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SOUTHERN RESIDENT KILLER WHALE MANAGEMENT MEASURES FOR 2022



Photo credit: Miles Ritter

Canada 



2022 MANAGEMENT MEASURES APPROACH

Southern Resident Killer Whale Population Status

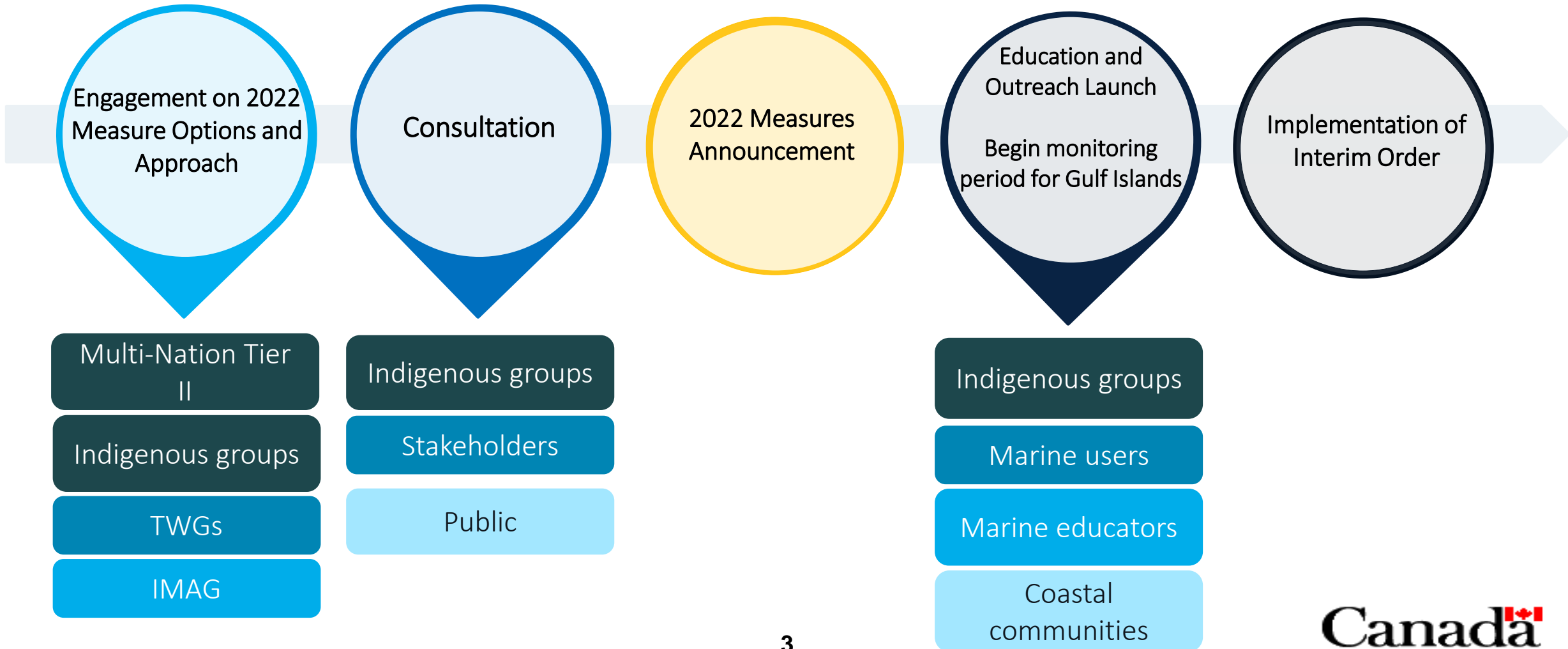
- Southern Resident Killer Whales listed as **Endangered** in Canada and the US
- **73 individuals** with the new calf J59 reported (March 2022)
- Population facing **imminent threats to survival and recovery** – enhanced measures necessary to support recovery

Management Measure Approach

- Building on efforts from previous years, the **2022 management measures address key threats** to support **protection in** Southern Resident Killer Whale **foraging areas** and **in the presence of killer whales**
 - Reduced prey availability (availability = abundance + accessibility of Chinook, Chum and Coho)
 - Physical and acoustic disturbance
- **Measures informed by** existing and new **science** published in 2021 to protect Southern Resident Killer Whales while balancing **socioeconomic impacts** and **aligning with other management measures** (such as the Chinook conservation measures), as well as **feedback from Indigenous groups, stakeholders and the public**
- The 2022 management measures are **part of a continuum of recovery efforts** for Southern Resident Killer Whales **over the longer-term** that address reduced prey availability, physical and acoustic disturbance and contaminants



KEY MILESTONES





PREY AVAILABILITY MEASURES



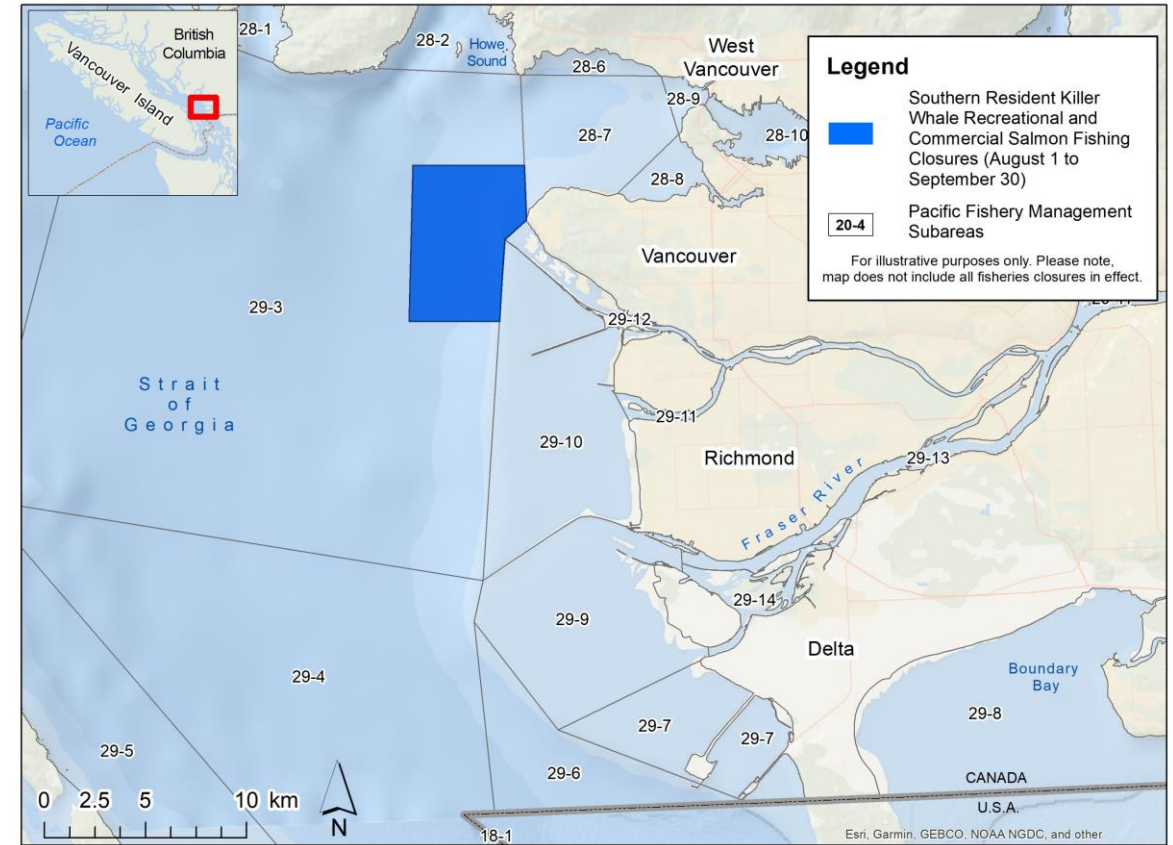
MOUTH OF THE FRASER RIVER: SALMON FISHING CLOSURE

Measure:

- No recreational or commercial salmon fishing in a portion of Subarea 29-3
 - Food, Social and Ceremonial harvest or domestic treaty fishing access not prohibited
- Closures are in effect from August 1 to September 30, 2022

Rationale:

- New closure for 2022 based on Southern Resident Killer Whale presence in greater frequency between August and September
- Provide protection in known foraging area
- In addition to salmon closures for 2022
- Change compared to 2021 where no additional closures in area to support Southern Resident Killer Whale



2022 salmon fishing closure in support of Southern Resident Killer Whale recovery



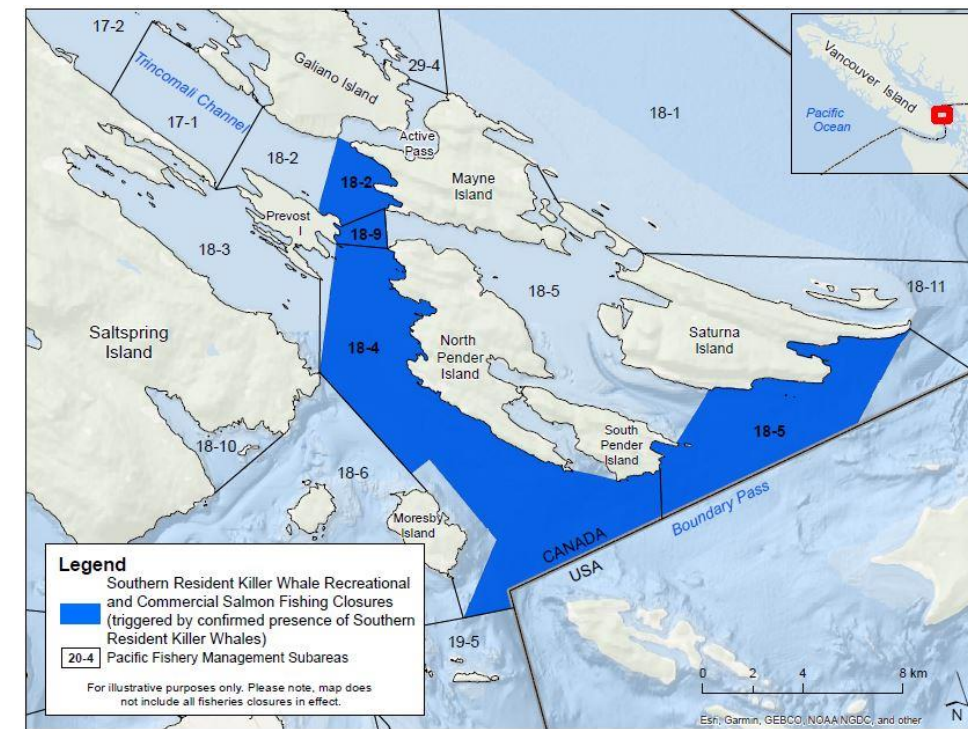
SOUTHERN GULF ISLANDS: SALMON FISHING CLOSURES

Measure:

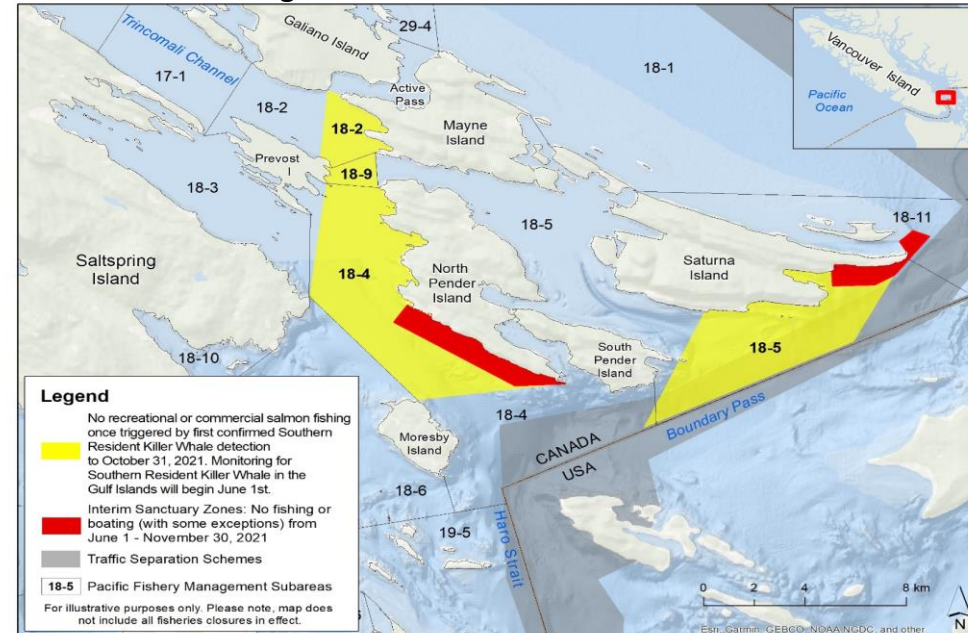
- No recreational or commercial fishing in Subarea 18-9 and portions of 18-2, 18-4, and 18-5
 - Food, Social and Ceremonial harvest or domestic treaty fishing access is not prohibited
- Closure protocol in effect to implement closures based on first confirmed presence of Southern Resident Killer Whales

Rationale:

- Expansion of closure area in 2022 compared to 2021 based on Southern Resident Killer Whale presence information
- Protect greater areas while balancing harvest access in key locations



2022 salmon fishing closures



2021 Gulf Islands management measures



GULF ISLANDS SALMON TRIGGER CLOSURE PROTOCOL

Detection

- Monitoring in the area will begin May 5
- Confirmed detections to trigger closures provided by
 - DFO Whale Tracking Network: acoustic monitoring starting May 5
 - ECHO Program, working closely with local partners: visual monitoring starting June 1

Timing

- Closures will only “turn on” once
- Once triggered, closures will remain in effect until October 31, 2022

Confirmation

- A Notice to Fish Harvesters will be sent out implementing area-based salmon fishing closures within 24 hours of confirmed detection
 - Confirmed detections near dusk or over the weekend will be implemented on next business day
- Website, social media, and e-bulletin to be sent out following Notice



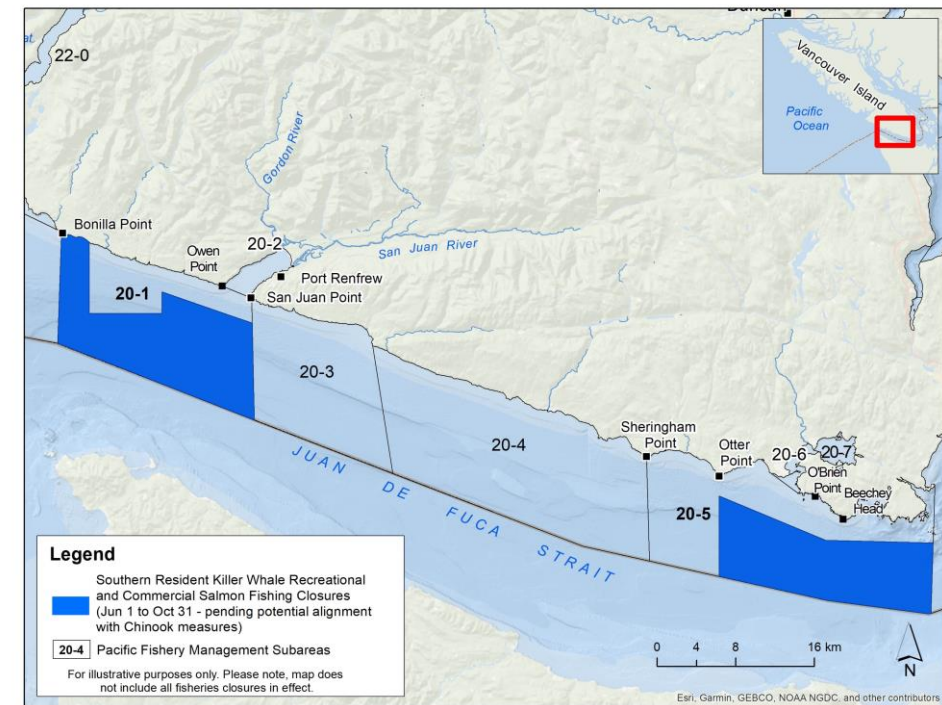
JUAN DE FUCA STRAIT: AREA BASED FISHING CLOSURES

Measure:

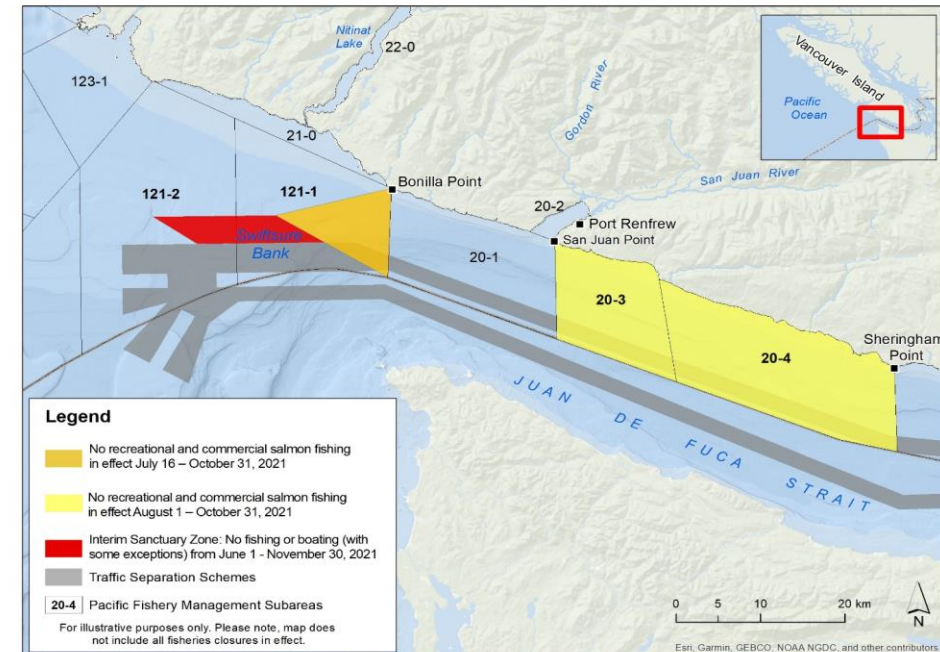
- No recreational and commercial salmon fishing in portions of Subareas 20-1 and 20-5
 - Food, Social and Ceremonial harvest or domestic treaty fishing access is not prohibited
- Closures in effect August 1 (or following the expiry of Chinook non-retention measures) until October 31, 2022
 - Dates of recreation and commercial fishery closures will be finalized in June 2022

Rationale:

- New closure areas in 2022 to protect dominant foraging areas while balancing harvest access in key locations
- 2021 closure (Subareas 20-3 and 20-4) no longer closed in 2022 due to new science advice on Southern Resident Killer Whale habitat use



2022 salmon fishing closures



2021 Juan de Fuca management measures



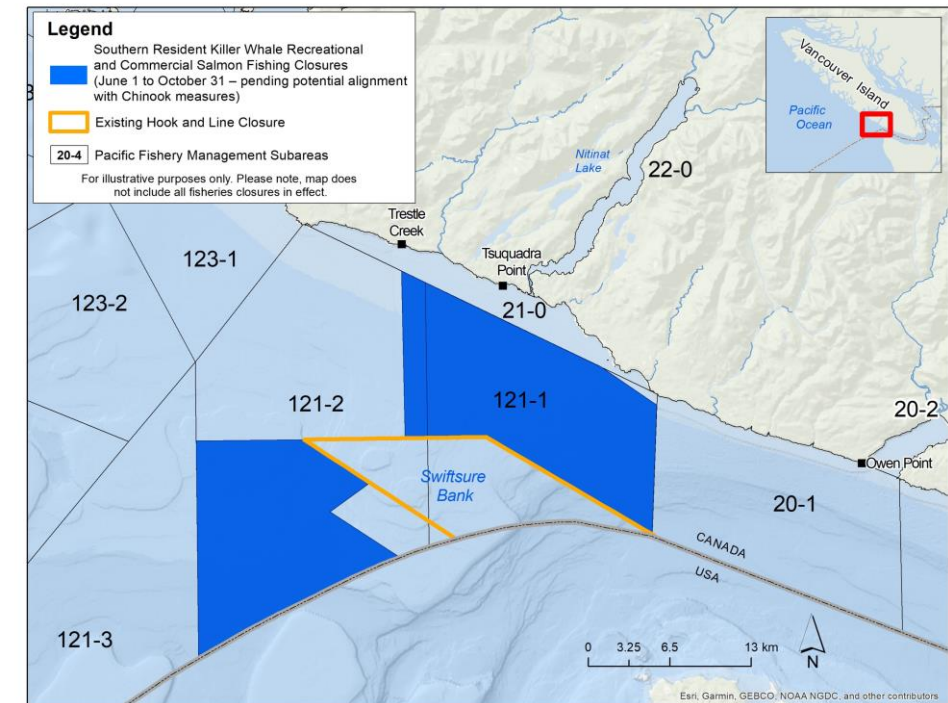
SWIFTSURE BANK: SALMON FISHING CLOSURES

Measure:

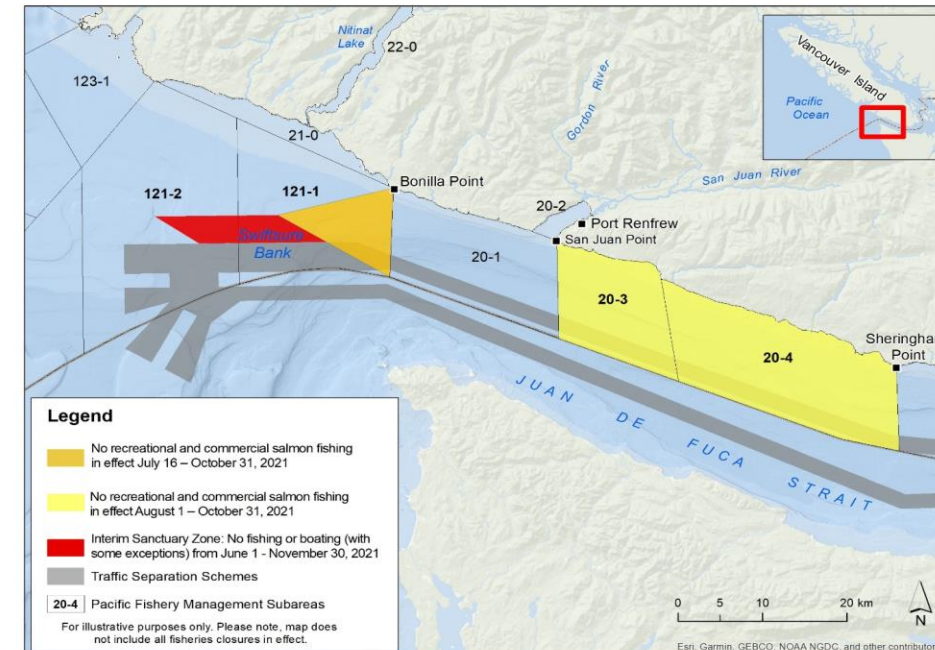
- No recreational and commercial salmon fishing in portions of Subareas 121-1 and 121-2
 - Food, Social and Ceremonial harvest or domestic treaty fishing access is not prohibited
- Closures in effect July 15 (or following the expiry of Chinook non-retention measures) until October 31, 2022
 - Dates of recreation and commercial fishery closures will be finalized in June 2022

Rationale:

- Expansion of 2021 closure in Subarea 121-1 and additional closure in 121-2
- Provide protection to dominant foraging areas and areas of high Southern Resident Killer Whale presence



2022 salmon fishing closures



2021 Juan de Fuca management measures



VOLUNTARY FISHING AVOIDANCE ZONE

Measure:

- Continue to encourage fishers to stop fishing (and not haul gear) within 1000m of a killer whale
- In effect year-round and in all Canadian Pacific waters

Rationale:

- Same voluntary measure as previous years
- Best practice in the presence of killer whales

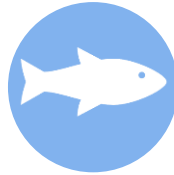


LONGER-TERM WORK TO SUPPORT PREY AVAILABILITY



SALMON MANAGEMENT MEASURES

- Management measures are anticipated to be required for many years given the status of Fraser Chinook
- Potential adjustments for the 2022 season will be considered as part of the salmon Integrated Fisheries Management Plan process



SALMON ENHANCEMENT

- Enhancement of Pacific salmon includes rebuilding depleted stocks with a greater emphasis on the integration of harvest and habitat management with stock rebuilding
- Release of 1M Chilliwack River Hatchery Chinook



SALMON PROTECTION & RESTORATION & REBUILDING

- Focus on improving habitat quality and connectivity to support salmon freshwater life history requirements
- Re-opening estuary habitat to improve salmon early marine survival
- Researching ways to incorporate climate change into restoration planning and prioritization and benefits to Southern Resident Killer Whale prey availability
- Implement the Pacific Salmon Strategy and to make new investments to restore and rebuild salmon populations



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SANCTUARIES

SWIFTSURE BANK SEASONAL SLOWDOWN AREAS

Measure

Two new Seasonal Slowdown Areas (SSA):

1. Existing ISZ extended to become SSA in PFMA 121-1
2. Second located between Carmanah Point & Latitude 125

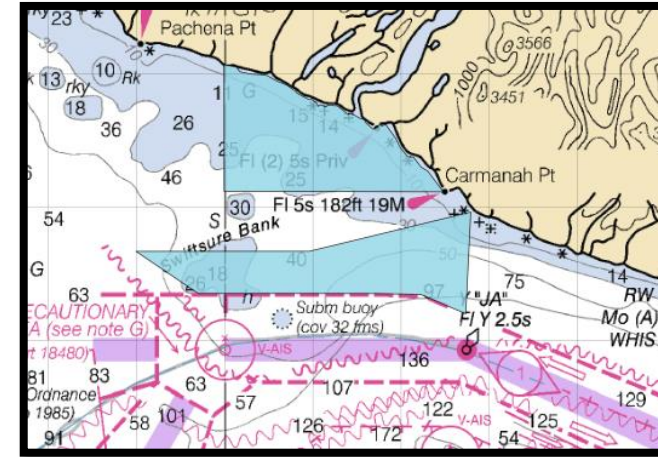
Vessel speed limited to no more than 10 knots in SSAs

Timing

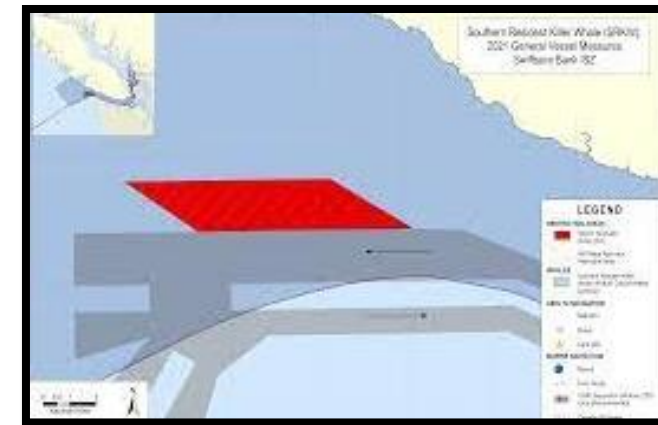
In effect from June 1 - November 30, 2022

Exceptions

- Federal government, or present at the request of the government
- Non-motorized vessels
- Vessels in distress or providing assistance
- Vessels avoiding immediate or unforeseen danger



2022 Swiftsure Bank SSAs



2021 Swiftsure Bank ISZ



SOUTHERN GULF ISLANDS INTERIM SANCTUARY ZONES

Measure

Consistent with 2021, no fishing or boating (some exceptions) off the coasts of South Pender & Saturna Islands.

Timing

In effect from June 1 - November 30, 2022

Exceptions

- Human powered vessels provided a 20m transit lane along shoreline
- Local traffic
- Vessels in distress or providing assistance
- Vessels involved in pollution response
- Vessels avoiding immediate or unforeseen danger
- Federal government, or present at the request of the government
- Undertaking activities as authorized under either SARA, the MMR, or *Fisheries Act* (including scientific research)
- Vessels being used for s. 35 fishing



2021 & 2022 Southern Gulf Islands ISZs



GENERAL VESSEL MEASURES



MANDATORY 400M APPROACH DISTANCE

Measure

Consistent with 2021, vessels may not approach any killer whale within 400m in all southern BC coastal waters between Campbell River and just north of Ucluelet

Timing

In effect year-round until May 31, 2023

Exceptions

- Vessel in transit
- Vessel in distress or providing assistance
- Vessel involved in pollution response operations
- Vessel avoiding immediate or unforeseen danger
- Federal government, or present at the request of the government
- Undertaking activities as authorized under either SARA, the MMR, or *Fisheries Act* (including scientific research)
- Vessels being used for s. 35 fishing



400 m Approach Distance Geographic Scope



COAST WIDE VOLUNTARY MEASURES

Consistent with 2021, continuation of voluntary measures:

- Reduce speed to less than 7 knots when within 1000-metre (1km) of a killer whale
- When safe to do so, turn off echo sounders & fish finders and place engine in neutral idle if inadvertently within the approach distance to a killer whale

Continue to encourage Be Whale Wise & ECHO Program voluntary measures



LONGER-TERM WORK TO ADDRESS DISTURBANCE

Quiet Vessel Initiative (QVI): Testing safe, environmentally-responsible and effective quiet vessel technologies, retrofits, designs and operational practices to reduce noise in the Salish Sea.

Traffic Scheme Separation (TSS) Feasibility Study: Assess the feasibility of potential amendments to the TSS, balancing benefits to endangered whales with marine safety/use, environmental, economic and cultural factors. Final Report and decision support tools completed in March 2022. TC reviewing potential next steps.

Commercial whale watching licensing system: Conducting an analysis of commercial whale watching permitting as a potential tool to minimize the threat of physical and acoustic disturbance to Southern Resident Killer Whales and other marine mammals

Approach distance: Advancing work regarding the potential to increasing the minimum vessel approach distance in the *Marine Mammal Regulations* from 200m to 400m for all killer whales in the Canadian Pacific waters, building off the 400m approach distance implemented since 2019 through TC's Interim Order under the *Canada Shipping Act, 2001*

Ocean Noise Strategy for Canada:

- The Government of Canada is committed to leading the development of an Ocean Noise Strategy, which will define the Government's vision and guide future federal efforts, to address priority underwater noise issues.
- Following a public engagement period of the draft Strategy, publication of the final Ocean Noise Strategy for Canada is anticipated later in 2022



2022 SEASON NEXT STEPS



2022 SEASON NEXT STEPS

- Education and outreach launching in early May
 - Digital educational materials are available online at Be Whale Wise or by request
 - Physical materials will be distributed in late May (brochures, posters, postcards)
- Stay informed on in-season updates by signing up for the Parks Canada Southern Resident Killer Whale e-bulletin
- Enforcement of the 2022 management measures is conducted collaboratively across DFO, TC, PCA, RCMP and with US counterparts to ensure consistent transboundary enforcement
- Government of Canada will be tracking enforcement through patrol effort and by percentage of violations for 2022, which can be compared to previous years to inform how efforts have been progressing over time



CONTACT

See a violation?

Report to Fisheries and Oceans Canada's
Observe Record and Report line: 1-800-465-4336 or
DFO.ORR-ONS.MPO@DFO-MPO.GC.CA

Questions about fisheries closures and boating around whales?

Contact Fisheries and Oceans Canada at:
DFO.SRKW-ERS.MPO@dfo-mpo.gc.ca

Questions about Interim Order?

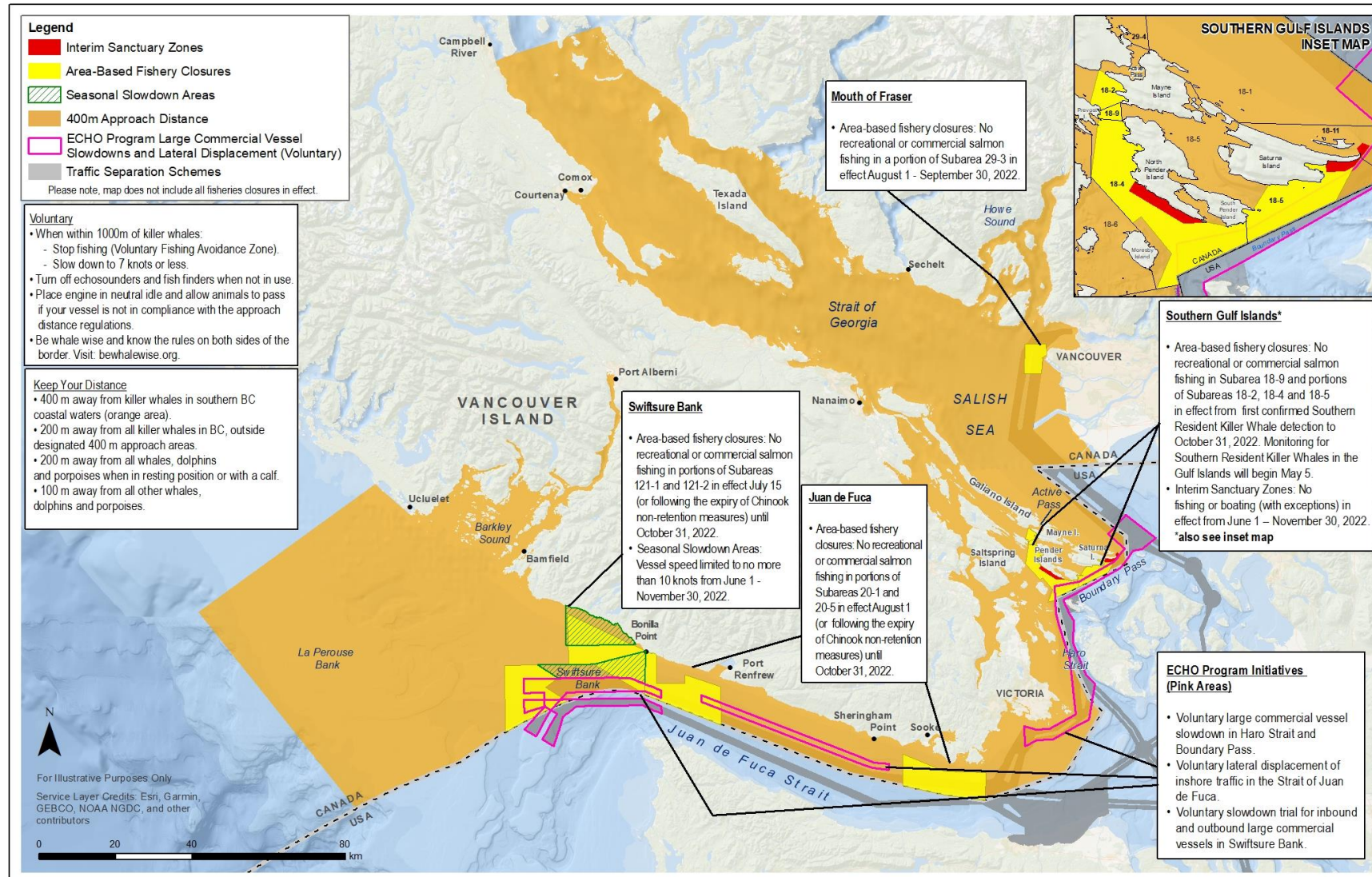
Contact Transport Canada at:
TC.SRKW-ERS.TC@tc.gc.ca



ADDITIONAL MATERIALS



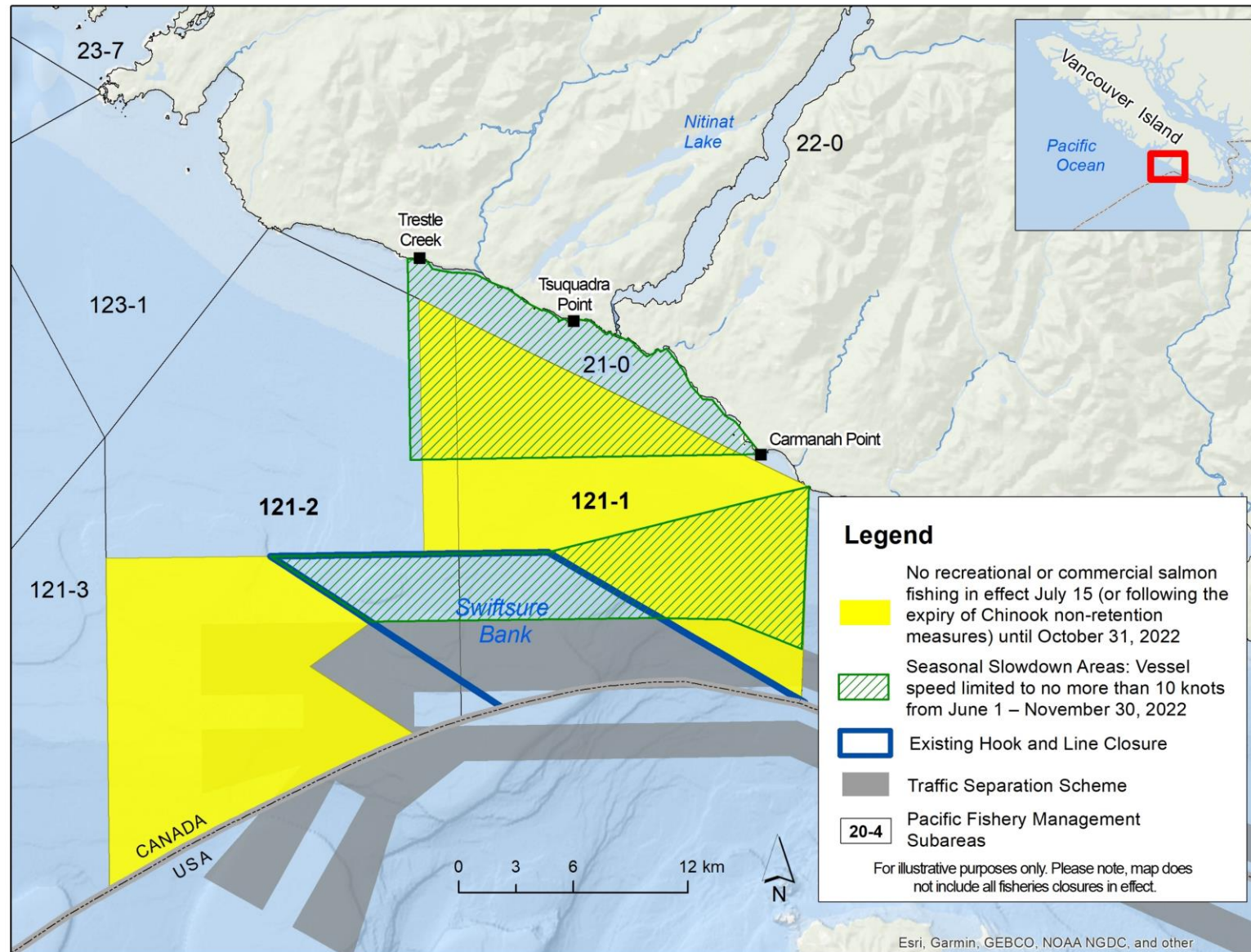
OVERVIEW OF 2022 MANAGEMENT MEASURES



Overview of 2022 management measures to protect Southern Resident Killer Whales



SWIFTSURE BANK MEASURES



2022 Swiftsure Bank management measures