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*This newsletter provides regular technical updates related to the ECHO Program's underwater noise reduction initiatives and is primarily intended for participants of the Haro Strait and Boundary Pass voluntary vessel slowdown trial and Strait of Juan de Fuca inshore lateral displacement trial. For more general ECHO Program news and updates, sign up to our [ECHO Program newsletter here](#).*



## **2019 voluntary vessel slowdown trial in Haro Strait and Boundary Pass**

Underwater noise from ships can interfere with whales' ability to hunt, navigate and communicate, but slowing ships down can reduce that noise. This summer, the ECHO Program, partners and advisors are coordinating the implementation of another voluntary vessel slowdown trial with a goal to maximize industry participation, underwater noise reduction levels and the benefits to the southern resident killer whales in the key foraging areas of Haro Strait and Boundary Pass, identified by Fisheries and Oceans Canada.

### **Slowdown not yet activated, monitoring period still underway**

Effective June 1, the commercial shipping industry has been on alert that the 2019 voluntary ship slowdown trial will begin when southern resident killer whales are confirmed as present within the expanded trial area of Haro Strait and Boundary Pass. The ECHO Program has enlisted the support of a team of trusted observers on Saturna Island and San Juan Island, as well as underwater microphones, known as hydrophones, to help provide real-time notification and confirmation of whale presence. While these observers have recorded numerous humpback and transient killer whale sightings to date, we are still awaiting the southern resident killer whale's return. If you are a pilot, shipping agent or ship operator, you will receive further instructions by email when the slowdown begins.

## **2019 voluntary inshore lateral displacement trial - overview**

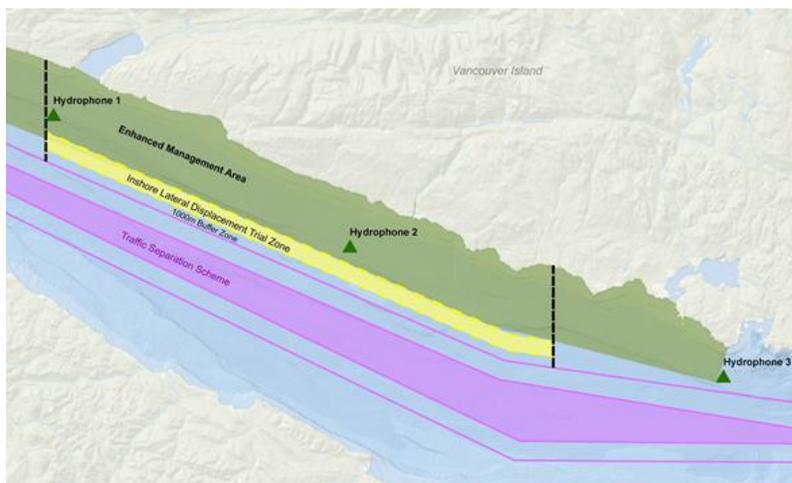
In 2018, the ECHO Program and Transport Canada, supported by both the Canadian and U.S. Coast Guard, Fisheries and Oceans Canada and the Canadian and U.S. marine transportation industry, conducted a voluntary lateral displacement trial to study how moving vessels further away from a known whale feeding area in the Strait of Juan de Fuca would affect the underwater noise levels in that area. Last year, 88 per cent of tugs participated in the trial by spending all or part of their transit in the inshore trial zone and results indicate that

this high rate of participation resulted in a substantial reduction in underwater noise at a nearby hydrophone located in this important feeding area for the southern resident killer whales.

Building on the learnings and success of the 2018 voluntary lateral displacement trial, and in an effort to support ongoing whale recovery measures for the southern resident killer whales, this year, the ECHO Program and Transport Canada are once again working closely with other advisors and partners to coordinate a lateral displacement trial, this time for tugs and barge operators only, in the Canadian inshore area of the Strait of Juan de Fuca.

The goal of the trial is to reduce underwater noise contributions from tug and barge traffic in the known killer whale feeding area, through high levels of participation, similar to 2018. The known killer whale feeding area is shown in green in the map below and between May and the end of October 2019, this area has also been designated by the Government of Canada as an Enhanced Management Area.

The voluntary inshore lateral displacement trial began on June 17, 2019 and where safe and operationally feasible to do so, all tugs and barges transiting in the Canadian inshore area of the Strait of Juan de Fuca are requested to move south of the known killer whale feeding area (Enhanced Management Area) and navigate through the inshore lateral displacement trial zone while maintaining a buffer distance of 1000m from the traffic separation scheme (shown in pink in the map below). The trial will continue until October 31, 2019.



For more detailed information, see our [2019 voluntary inshore lateral displacement trial webpage](#) and additional trial resources below.

## 2019 lateral displacement trial resources

- [2019 inshore lateral displacement trial fact sheet](#)
- [Map of inshore lateral displacement trial area in the Strait of Juan de Fuca](#)
- [Protocols for participating – 2019 inshore lateral displacement trial \(cheat sheet for mariners\)](#)

## Educational resources for mariners

Mariners play an important role in helping to protect at-risk whales in our waters and the ECHO Program helps to develop educational resources for those who regularly navigate our waters to help familiarize themselves with marine mammals in the region.

In preparation for the southern resident killer whales' arrival, here is one of the resources available that may be of interest:



### *Whales in our Waters* tutorial

Learn tips for identifying common species, including their seasonal distribution and critical habitat areas, detection cues and whale behaviours and best practices to implement when whales are in the area. The tutorial takes up to 90 minutes to complete.

The *Whales in our Waters* tutorial was developed for mariners by Vancouver Fraser Port Authority's ECHO Program and BC Ferries with the support of Ocean Wise.

[Register at http://echolearn.portvancouver.com](http://echolearn.portvancouver.com)

## Thank you

The ECHO Program team is very grateful for the ongoing participation and support of our many partners who contribute to the continued success of the voluntary underwater noise reduction initiatives.

## Questions or feedback

Contact the ECHO Program team at [echo@portvancouver.com](mailto:echo@portvancouver.com) or learn more at [www.portvancouver.com/echo](http://www.portvancouver.com/echo).

| For additional information about the voluntary vessel slowdown trial, see [portvancouver.com/echo/slowdowns](http://portvancouver.com/echo/slowdowns)

| For additional information about the voluntary inshore lateral displacement trial, see [portvancouver.com/echo/lateraldisplacement](http://portvancouver.com/echo/lateraldisplacement)

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You are receiving this email because of your support or participation in the ECHO Program's voluntary underwater noise reduction initiatives taking place this summer. These initiatives aim to reduce underwater noise which can affect endangered killer whales.



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