

# Whittier Tourism Best Management Practices

2024



|  |    |
|--|----|
| <a href="#">COMMUNICATE</a>  | 4  |
| <a href="#">KEEP IT CLEAN</a>  | 5  |
| <a href="#">Maintain Clean Air</a>   | 5  |
| <a href="#">Maintain Clean Water</a>   | 6  |
| <a href="#">PROTECT IMPORTANT USES</a>   | 8  |
| <a href="#">Ensure Access for All</a>  | 8  |
| <a href="#">Preserve Quiet</a>   | 8  |
| <a href="#">Respect Others</a>   | 9  |
| <a href="#">Wilderness Values</a>  | 11 |
| <a href="#">Commercial Fishing Values</a>  | 11 |
| <a href="#">PREVENT OVERCROWDING</a>   | 12 |
| <a href="#">Practice Ethical Wildlife Viewing</a>                                    | 13 |
| <a href="#">Make Them a Practice</a>   | 14 |
| <a href="#">Meet Regularly and Update the Document</a>                               | 14 |
| <a href="#">Appendix A: List of Acronyms</a>   | 16 |
| <a href="#">APPENDIX B: List of Contacts and resources</a>                           | 17 |
| <a href="#">APPENDIX C: Whittier Chamber of Commerce Tour Operators Guidance Map</a> | 19 |
| <a href="#">APPENDIX D: Marine Vessel Visible Emission Standards (18 AAC 50.070)</a> | 20 |

|  |    |
|--|----|
| <a href="#">Appendix E: Outdoor PA quiet zones</a>                         | 21 |
| <a href="#">Appendix F – PWS Area E Statistical Chart</a>                  | 24 |
| <a href="#">Appendix G – Summary of Ethical Wildlife Viewing Practices</a> | 25 |



## Acknowledgements

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## Introduction

With its access to stunning blue waters, glaciated fiords and abundant wildlife, the coastal town of Whittier is a natural gateway to a wide variety of outdoor recreation activities both on and off the water. As Alaska's tourism sector continues to grow, business owners and residents are keen to ensure that concerns around development, the environment, and operating logistics are heard from business owners and community members in an effort to minimize any potential negative impacts to the town of Whittier, its visitors, or its people. Concerns also extend to the broader Prince William Sound, where a healthy environment and sustainable tourism industry are important to Whittier's residents and business community. A broad coalition that includes business owners, tour operators, cruise lines, transportation providers, commercial fishers, community members, Prince William Sound Stewardship Foundation, the City of Whittier and the Prince William Sound Economic Development Distract have drafted these 'best management practices' for tourism both in and around Whittier and in the broader Prince William Sound. Valuable input has been provided by the Chugach National Forest, Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and NOAA Fisheries.

TBMP guidelines are driven by community voices. This document is the result of several stakeholder meetings that started in January, 2023. Its purpose is not to be regulatory or disciplinary, but a voluntary endeavor that serves as an asset to operators, visitors, and community members. Active participation in the development and improvement of these guidelines demonstrates a commitment to enhancing visitors' experience in Whittier, fostering relationships between business owners, cruise operators, and the community, and protecting the very qualities that make Whittier the wonderful place it is. If you live, work, or run a business in Whittier, we'd love to hear your thoughts on how the tourist season could be improved. These community centered practices are aimed at helping to ensure that Whittier remains not only a great place to visit, but a great place to live and work.

## Mission

Our mission is to support the town of Whittier in its role as a primary gateway to the natural beauty and biodiversity of Prince William Sound, celebrating its diverse culture and unique qualities while fostering sustainable tourism in Whittier and building strong connections within the Whittier community. This cooperative effort among tour operators, cruise lines, transportation providers, the City of Whittier and its residents is intended to address tourism operations in a manner that reflects both Whittier residents' and industry interests and concerns. It includes voluntary guidelines pertaining to operations both within Whittier and the broader Prince William Sound where so many businesses operate.

## Values

This document reflects values identified during public meetings and surveys conducted in 2023 that are critical to Whittier and PWS residents, businesses and visitors, and tour operators. We have identified four critical overarching values: Communicate, Keep it Clean, Protect Important Uses, Prevent Overcrowding, and Keep the BMP Alive. The practices suggested under each value are intended to support the collaborative fostering of each value by all involved parties from land managers to tour operators to business owners to residents.

## COMMUNICATE

A thriving tourism industry that respects residents, businesses, and other visitors depends on open and respectful communication. The signatories of this agreement agree to the following:

### Whittier

1. Signatories and the general public can bring issues to the attention of the best management practices team by contacting the following email: [whittiertbmp@gmail.com](mailto:whittiertbmp@gmail.com)
2. Cruise Line Agencies of Alaska agree to continue to publish in a timely manner its season schedule of port calls for Whittier, Valdez, and College Fiord at [claalaska.com](http://claalaska.com) so that the public and other tour operators can plan accordingly and schedule from cruise dock managers.
3. Bus tour routes: delineate and redirect where needed. Greater Whittier Chamber of Commerce is providing marked maps to tour operators, and distributing at ADOT&PF tunnel kiosk in Bear Valley.
4. Operators agree to respect the areas welcome to tours and where tours should avoid as identified by the Whittier Chamber of Commerce in the Map in Appendix C.

5. Develop signage delineating residential areas and roads and areas where tours are welcome. (Coming in 2025)
6. Within the Whittier Small Boat Harbor, tour operators, water taxis, jet skiers, commercial fishermen, and other commercial boaters agree to follow all Whittier Harbor regulations and adhere to no-wake zones and proper right-of-way protocols. (See Whittier Municipal Code Title 12)

### Prince William Sound

While transiting the waters of Prince William Sound, signatories agree to the following:

1. Vessel operators agree to monitor marine radio channels 16/13 along with their other working channels.
2. Captains agree to use marine radios to share pertinent information such as operator intentions and updates on sea and ice conditions.
3. Operators agree to keep communications respectful and concise.
4. Kayak tour operators agree to issue security warnings over marine channel 16 when transiting busy channels such as upper Passage Canal.
5. Users agree to expedite use of the launch ramp to ensure convenient access by others.
6. Operators agree to work through the TBMP process to collaborate on tour times and locations to avoid overlapping tours and preserve a high-quality experience for all visitors.

## KEEP IT CLEAN

### Maintain Clean Air

The clean air and waters of Whittier and Prince William Sound are resources valued by residents and visitors alike. Wastewater or ballast discharge from ships can foul the marine environment or introduce invasive species, while vehicle and vessel exhaust can negatively affect scenery and may carry health and environmental impacts. The following guidelines are aimed at helping keep local air and water clean.

1. Bus and van operators agree to shut off their engines when parked for more than 10 minutes.
2. Cruise lines agree to work toward the installation of shore power as soon as practicable and financially feasible. Vessel operators agree to make use of shore power as soon as it is practicable.

3. All vessel operators agree to comply with the Marine Vessel Visible Emissions Standards (18 AAC 50-070, see Appendix D) and take all available and reasonable steps to minimize visible stack effluents while in port and while transiting Prince William Sound. Operators recognize that visual emissions can become concentrated in narrow, steep-walled fiords such as Passage Canal and College Fiord and agree to take any other proactive steps, whether operational or engineered, feasible to manage visible emissions.

## **Maintain Clean Water**

### **Wastewater Discharge from Ships**

All vessel operators agree to comply with all federal and state statutes and regulations related to black water and gray water discharge while in port in Whittier and while operating in Prince William Sound.

### **Aquatic Invasive Species**

To prevent the accidental spread of European green crab or other aquatic invasive species that can harm salmon or other native species, operators agree to the following voluntary practices recommended by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service:

1. avoid releasing into Prince William Sound any ballast or other raw water that was collected from other ports
2. avoid discarding into Prince William Sound any live or dead seafood, aquatic organisms, or their shells that originated from outside the area.
3. review the Western Regional Panel on Aquatic Nuisance Species pamphlet on best anti-fouling practices aimed at avoiding the spread of aquatic invasives (<https://media.fisheries.noaa.gov/2022-02/fishing-vessel-biofouling-handout.pdf>)
4. familiarize crews with the carapaces of European green crabs and report any that are found on Prince William Sound beaches to the Alaska Department of Fish and Game hotline, 1-877-INVASIV, or online. (Identification details at: [https://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm%3Fadfg%3Dinvasiveprofiles.europeangreencrab\\_characteristics](https://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm%3Fadfg%3Dinvasiveprofiles.europeangreencrab_characteristics))

### **Marine Debris**

Gulf of Alaska Keeper, the PWS Stewardship Foundation, Chugach National Forest, and others spend hundreds of thousands of dollars each year to remove tons of marine debris from Prince William Sound beaches. Evidence shows between 10-30% of the garbage originates from PWS boats, work sites, or communities.

The Prince William Sound tourism industry can be a leader in the prevention and clean-up of marine debris in our region. The signatories of this agreement agree to the following voluntary practices to educate the public about marine debris, prevent its deposition, and support its removal from PWS beaches.

### **In Whittier**

1. Since plastic and other trash can catch a ride to the ocean on the wind, Whittier restaurants, storefronts, and the Municipality agrees to manage their properties and outdoor trash receptacles in a way that prevents loose trash, overflowing receptacles, or access to trash by wildlife. This includes the use of functioning bear-resistant dumpsters and other trash receptacles, which prevent wildlife from spreading garbage.
2. When storefront, harbor, or municipal trash receptacles are overflowing or breached by birds, bears, and other wildlife, the appropriate business owners or municipal department agree to resolve the problem in a timely manner so that plastic and other trash does not enter marine waters.
3. To protect nearby ocean waters, businesses agree to favor, whenever feasible, the use of paper, cardboard, and other non-plastic materials and avoid single-use Styrofoam and plastic bags and food/beverage packaging to prevent plastics from entering the ocean.
4. Consider participating in or supporting the annual Leave it Better Campaign or annual marine debris clean-ups or town clean-ups hosted by the PWS Stewardship Foundation, City of Whittier, and others

### **In Prince William Sound**

1. Vessel operators agree to educate passengers about preventing litter during their trip;
2. Captains agree to secure loads to prevent overboard loss of gear or litter;
3. To prevent loss of plastics overboard, when feasible operators agree to favor the use of paper, cardboard, and other non-plastic packaging and avoid single-use Styrofoam and plastic bags and food/beverage packaging;
4. To protect wildlife and prevent litter, operators and guides agree to carefully dispose of used fishing line, hooks, and other tackle in an appropriate container. Use monofilament recycling bins when feasible;
5. So that timely action can be taken on marine debris, vessel operators and guides agree to report marine debris to the Glacier Ranger District of the Chugach National Forest at 907 783 3242 or in person at the Girdwood office.

6. Remote fish camps, research camps, aquaculture operations, and commercial fishers agree to prevent litter from entering the ocean by limiting the use of single-use plastics when feasible, keeping clean camps and facilities, securely stowing equipment and supplies against weather and wildlife, and inspecting gear to prevent its loss to the ocean.
7. Commercial fishers going ashore for maintenance, repair, camping, and other uses agree to avoid leaving behind litter, lines, nets, or other other debris.

## PROTECT IMPORTANT USES

### Ensure Access for All

Access is important for every user. This is a dynamic process. The TBMP process is one mechanism by which communication can be facilitated to ensure everyone has the access they need.

### Preserve Quiet

#### Public Address Announcements and Signals

Shipboard announcements, including on outdoor decks, are important for safety and to provide passengers with interpretive information about the natural history of Prince William Sound. Some announcements, horns, and signals are also required by the US Coast Guard or are necessary for inspections, drills, and other safety reasons. However, announcements and signals may also disrupt Whittier residents and businesses or people hunting, working, or recreating in Prince William Sound. The following guidelines are designed to balance the need for safety, interpretation, and quiet. Operators agree to ensure that shipboard staff understand the importance of following these guidelines.

#### In Whittier:

1. To respect Whittier residents and businesses, all vessel operators agree to minimize vessel announcements, whistle signals, and outdoor entertainment (movies/video screens and use of music, bands or DJ) while docked or anchored in Whittier Harbor and within Passage Canal between Whittier and Trinity Point. Where practicable, safety drills should not begin before 7 a.m. local time.

#### In Prince William Sound

1. To respect the importance of quiet and solitude to other visitors, particularly near recreation areas such as Alaska State Marine Parks and the Wilderness Study Area of western Prince William Sound, operators agree to limit the number and duration of outside announcements. Operators agree to lower loudspeaker volume on outside decks

to the minimum required for communication and safety and to avoid announcements between 8:00 am and 8:00 pm whenever possible.

2. Operators agree not to use whistles, horns or other noisemaking devices except as required for navigational, safety or emergency purposes.
3. To respect onshore users in popular areas, operators agree to avoid outdoor PA announcements, except those necessary for safety and navigation, while traveling the zones depicted in Appendix E, "Suggested PA Quiet Zones in Blackstone Bay, Harriman Fiord, and College Fiord."

## Respect Others

Whittier is home to people and businesses and is popular among visitors seeking a variety of experiences. The broader Prince William Sound is also a place where people live, work, hunt, fish, hike, paddle, and enjoy a wilderness setting. To respect this wide range of residents, businesses, and other visitors, tour guides and vessel operators agree to the following:

In Whittier:

1. Operators agree to follow International Navigation Rules and visit [safeboatingcouncil.org](https://safeboatingcouncil.org) to consult further resources on safe boating practices.
2. All motorized vessel operators agree to maintain a safe and respectful distance from other users, including kayakers and other non-motorized users.
3. To respect other boaters and activity at the fuel dock, all vessel operators agree to travel at no-wake speeds within Whittier Harbor within and at the mouth of the harbor and to adhere to the standards in Whittier Municipal Code Title 12.
4. Tour guides providing hikes in and around Whittier agree to have necessary city, state, or U.S. Forest Service permits and follow their stipulations. Hiking groups agree to practice Leave No Trace (<https://lnt.org/>) principles, including by hiking on durable surfaces, staying together as a group, yielding to faster hikers, and taking other actions to respect other users. Groups agree to work to avoid degrading sensitive areas like meadows, wetlands, and alpine vegetation.
5. Operators and tour guides agree to avoid flying drones in front of Begich Towers or other residential areas, along public trails, or close to any marine vessel.
6. All tours agree to work with BTI management for any planned activities at or near Begich Towers. See <https://begichtowers.com/> for contact information.

7. Visiting cruise ships agree to notify ship captains to turn off completely (both visual and sound) large shipboard outdoor and indoor screens in passenger common areas when entering Whittier after 9pm to reduce light and noise pollution.

#### In Prince William Sound

1. All motorized vessel operators agree to maintain a safe and respectful distance from other users, including kayakers and other non-motorized users.
2. To respect other visitors, operators of boats, jet skis, kayaks, or other vessels agree to avoid playing loud music or use fireworks or outdoor loudspeakers (unless for safety and navigation) while anchored or traveling near campers or other boaters. Operators agree to avoid playing loud music while traveling in narrow fiords such as Blackstone Bay. For jet skis, in-helmet communication devices are encouraged over external loudspeakers.
3. For marine safety and to help other mariners, tour guides agree to keep jet skiers together in a uniform group.
4. If a jet ski tour operator offers free time or play time as part of their tour, they agree to focus the activity outside of common traffic lanes, away from blind corners, or a minimum of 2 miles from the following Blackstone Bay recreation sites: 13-Mile Beach, 17-Mile Beach, “avalanche” beach, East Willard Island moraine, and Lawrence Glacier beach. At the request of tour boat operators, jet ski free time should also not occur within 2 miles of the face of tidewater glaciers so that boat captains can safely negotiate the dynamic environment of boat traffic, floating ice, and calving glaciers.
5. Operators and tour guides agree not to fly drones within one mile of people seen hiking, camping, hunting, fishing, recreating, or working in Prince William Sound.
6. Operators and tour guides agree to avoid flying drones near other vessels or within anchorages shared with other vessels.
7. Operators who guide people ashore agree to have the appropriate State or Chugach National Forest permits, follow their permit stipulations, and be aware of the location of Alaska Native Corporation or other private lands..
8. Guides who offer campfires ashore agree to follow Leave No Trace principles by building fires on gravel or other durable surfaces below the high tide line, extinguishing fires before they leave, scattering burned debris, and removing all garbage.
9. Guides who offer hiking or camping ashore agree to respect other commercial and private groups by not encroaching on their space or making loud noise.

10. Guides who offer hiking and camping ashore agree to follow the latest Leave No Trace principles provided by the Chugach National Forest and abide by the stipulations of their permits, including direction for proper disposal of human waste.
11. Helicopter and airplane pilots agree to maintain respectful distances from vessels and people ashore, including kayakers, campers, and boats on anchor.

## Wilderness Values

Prince William Sound has long been valued as a place where residents and visitors can enjoy a wilderness setting. Approximately 2 million acres of the western Sound are designated by Congress as the Nellie Juan-College Fiord Wilderness Study Area. The Chugach National Forest manages this area to maintain its wild character, including its undeveloped landscape, natural conditions, and outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation in a generally non-motorized environment (on land; does not include marine waters). The tourism industry recognizes that these characteristics are important to small tour operators, subsistence users, hikers, boaters, kayakers, hunters, and many others.

1. Operators agree to conduct tours in a manner that preserves the on-shore wilderness experience of others.
2. To help maintain Wilderness Study Area conditions, operators agree to teach guides, employees, and guests about the public lands surrounding Prince William Sound, including their wilderness values. Educational materials, including the Wilderness Study Area Narrative and Baseline assessment found [here](#), are available through the Chugach National Forest and are referenced as part of US Forest Service permitting materials. Call the Glacier Ranger District office in Girdwood at 907 783 3242 to get these materials.
3. When feasible and practical, operators agree to seek engineered and operational solutions to reduce engine and generator noise.

## Commercial Fishing Values

Tour operators recognize that commercial fishing is an essential part of the Prince William Sound economy and culture and agree to operate in a manner that gives a wide berth to active commercial fishing operations.

1. All vessel operators agree to observe US Coast Guard Navigation Rules and Regulations Handbook direction that all vessels should stay out of the way of vessels engaged in commercial fishing (Rule 18, except where rules 9, 10, and 13 apply).

2. Vessel operators agree to keep a sharp eye for commercial fishing nets and buoys, which may be located several hundred yards from a fishing vessel.
3. Operators agree to navigate with extreme caution in the following highly concentrated commercial fishing zones (see Appendix F PWS Area E Statistical Chart):
  - a. Within the Coghill District, northward of the bold line extending from Pigot Point to Culross Point
  - b. Shoreward of the bold line 1 mile offshore from Nellie Juan to Granite Bay
  - c. Within the Eshamy District, there are also setnet lines, buoys, and anchors extending out from the shore that should be avoided when under way and when anchoring a vessel.
4. Operators agree not to drop anchors within a 100 yards of any buoy marking setnet operations in the Eshamy District, as fixed anchor lines extend from multiple directions from setnet buoys.
5. Private setnet cabins on USFS leases are private property. Use of these sites is not permitted without permission from the owner and USFS.
6. Charter fishing boat operators acknowledge recent Alaska Board of Fish actions that prevent the commercialization of subsistence fishing.
7. All operators agree to vacate any area being actively used by cost recovery operations, specifically the area within the Special Harvest Area (SHA) and Alternating Gear Zone (AGZ) in Main Bay.
8. Commercial fishermen monitor VHF Channel 6.

## **PREVENT OVERCROWDING**

Whittier is a small town that is easily impacted by large volumes of traffic or visitors. The broader Prince William Sound, including the Alaska State Marine Parks and the Chugach National Forest Wilderness Study Area, is also valued for its opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation. As tourism in our region grows, tour operators agree to operate in ways that respect and maintain Whittier's small-town environment and the wilderness setting of the Sound.

In Whittier

1. The Prince William Sound Economic Development District, Greater Whittier Chamber of Commerce, and City of Whittier are developing wayfinding signs around Whittier to address vehicle and pedestrian interaction adjacent to Princess Cruises terminal, around the harbor, and throughout the town of Whittier.

In Prince William Sound

2. Tour operators agree to respect independent visitors and other tour operators by not conducting on-shore activities where other groups are already hiking, picnicking, or camping.

## Practice Ethical Wildlife Viewing

Whether close to Whittier or in the broader Prince William Sound, vessel operators and tour guides agree to maintain a safe and respectful distance from all terrestrial and marine wildlife. Whenever possible, operators and guides agree to avoid changing the natural behavior of wildlife in their vicinity, including bears, mountain goats, marine mammals, and nesting birds such as terns and oystercatchers. Tour companies agree to provide employee training that includes the latest wildlife viewing laws, regulations, and recommendations from appropriate state and federal agencies.

Tour companies agree to consider applying to Whale SENSE, a voluntary program that provides recognition to tour operators who commit to certain responsible practices. Whale SENSE can be viewed at <https://whalesense.org/>.

Vessel operators and tour guides also agree to:

1. abide by Marine Mammal Protection Act regulations (50 CFR § 216.3) requiring all vessels and watercraft remain at least 100 yards from killer whales and large whales and at least 50 yards from porpoises, seals, and sea lions;
2. carry the latest NOAA Marine Mammal Viewing [Guidelines](#) brochure for whales, sea lions, and harbor seals and ensure employees and visitors follow its recommendations;
3. become familiar with the operational tips from NOAA Fisheries and US Fish and Wildlife Service (Summarized in Appendix G) and incorporate them to the best of their ability while still prioritizing safety;
4. Recognizing that tour operators may be the first to encounter stranded, dead, entangled, or injured marine mammals, operators agree to promptly report the date, location, number of animals, and species to the NOAA Fisheries Alaska Statewide 24-hour Stranding Hotline at (877) 925 7773. Vessel operators and tour guides are encouraged to take the online entanglement response training. <https://alaska-training.whaledisentanglement.org>

## KEEP THE BMPs ALIVE

## **Make Them a Practice**

1. Statement of Agreement signed annually by groups wanting to be involved in BMP (including tour operators, businesses, etc.)
2. Build a shared identity and stewardship
  - a. Share a compelling story for why people love to live in and visit Whittier
  - b. Highlight Whittier as a home, not just a playground to visit
  - c. Establish Whittier's place in the wider context of Alaska
    - i) Celebrate Whittier's diverse culture and accentuate Whittier's unique qualities
3. Make employees aware of the BMP document and associated maps, materials, and guidelines. Use the materials referenced in the BMP as resources in training.

## **Meet Regularly and Update the Document**

1. Pre-season meeting with tour operators (April 2024): cruise ship operators, small commercial tour operators (kayak guides, fishing charters, jet ski tours, charter tours), USFS permitted operators, AK DOT&PF Tunnel Director.
2. Post-season fall meeting to discuss what went well, what did not go well, and what could be added and/or changed.

# WHITTIER TOURISM BMPs STATEMENT OF AGREEMENT

As a *voluntary practitioner* of the Whittier Tourism Best Management Practices, I understand that our business agrees to:

- Participate in periodic de-brief sessions to discuss progress made in attaining program goals.
- Train all relevant employees on the program’s objectives and practices and to conduct periodic training sessions for employees. Participants agree to train employees and strive to conduct business in a manner that exhibits common courtesy throughout the season.
- Participants agree to provide the Greater Whittier Chamber of Commerce with an accurate contact name, telephone number and e-mail address to communicate any changes to Tourism BMPs as soon as possible if they occur.
- Response to lapses noted: An important ingredient for a successful TBMP program is consistent, respectful and prompt responses to observations made of lapses in following Whittier’s TBMPs. Participants agree to respond promptly to reports of a lapse in following our Tourism Best Management Practices by taking corrective action, such as providing training to employees, or notifying staff of a needed change, and/or documenting the changes to company operating procedures in writing.
- Support compliance with Whittier TBMPs by actively using the TBMP e-mail account to document an observation of a company who may not be observing the TBMP guidelines. For 2023, all observations submitted to the e-mail account should be shared with businesses in the fall for review and correction in 2024. These actions honor the spirit of TBMP and ultimately help all companies reduce tourism impacts in the community of Whittier.
- All businesses agree to dispose of and secure trash in a manner that does not attract wildlife.

In its turn, the Greater Whittier Chamber of Commerce is responsible to my business for:

- Distributing periodic updates to Whittier Tourism Best Management Practices as they are agreed upon.
- Monitoring the [WhittierTBMP@gmail.com](mailto:WhittierTBMP@gmail.com) email account seasonally and coordinating responses to observations made regarding compliance with these Tourism BMPs.
- Coordinating seasonal meetings of participating businesses so that we can determine which parts of this program are successful and which elements might need revision.

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Signature

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Date

Company Contact for TBMP follow-up

Entity Name:

Contact Name:

Contact Email & Phone Number:

## Appendix A: List of Acronyms

|          |   |
|----------|---|
| PWS      | Prince William Sound                            |
| NOAA     | National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration |
| TBMP/BMP | (Tourism) Best Management Practices             |
| MPH      | Miles Per Hour                                  |
| BTI      | Beigich Towers Incorporated??                   |
| USFS     | United States Forest Service                    |
| SHA      | Special Harvest Area                            |
| AGZ      | Alternating Gear Zone                           |
| VHF      | Very High Frequency                             |

## APPENDIX B: List of Contacts and resources

| Resource Name  | Website/Contact   |
|--|---|
| Whittier TBMP email  | whittiertbmp@gmail.com  |
| Cruise Line Agencies Alaska website  | <a href="http://www.claalaska.com">www.claalaska.com</a>  |
| Adventure Green Alaska Sustainable Tourism Certification   | <a href="https://www.adventuregreenalaska.org/">https://www.adventuregreenalaska.org/</a>   |
| Safe Boating Council website   | <a href="http://www.safeboatingcouncil.org">www.safeboatingcouncil.org</a>  |
| Western Region Panel on Aquatic Nuisance Species Pamphlet on best anti-fouling practices aimed at avoiding the spread of aquatic invasives | <a href="https://media.fisheries.noaa.gov/2022-02/fishing-vessel-biofouling-handout.pdf">https://media.fisheries.noaa.gov/2022-02/fishing-vessel-biofouling-handout.pdf</a>   |
| How to identify European Green Crabs   | <a href="https://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm%3Fadfg%3Dinvasiveprofiles.europeangreencrab_characteristics">https://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm%3Fadfg%3Dinvasiveprofiles.europeangreencrab_characteristics</a>     |
| Phone number for the Glacier Ranger District of the Chugach National Forest  | (907) 783 3242  |
| Leave No Trace website   | <a href="https://lnt.org/">https://lnt.org/</a>   |
| Begich Towers Incorporated   | <a href="https://begichtowers.com/">https://begichtowers.com/</a>   |
| Whalesense Website   | <a href="http://www.whalesense.org">www.whalesense.org</a>  |
| NOAA Mammal Viewing Guidelines   | <a href="https://media.fisheries.noaa.gov/dam-migration/alaska-marine-mammal-viewing-guidelines-brochure.pdf">https://media.fisheries.noaa.gov/dam-migration/alaska-marine-mammal-viewing-guidelines-brochure.pdf</a> |
| NOAA Alaska Wildlife Approach Guidelines   | <a href="https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/region/alaska">https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/region/alaska</a>   |
| NOAA Harbor Seal Approach Guidelines in Glacial Fjords   | <a href="https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/s3//dam-migration/hs-approach-guidelines-akr.pdf">https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/s3//dam-migration/hs-approach-guidelines-akr.pdf</a>   |
| NOAA Marine Life Viewing Guidelines and Distances  | <a href="https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/topic/marine-life-viewing-guidelines">https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/topic/marine-life-viewing-guidelines</a>   |
| NOAA Give Whales Bubble Room Flyer   | <a href="https://media.fisheries.noaa.gov/dam-migration/whale_bubble_flyer.pdf">https://media.fisheries.noaa.gov/dam-migration/whale_bubble_flyer.pdf</a>   |
| NOAA Fisheries Enforcement Hotline   | (800) 853 1964  |

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| NOAA Stellar Sea Lion Guidance                           | <a href="https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/species/steller-sea-lion">https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/species/steller-sea-lion</a> |
| Fish and Wildlife Service Boater guidance for sea otters | <a href="https://www.fws.gov/sea-otters-boater-guidance">https://www.fws.gov/sea-otters-boater-guidance</a>                   |
| NOAA Fisheries Alaska 24-hour Stranding Hotline          | (877) 925 7773  |
| Online Marine Mammal entanglement response training      | <a href="https://alaska-training.whaledisentanglement.org">https://alaska-training.whaledisentanglement.org</a>               |

# APPENDIX C: Whittier Chamber of Commerce Tour Operators Guidance Map



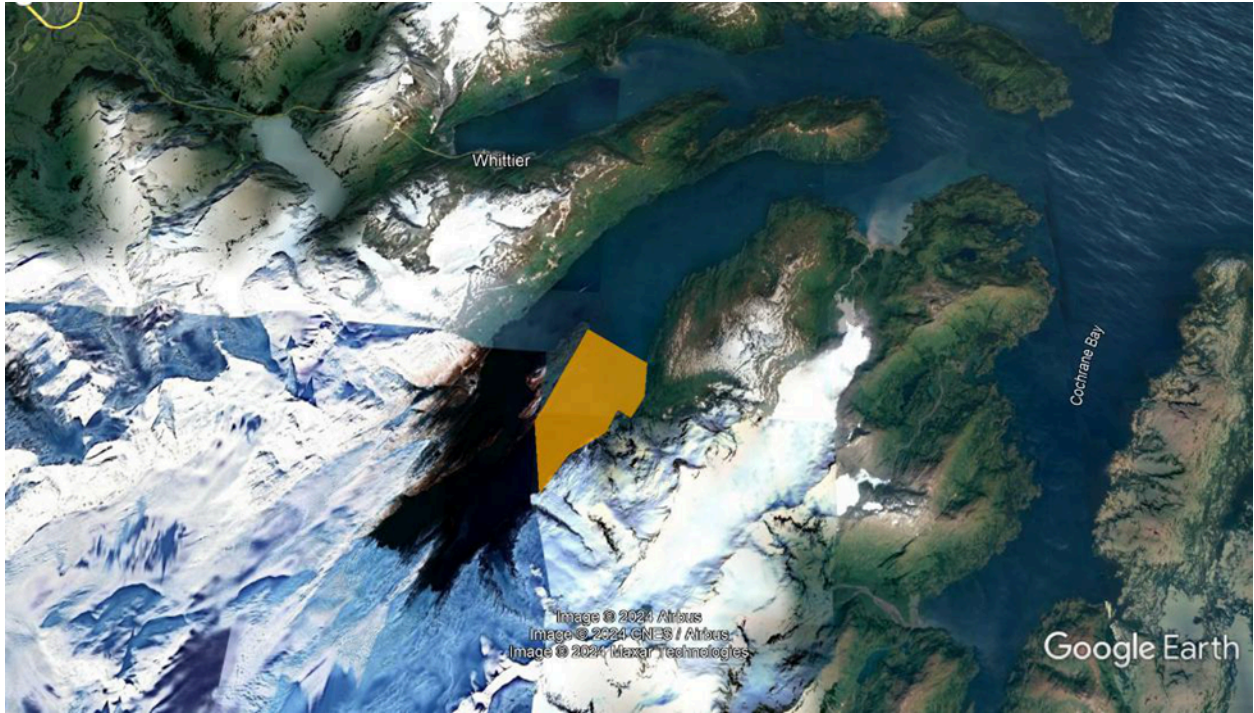
# APPENDIX D: Marine Vessel Visible Emission Standards (18 AAC 50.070)

Within three miles of the Alaska coastline, visible emissions, excluding condensed water vapor, may not reduce visibility through the exhaust effluent of a marine vessel by more than 20 percent except as follows:

1. While at berth or at anchor, visibility may be reduced by up to 100 percent for periods aggregating no more than
  - three minutes in any one hour; and
  - an additional three minutes during initial startup of a vessel; for purposes of this subparagraph, “initial startup” includes the period during which a vessel is testing equipment in preparation to casting off or weighing anchor;
2. During the hour immediately after weighing anchor or casting off, visibility may be reduced under one, but not both, of the following options:
  - visibility may be reduced by up to 40 percent for that entire hour; or
  - visibility may be reduced by up to 100 percent for periods aggregating no more than nine minutes during that hour;
3. During the hour immediately before the completion of all maneuvers to anchor or make fast to the shore, visibility may be reduced under one, but not both, of the following options:
  - visibility may be reduced by up to 40 percent for that entire hour; or
  - visibility may be reduced by up to 100 percent for periods aggregating no more than nine minutes during that hour; and
4. At any time not covered by (1)-(3) of this section, visibility may be reduced by up to 100 percent for periods aggregating no more than three minutes in any one hour.

# Appendix E: Outdoor PA quiet zones

## Suggested PA Quiet Zone – Blackstone Bay



**Suggested PA Quiet Zones Harriman Fjord**



**Suggested PA Quiet Zone College Fiord**



# Appendix F – PWS Area E Statistical Chart



# Appendix G – Summary of Ethical Wildlife Viewing Practices

## **Molting and pupping harbor seals**

Harbor seals molt and nurse pups at terrestrial haul-outs throughout Prince William Sound and on icebergs in Harriman Fiord, Blackstone Bay, Chenega Bay, Columbia Bay, and other glacial fjords. In these areas, vessel operators and tour guides agree to consult the Alaska Harbor Seal Approach Guidelines in Glacial Fjords (found at <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/species/harbor-seal>), which includes recommendations to:

- strive to maintain 500 meters (~0.25 mile) from resting seals,
- minimize wakes and avoid sudden or loud noises,
- minimize outdoor announcements, and
- avoid travel through thick ice.

## **Humpback whales**

Vessel operators and tour guides agree to consult the “Give Whales Bubble Room” flier provided by NOAA Fisheries (found [https://media.fisheries.noaa.gov/dam-migration/whale\\_bubble\\_flyer.pdf](https://media.fisheries.noaa.gov/dam-migration/whale_bubble_flyer.pdf)), which includes recommendations to:

- limit viewing times to 30 minutes or less since whales may be viewed by boats several times in a day,
- give wide berth where vessels are viewing whales since whales may appear in those general vicinities,
- coordinate with other vessels watching whales and approach or leave areas with whales at slow speeds.

## **Steller Sea Lions**

“Take the lead, do not feed.” Feeding sea lions is illegal. Anyone witnessing sea lions being fed is encouraged to call NOAA Fisheries Enforcement Hotline at (800) 853-1964.

While viewing Steller sea lions (<https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/species/steller-sea-lion>), NOAA Fisheries recommends:

- maintain a minimum of 100 yards to avoid disturbance or stampedes;
- leave the area if you see changes in natural behavior;
- keep viewing times to 30 minutes or less as multiple boats may view the animals the same day;
- exercise extra caution when pups are present. Pups are born onshore from mid-May to mid-July.

Steller sea lions in Prince William Sound are listed as endangered under the Endangered Species Act. All rookeries and major haul-outs (greater than 200 animals) in the region are designated critical habitat, which includes a 20-nautical mile buffer around each.

### **Sea Otters**

Vessel operators agree to consult FWS guidance for sea otters in Alaska (found at <https://www.fws.gov/sea-otters-boater-guidance>), which includes recommendations to:

- Look ahead – Scan the water surface ahead for sea otters while underway.
- Slow down – Reduce speeds in areas with high densities of sea otters, and slow down when sea otters are spotted. Do not assume sea otters will dive and get out of the way of your boat.
- Steer clear – FWS recommends staying 100 meters away from individual sea otters, 200 meters away from mother-pup pairs, and 500 meters away from rafts of otters (groups of 10+ animals) when possible.
- Respect groups – Do not pass between individuals. Go around entire groups.
- Never pursue – Do not operate a vessel at any rate of speed heading directly at one or more sea otters.
- Note conditions – When visibility is poor due to weather or darkness, travel slower to reduce the likelihood of injuring sea otters. During poor weather, sea otters may form large rafts in protected bays.  
Stay 100 meters from sea otters on shore or other platforms when possible.