

# 2026

## Whittier Tourism Best Management Practices



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## Acknowledgements

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## Introduction

Whittier is a natural gateway to Prince William Sound and its abundant recreational and tourism opportunities. As tourism grows, business owners and residents want to avoid negative impacts on both the quality of visitor experience and the quality of life for residents. Concerns also extend to the broader Prince William Sound, where a healthy environment and sustainable tourism are important to Whittier residents and business.

In response, a broad coalition of business owners, tour operators, cruise lines, transportation providers, commercial fishers, and community members have helped craft the Whittier Tourism Best Management Practices agreement (Whittier TBMP). The voluntary agreement was shaped by community voices and grew from surveys and stakeholder meetings that began in January 2023. It is designed to promote sustainable recreation and tourism and preserve the qualities that make Whittier and Prince William Sound special.

The Whittier TBMP is administered by the Greater Whittier Chamber of Commerce, with help and support from the Prince William Sound Economic Development District, Prince William Sound Stewardship Foundation, the City of Whittier, and others. Valuable input is provided by the Chugach National Forest, Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, NOAA Fisheries, and others.

If you live, work, or own a business in Whittier or Prince William Sound, we'd love to hear your thoughts on how to improve the Whittier TBMP.

## 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.

## General Agreements for Whittier TBMP Signatories

1. Participating operators will sign the Statement of Agreement indicating that the operator/agent has read, understands, and agrees to abide by the Whittier TBMP guidelines applicable to their operations. See Whittier Statement of Agreement at the end of the document.
2. TRAINING/AWARENESS: Operators/Agents agree to educate all relevant employees (including drivers, dock representatives, guides, naturalists, aircraft pilots, and vessel captains, and others) on the program objectives and practices and to conduct periodic training sessions for employees hired midseason. Operators will encourage employees to conduct business in a manner which exhibits common courtesy throughout the season.
2. CONTACT NAME: Operators/Agents agree to provide Whittier TBMP with a current contact name, telephone number, fax number, and email address.
3. WORK SESSIONS: Operators/Agents agree to participate in periodic work sessions to discuss progress made in attaining program goals.
4. RESPONSE TO WHITTIER TBMP FEEDBACK: An important element of a successful Whittier TBMP program is consistent and prompt response to comments received. Operators/Agents agree to respond to Whittier TBMP Feedback regarding complaints and issues as long as enough information is given to respond to the complaint.
5. OPERATOR SELF MONITORING: Participants agree to improve self-monitoring efforts and to notify other operators who are not observing the Whittier TBMP guidelines by contacting the Whittier TBMP program at [whittiertbmp@gmail.com](mailto:whittiertbmp@gmail.com).

## Values

The Whittier TBMP is organized around the following five overarching values identified through surveys and public meetings that began in 2023:

- Communicate
- Keep it Clean
- Protect Important Uses
- Prevent Overcrowding
- Keep the Whittier TBMP Alive

Participating residents and businesses identified these values as important for maintaining the character of Whittier and the quality of recreation and tourism in Prince William Sound. Under each value, the agreement provides relevant guidelines that operators agree to incorporate into their operations.

## COMMUNICATE

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

### In Whittier:

1. Businesses and the public are encouraged to bring feedback and observations to the attention of the Whittier TBMP Program Administrator by contacting the following email: [whittiertbmp@gmail.com](mailto:whittiertbmp@gmail.com)
2. Cruise Line Agencies of Alaska agrees to continue to publish in a timely manner its season schedule of port calls for Whittier, Valdez, and College Fiord at <https://claalaska.com/> so that the public and other tour operators can plan accordingly.
3. Bus, van, taxi, and walking tours agree to follow Whittier TBMP maps and signage designed to reduce congestion and respect residential areas. See Appendix C for maps addressing routes adjacent to Princess Cruises terminal, around the harbor, and throughout the town of Whittier. Signage is currently being developed by the Prince William Sound Economic Development District, Greater Whittier Chamber of Commerce, and City of Whittier.
4. 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)

### **In Prince William Sound:**

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 sécurité alerts over marine channel 16 when transiting busy channels such as upper Passage Canal.
5. Commercial operators agree to expedite use of the launch ramp to ensure convenient access by others.
6. Where feasible and practical, operators agree to work through the Whittier 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 valued by residents and visitors alike. Vehicle and vessel exhaust can negatively affect scenery and may carry health and environmental impacts, while wastewater or ballast discharge from ships can foul the marine environment or introduce invasive species.. The following guidelines are aimed at keeping 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 fjords 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 removing 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. Whittier TBMP signatories 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 agree to manage their properties, associated parking lot areas 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, reusable packaging and to-go food packaging other non-plastic materials and avoid single-use Styrofoam to prevent plastics from entering the ocean.
4. Consider participating in or supporting the annual Leave it Better campaign or annual marine debris cleanups or town cleanups hosted by the PWS Stewardship Foundation, City of Whittier, Chugach National Forest, and others.
5. So that timely action can be taken on marine debris, vessel operators and guides agree to report beaches with heavy marine debris accumulation, as well as any items that are difficult to remove due to size and weight. If possible, please take a photo and GPS coordinates to include in your report. Send reports to the Glacier Ranger District of the Chugach National Forest via email at [ellen.ray@usda.gov](mailto:ellen.ray@usda.gov), or in person at the Girdwood office.
6. Where feasible and practical, operators agree to help keep PWS beaches clean by packing out trash and marine debris during their activities (except from beaches marked in Appendix XX showing Gulf of Alaska monitoring beaches).

### **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 follow Leave No Trace practices and avoid leaving behind litter, lines, nets, fire rings, or other debris.

## **Minimize Bear Attractants**

Bears entering the harbor create safety issues and can damage boats and gear. The following practices are intended to minimize bears in the harbor.

1. The City of Whittier and any businesses with outdoor trash receptacles or dumpsters will ensure that they are bear proof and properly maintained. Damaged receptacles or dumpsters will be repaired as soon as possible. Overflowing receptacles or dumpsters will be cleaned and secured as soon as possible.
2. Whittier businesses agree to manage food waste in a way that does not create an attractant for bears.
3. Tour operators agree to minimize bear attractants on the outside decks of their vessels while they are unattended in port. Attractants include unsecured food, bait, or fish scraps.

4. To maximize space in public dumpsters, businesses agree to deposit cardboard in the recycling containers located near the Harbor Store instead of putting them in public dumpsters.
5. Companies agree to provide training and education on bear safety and awareness to their employees. Training resources include: <https://www.bearbiology.org/education-and-resources/bear-safety/>

## PROTECT IMPORTANT USES

### Ensure Access for All

Access is important for every user. The Whittier TBMP is a tool that gives businesses and residents a voice in ensuring everyone has the access they need. To voice comments or concerns about access, email [whittiertbmp@gmail.com](mailto:whittiertbmp@gmail.com).

### 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 U.S. 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. Whittier TBMP signatories 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 and within Passage Canal between Whittier and Trinity Point. Where practicable, safety drills should not begin before 7 a.m.

#### 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 wherever possible.

2. Operators agree not to use whistles, horns or other noise making 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 using 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 fjords 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.
5. Tour boat operators request that jet ski free time also does 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.
6. 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.
7. Operators and tour guides agree to avoid flying drones near other vessels or within anchorages shared with other vessels.
8. 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.

9. 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, completely extinguishing fires before they leave, scattering burned debris low in the intertidal, and removing all garbage.
10. 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.
11. Guides who offer hiking and camping on Chugach National Forest lands 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.
12. 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 residents, small tour operators, subsistence users, hunters, hikers, boaters, kayakers, 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 receive these materials.
3. When feasible and practical, operators agree to seek engineered and operational solutions to reduce engine and generator noise.

# Commercial Fishing Values

Whittier TBMP signatories 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 U.S. 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 agree to abide by the recent Alaska Board of Fish action prohibiting sport fishing from vessels within 200 feet of the Main Bay Hatchery barrier seine.
7. Charter fishing boat operators acknowledge recent Alaska Board of Fish actions that prevent the commercialization of subsistence fishing.
8. 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.
9. 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, Whittier TBMP signatories agree to operate in ways that respect and maintain Whittier's small-town environment and the wilderness setting of the Sound.

In Whittier and Prince William Sound:

1. Operators of tours in Whittier agree to follow the tour routes depicted in the maps in Appendix C of the Whittier TBMP and the signage under development by the Prince William Sound Economic Development District, Greater Whittier Chamber of Commerce, and City of Whittier.
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 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 whales and killer 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 WHITTIER TBMP ALIVE**

Whittier TBMP signatories agree to:

### **Make It a Practice**

1. Annually review the Whittier TBMP agreement and sign its Statement of Agreement
2. Train employees in how to follow the Whittier TBMP, including by familiarizing employees with the agreement's maps, guidelines, and other materials.
3. Promote stewardship and a shared identity of Whittier and Prince William Sound by:
  - a. sharing a compelling story for why people love to live in and visit Whittier,
  - b. highlighting Whittier as a home, not just a playground to visit,
  - c. establishing Whittier's place in the wider context of Alaska,
  - d. celebrating Whittier's diverse culture and unique qualities

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

1. Attend pre-season roll-out of current year guidelines (Annually in March)
2. Attend post-season de-brief to discuss what went well, what did not go well, and what could be added and/or changed.

# WHITTIER TBMP 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 element of 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 2026, all observations submitted to the e-mail account should be shared with businesses in the fall for review and correction in 2027. 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.

Signature

Date

Company Contact for TBMP follow-up:

Entity Name:

Email Address:

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
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>
Glacier Ranger District of the Chugach National Forest phone number	(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-guidelinesbrochure.pdf">https://media.fisheries.noaa.gov/dam-migration/alaska-marine-mammal-viewing-guidelinesbrochure.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

NOAA Stellar Sea Lion Guidance	<a href="https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/species/stellar-sea-lion">https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/species/stellar-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>
Bear Safety Principles	<a href="https://www.bearbiology.org/education-and-resources/bear-safety/">https://www.bearbiology.org/education-and-resources/bear-safety/</a>
NOAA Fisheries Alaska 24-hour Stranding Hotline	(877) 925-7773
Whittier Forecast	<a href="https://akwxconsulting.com/index.php/whittier-forecast/">https://akwxconsulting.com/index.php/whittier-forecast/</a>
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



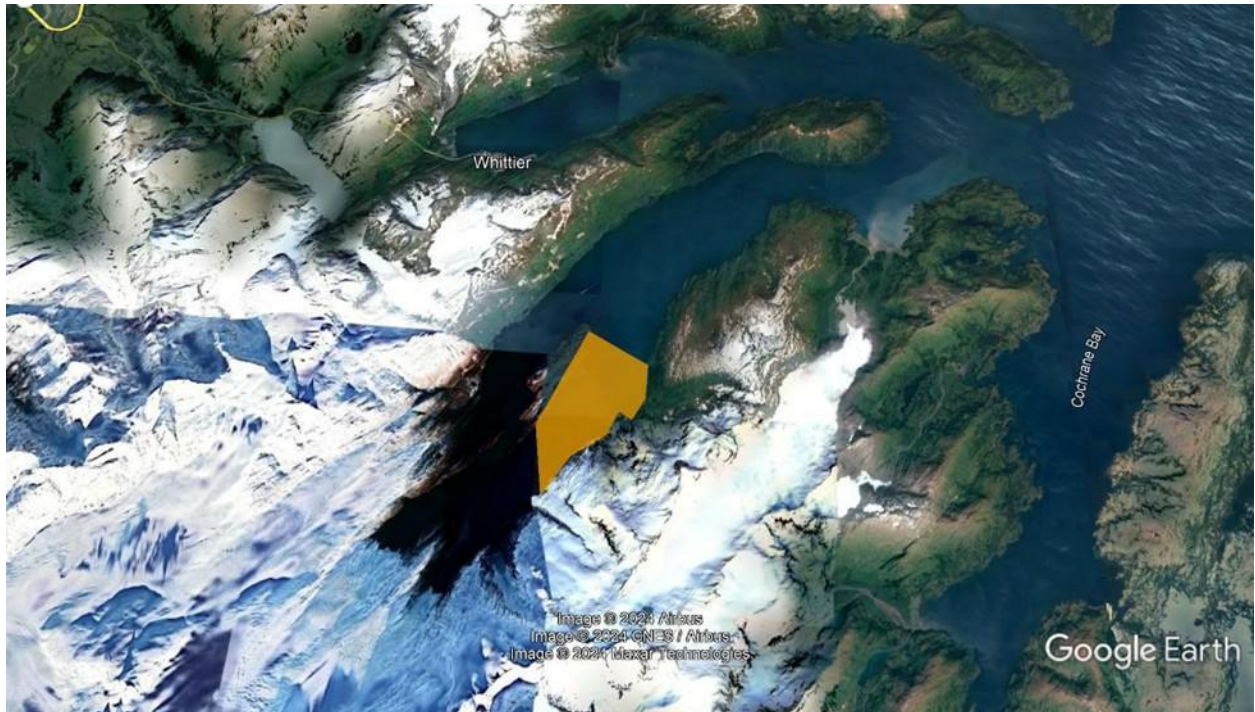
# Appendix D: Marine Vessel Visible Emission Standards (18 AAC 50.070)

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 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, Nassau Fiord, 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 USFWS 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 – USFWS 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.