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NEW SRKW DISTANCE IN BC AND PROTECTIVE MEASURES

Posted by Lorena and Leonard Landon | Apr 29, 2026



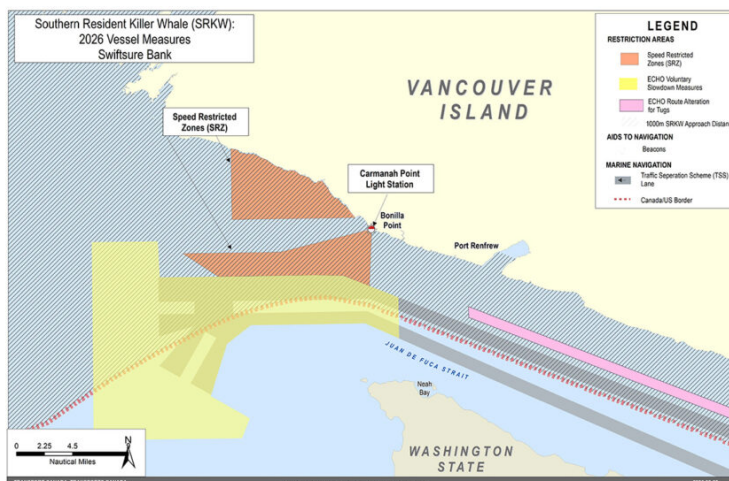
The Government of Canada has introduced an increased approach distance for the Southern Resident Killer Whale (SRKW) for a specified time period in BC waters.

SRKW Approach Distance. Under Transport Canada's 2026 Interim Order, motorized vessels and human-powered craft **must stay 1,000**

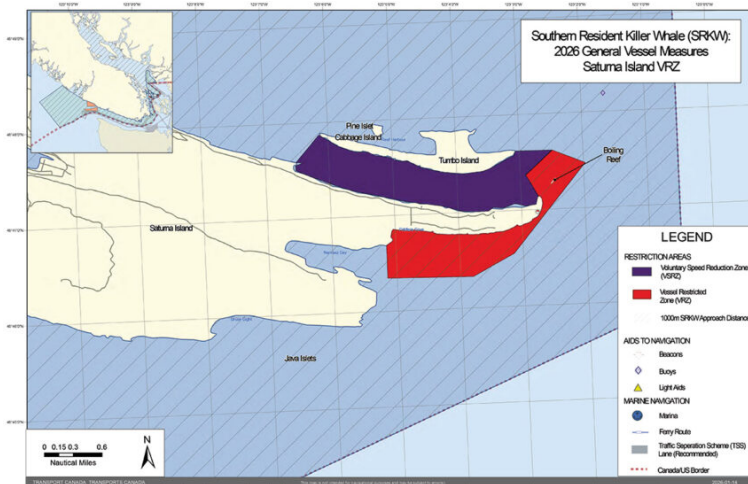
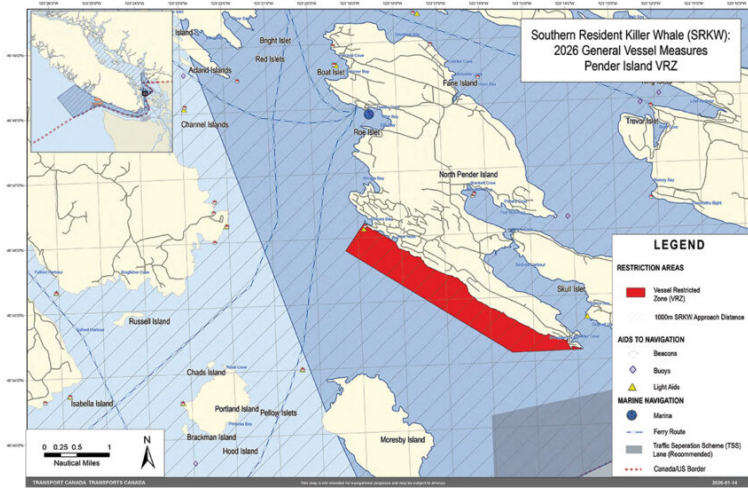
metres away from SRKW (previously 400 metres) in southern BC coastal waters between Campbell River and just north of Ucluelet, including Barkley Sound and Howe Sound, beginning **June 1, 2026 until May 31, 2027**. The approach distance for other killer whale populations in Pacific Canadian waters remains at 200 metres. Comments from Canadian residents regarding this amendment/regulation opened March 7 and closed at midnight on April 21, 2026 via the [Gazette portal](#).



Transport Canada is continuing Protective Measures that have previously been in place, including Mandatory Speed Restricted Zones and Mandatory Vessel Restricted Zones, which are in effect from June 1 to November 30, 2026.



Mandatory Speed Restricted Zones. From **June 1 until Nov. 30**, all vessels are required to slow down to a maximum of 10 knots around Swiftsure Bank. This measure is mandatory and separate from any voluntary slowdowns.



Vessel Restricted Zones. These zones (formerly called Interim Sanctuary Zones) are in effect from **June 1 to Nov. 30**, prohibiting any vessel in the zone off the southwestern side of North Pender Island and the east and southeast tip of Saturna Island. Some exceptions apply, including emergency situations, and vessels engaged in Indigenous food gathering and existing rights.

Year-round Marine Mammal Regulations. Other Canada regulations remain in effect year-round:

- 200m away from all other killer whales in Pacific Canadian waters
- 200m away from porpoises, dolphins, and other whales when resting or with a calf
- 100m away from other whales, porpoises, and dolphins

Be Whale Wise Guidelines. Boaters are encouraged to follow guidelines when in the presence of whales and other marine mammals:

- Reduce speed to less than 7 knots when within 1,000m of the nearest marine mammal
- When safe to do so, turn off fish finders and echo sounders
- If a whale is too close, place engine in neutral if safe to do so and allow animals to pass

To read the News Release from Transport Canada regarding the increased SRKW approach distance, click [HERE](#).

*Photo Killer Whales: NOAA Research Vessel
Maps/Diagrams: Transport Canada*

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Lorena and Leonard Landon

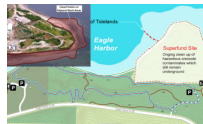
Lorena and Leonard Landon have been plying Pacific Northwest waters for 40 years. After extensive boating that ranged from Olympia through Southeast Alaska and west to Haida Gwaii, the Landons have extended their experience while cruising the West Coast to Baja and mainland Mexico, returning to Washington State after accomplishing “the bash” northward. They have had the opportunity to operate boats of varying sizes, speed, and configurations, providing them with a wide range of boat-handling experience. After living for seven years aboard their 47-foot DeFever, they have chosen Anacortes as their new home.

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