steveston, Ladner, Deas Slough, and other areas outside of the 'deep-sea transit route'. https://www.portvancouver.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/SafeBoating-FraserRiver.pdf</p> <p>The Fraser River Traffic Control Zone procedures establish guidelines for the safe and efficient operation of vessel traffic within a defined area in which deep-sea vessels and other commercial vessel traffic operates regularly.</p> <p>The development, formalization and publication of mostly existing procedures support local communities to identify the hazards which exist in and around a deep-sea navigation channel, within the jurisdiction of the port authority.</p>
	<p>Proposed amendments go against a Metro Vancouver Experience the Fraser initiative and route map that brought bring together points of interest and features along the river for recreational paddlers.</p>	<p>It's important to note that the proposed amendments to the Port Information Guide do not ban or restrict access of paddlers to the Fraser River.</p> <p>The intention of the guide is to formalize existing navigation best practices and procedures that raise awareness of critical information regarding the deep-sea transit route and the potential hazards and risks of collision that are unique to</p>

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		<p>river waters and narrow channels for the safety of those navigating these waters.</p> <p>We want to encourage paddling to occur as close to the shoreline as safe and practical as possible and to cross the channel only if necessary and when not impeding larger vessels.</p>
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Images to be added to Fraser River Traffic Control Zone (TCZ-4):

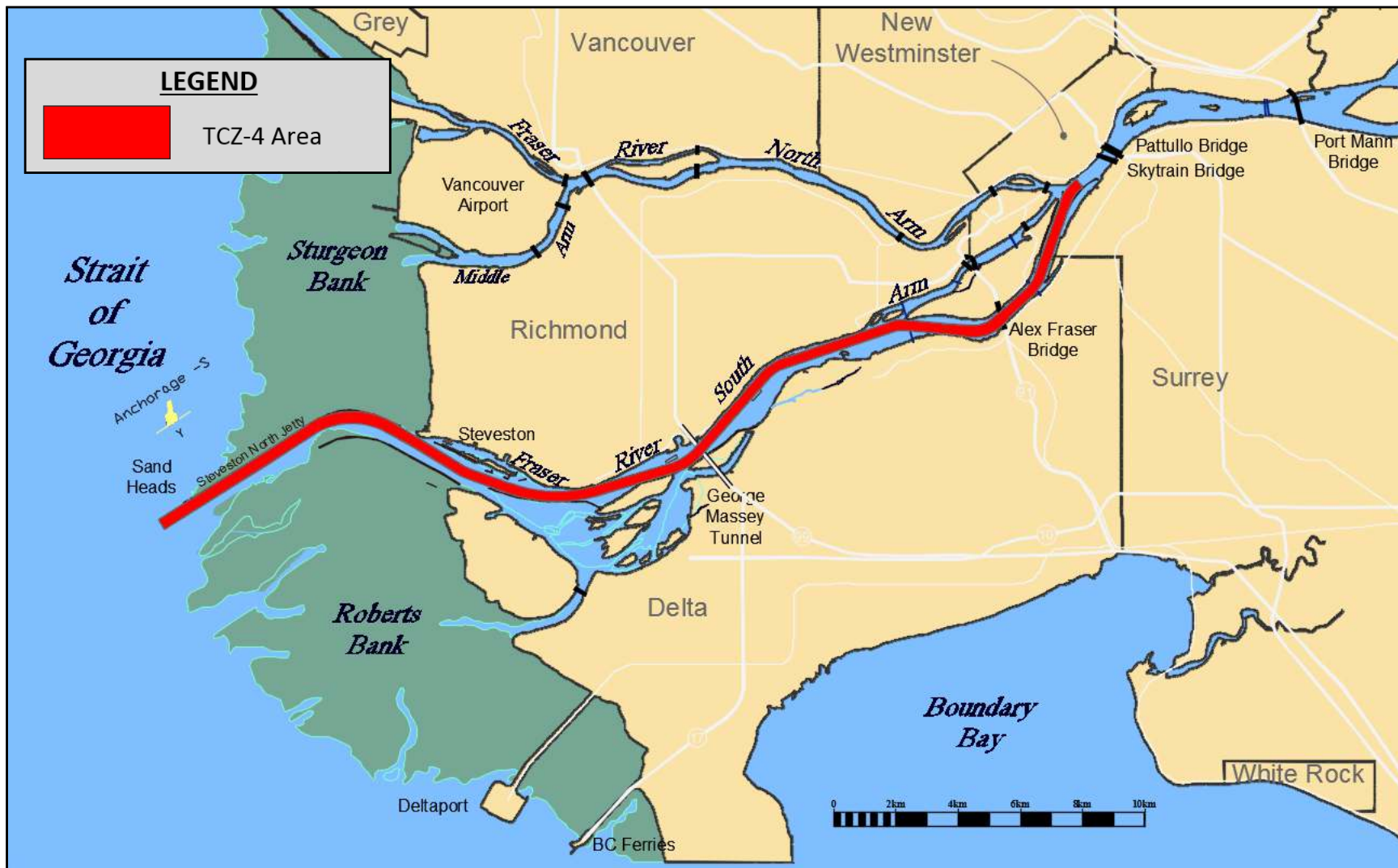


Image: TCZ-4 Overview

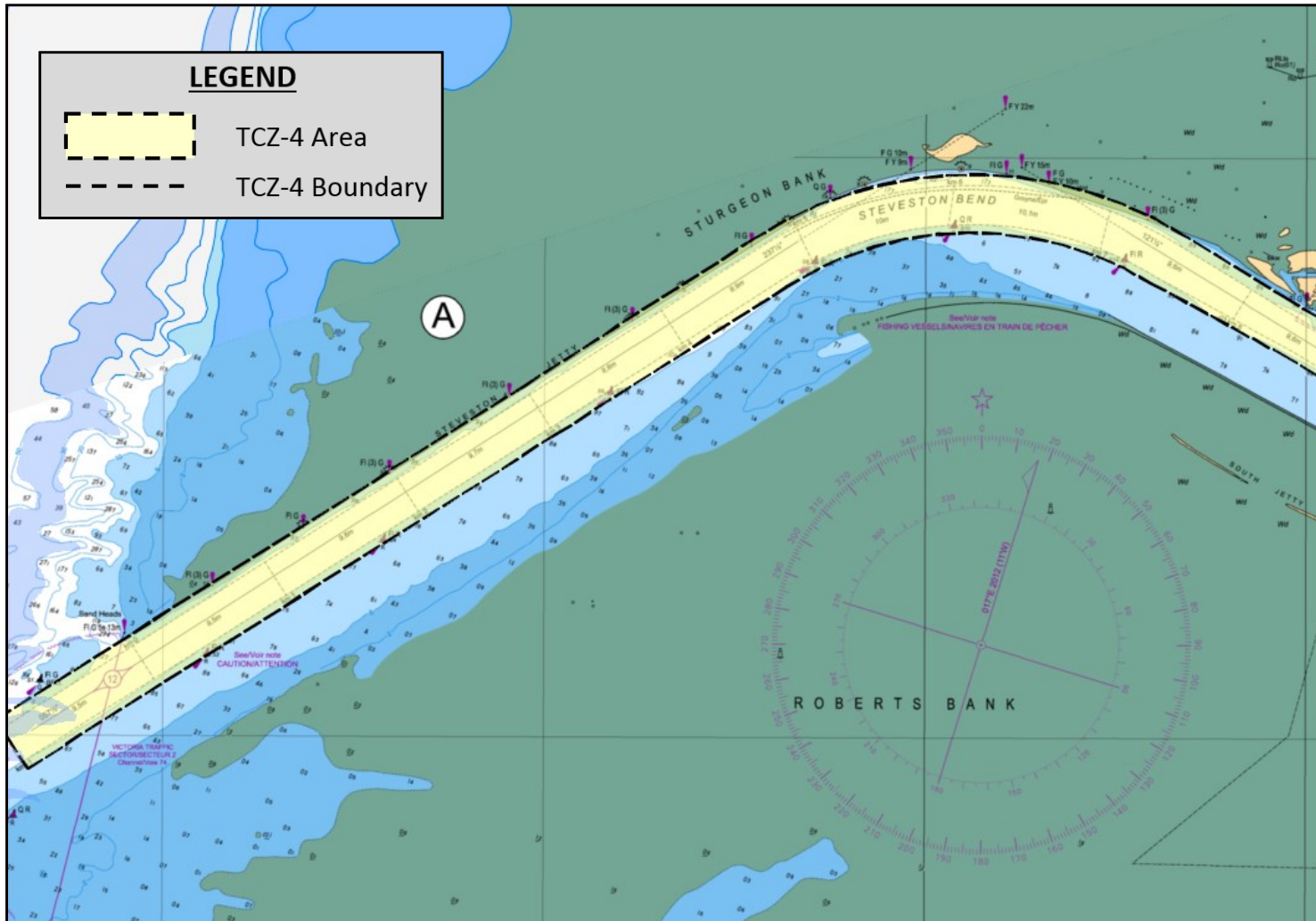


Image: TCZ-4 Section 1

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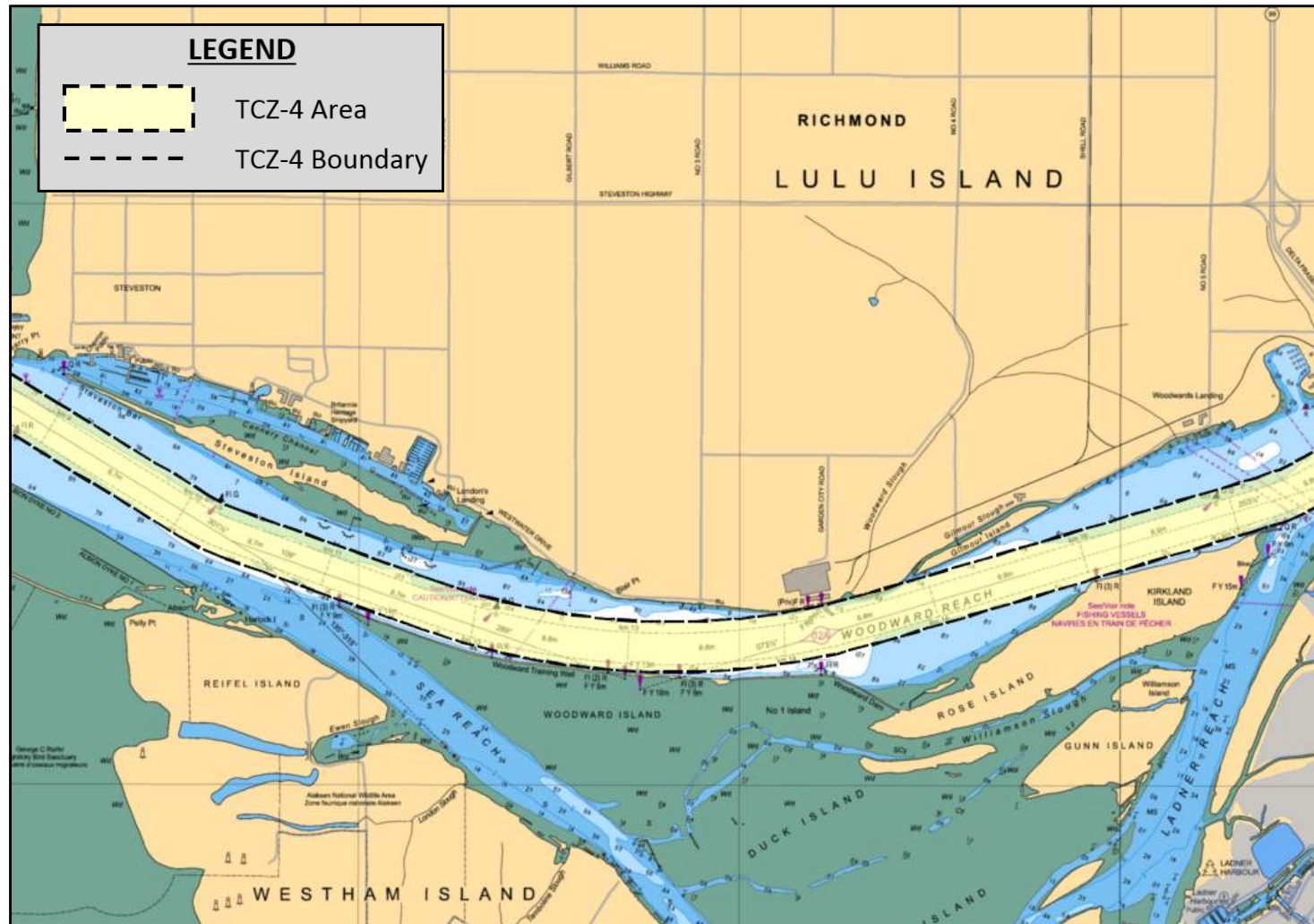


Image: TCZ-4 Section 2

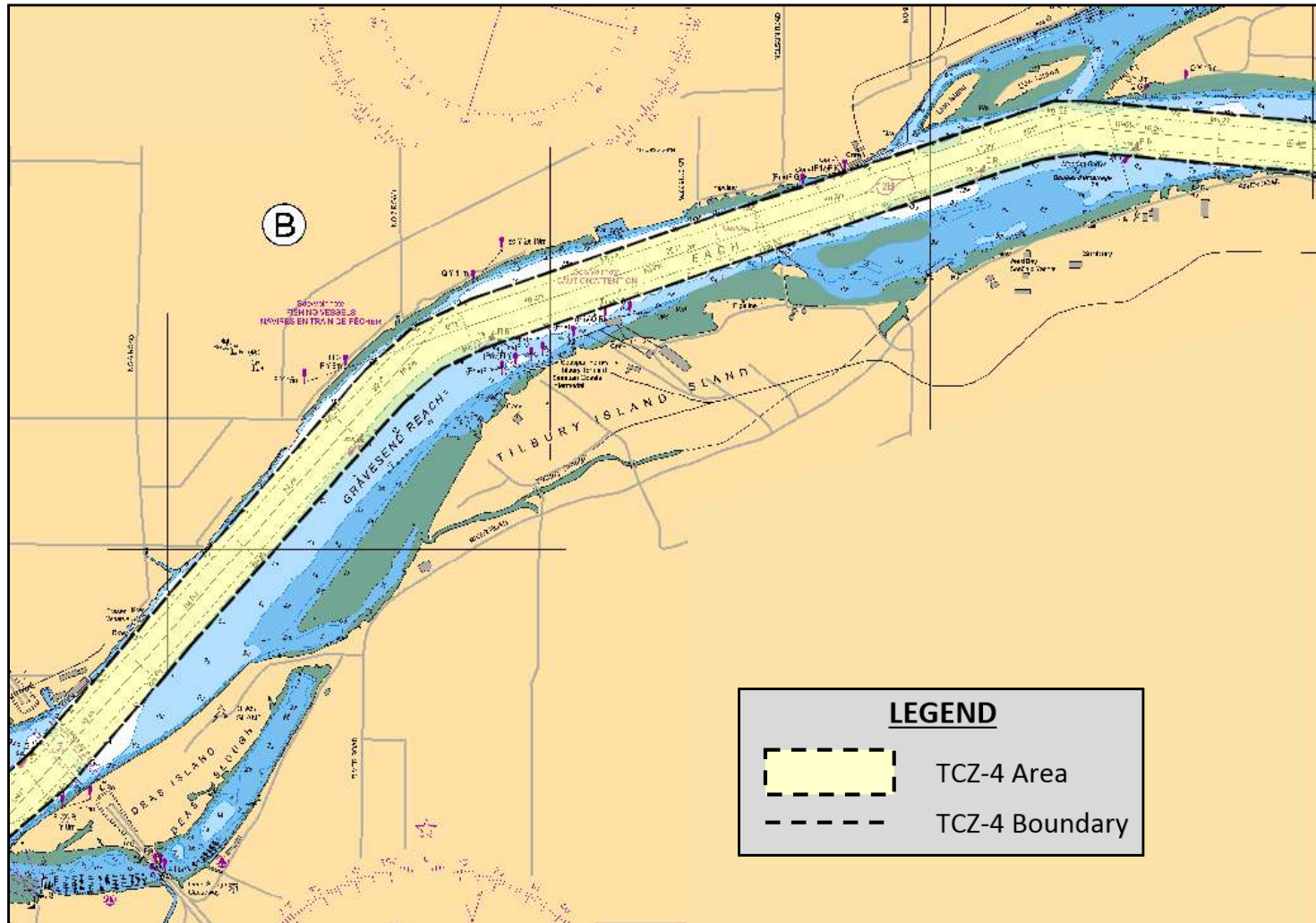


Image: TCZ-4 Section 3

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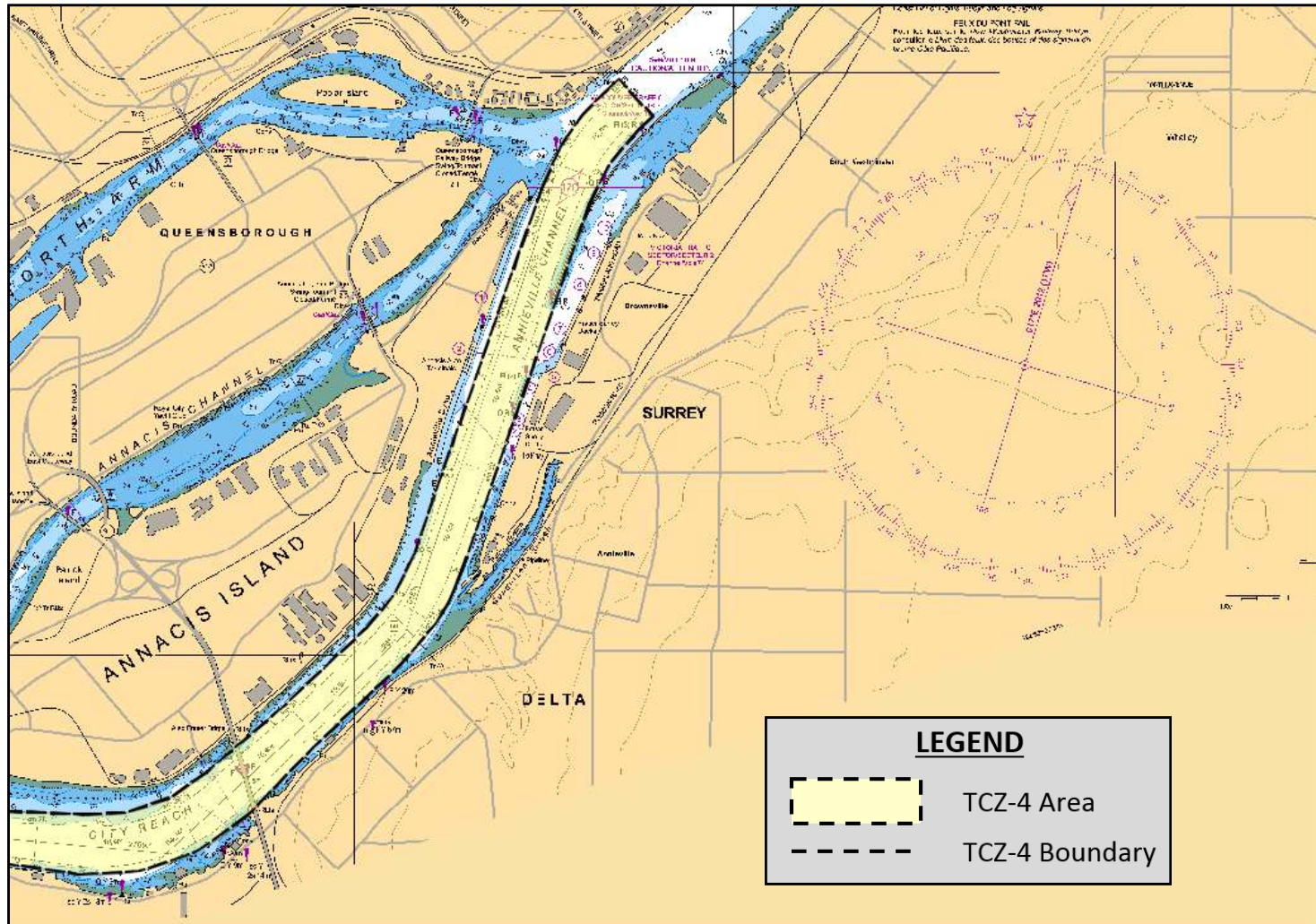


Image: TCZ-4 Section 4