



# **Board of Pilotage Commissioners Tug Escort Rulemaking (Chapter 363-116 WAC)**

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## **SEPA EIS Scoping Summary Report**

For the

**Spills Prevention, Preparedness, and Response Program and the Board  
of Pilotage Commissioners**

Washington State Department of Ecology  
Olympia, Washington

June 2024 (Rev.), Publication 24-08-012

## Publication Information

This document is available on the Department of Ecology's website at:  
<https://apps.ecology.wa.gov/publications/summarypages/2408012.html>

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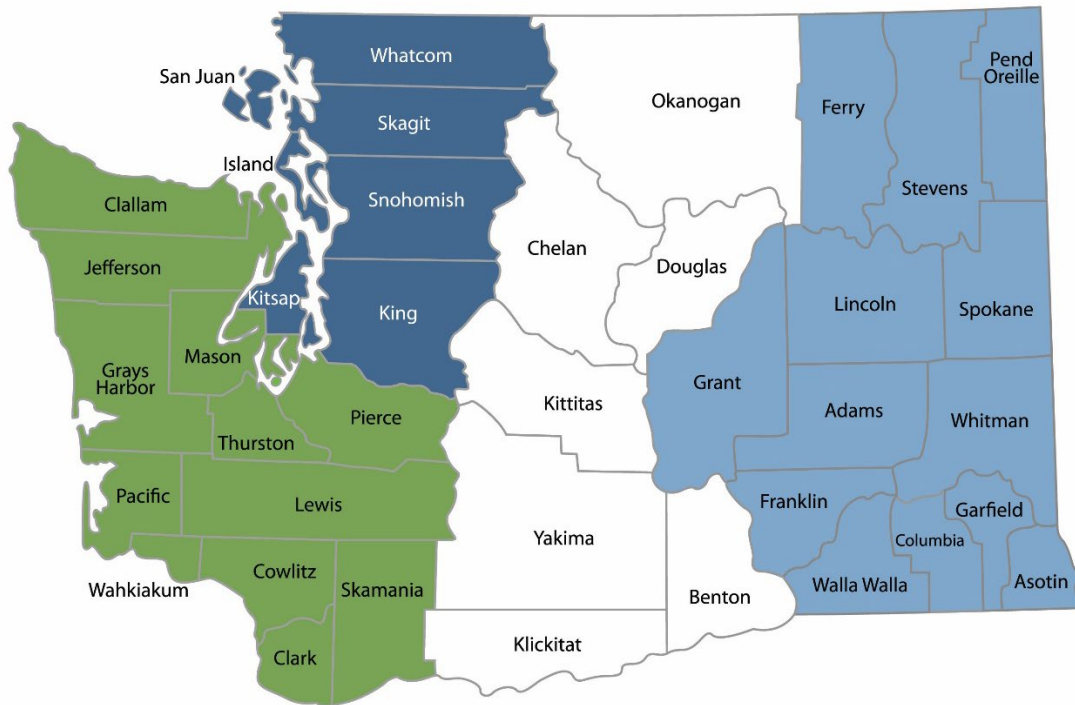
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|   |   |                                       |                                       |
|---|---|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| <b>Southwest Region</b><br>360-407-6300 | <b>Northwest Region</b><br>206-594-0000 | <b>Central Region</b><br>509-575-2490 | <b>Eastern Region</b><br>509-329-3400 |
|---|---|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|

| Region              | Counties served  | Mailing Address                               | Phone        |
|---------------------|--|---|--------------|
| <b>Southwest</b>    | Clallam, Clark, Cowlitz, Grays Harbor, Jefferson, Mason, Lewis, Pacific, Pierce, Skamania, Thurston, Wahkiakum           | P.O. Box 47775<br>Olympia, WA 98504           | 360-407-6300 |
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| <b>Central</b>      | Benton, Chelan, Douglas, Kittitas, Klickitat, Okanogan, Yakima   | 1250 West Alder Street<br>Union Gap, WA 98903 | 509-575-2490 |
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Washington State Department of Ecology  
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DEPARTMENT OF  
**ECOLOGY**  
State of Washington

# Table of Contents

## List of Figures and Tables 6

|               |   |
|---------------|---|
| Figures ..... | 6 |
| Tables.....   | 6 |

## Introduction 7

|   |   |
|---|---|
| Overview and Purpose of the Scoping Summary Report..... | 7 |
| EIS Process Overview.....                               | 8 |
| Scoping Process and Purpose .....                       | 8 |

## Rulemaking Background 9

|  |    |
|--|----|
| Description of Rulemaking.....         | 9  |
| Determination of Significance.....     | 10 |
| Rulemaking Objectives for the EIS..... | 10 |

## Scoping Process 11

|  |    |
|--|----|
| Overview.....                          | 11 |
| Ways to Provide Comments.....          | 11 |
| Scoping Notifications.....             | 11 |
| Public Scoping Meetings.....           | 13 |
| OTSC Recommendations and BPC Vote..... | 13 |

## Summary of Scoping Comments 13

|   |    |
|---|----|
| Comments on Reasonable Alternatives to be Assessed..... | 13 |
| Comments on Elements of the Environment to Include..... | 15 |
| Comments on Mitigation, Process, or Other Topics .....  | 17 |

## Preliminary Scope: OTSC Recommendation and BPC Vote 19

|  |    |
|--|----|
| Reasonable Alternatives to be Assessed.....      | 19 |
| Elements of the Environment to be Assessed ..... | 19 |

## Next Steps 20

## Appendix A. Record of BPC Decision-Making 21

## Appendix B. Determination of Significance and Scoping Notice 26

## Appendix C. Public and Media Notifications30

## Appendix D. Letters to Tribal Governments37

# List of Figures and Tables

## Figures

Figure 1. Map of study area and BPC Zones. .... 7

## Tables

Table 1. List of OTSC recommendations and BPC vote for alternatives to be assessed. .... 19  
Table 2. List of OTSC recommendations and BPC vote for elements of the environment to be assessed. .... 20

# Introduction

## Overview and Purpose of the Scoping Summary Report

The Board of Pilotage Commissioners (BPC) in coordination with the Washington State Department of Ecology (Ecology) are co-lead agencies on a rulemaking to amend Chapter 363-116 WAC, Pilotage Rules. This rulemaking could potentially increase the number of required tug escorts in Puget Sound. Because of this potential increase in vessel traffic, the co-lead agencies determined that the rulemaking may have significant adverse impacts on the environment. The co-lead agencies issued a Determination of Significance (DS, see Appendix B), and opened a comment period on the scope of the proposed State Environmental Policy Act Environmental Impact Statement (SEPA EIS) for this rule on February 22, 2023. The rulemaking will consider tug escorts in the waters east of Discovery Island Lighthouse south to New Dungeness Lighthouse, and all points in the Puget Sound Area for oil tankers (5,000-40,000 deadweight tons (DWT)) and articulated tug barges (ATBs) and towed waterborne vessels (greater than 5,000 DWT).

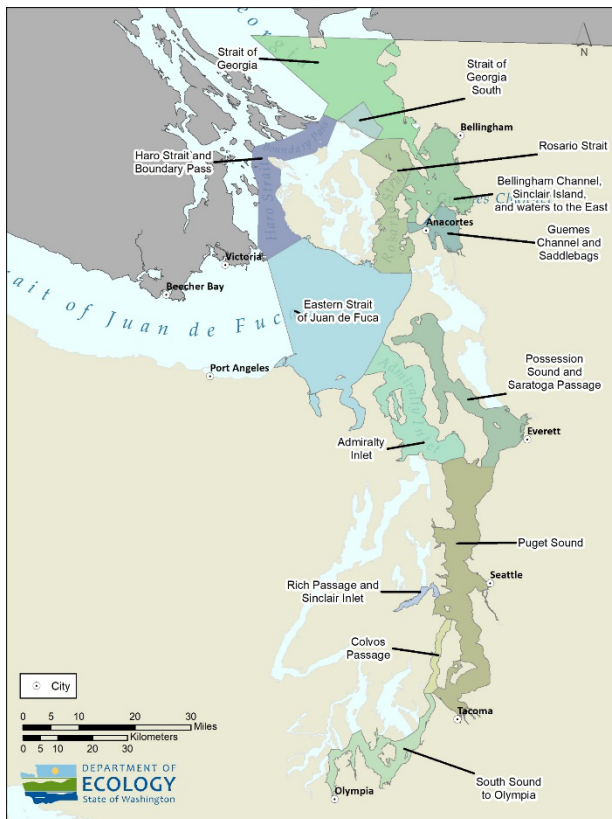


Figure 1. Map of study area and BPC Zones.

Ecology determined that, due to this potential increase in tug traffic, the rulemaking is likely to have a significant adverse impact on the environment. This requires an EIS under Revised Code of Washington (RCW) 43.21C.030 (2)(c) to be prepared pursuant to Chapter 197.11 Washington Administrative Code (WAC) procedures. The DS and Scoping Notice for the EIS initiated Ecology's environmental review process. The scoping comment period started February 22, 2023, and ended on April 8, 2023. The comment period included one online public meeting held on March 21, 2023. Rule development workshops continued throughout 2023 and the beginning of 2024 with additional SEPA-related comments recorded. A second (informal) scoping workshop was held on March 5, 2024.

This Scoping Summary Report provides an overview of the rulemaking scope, the environmental review and scoping processes, and a summary of the scoping comments received. It also includes preliminary research conducted by Ecology to support scoping decision-making where relevant, as well as records of preliminary recommendations and decisions made by the Oil Transportation Safety Committee

(OTSC) and the BPC. Copies of relevant notices, letters to Tribes and the public, and scoping decision-making documents are included as appendices.

## EIS Process Overview

SEPA requires agencies to consider environmental factors before taking action on state and local government decisions, such as rulemaking or issuing permits for projects. The SEPA review process helps agency decision-makers and the public understand how the entire proposal will affect the environment. In this case, the co-lead agencies are conducting a SEPA review for this rulemaking and will be developing a *non-project* EIS. The co-lead agencies are also complying with the Administrative Procedures Act (APA) requirements for a rulemaking concurrently with the EIS development.

An EIS is not a decision document. An EIS contains an unbiased and scientifically based analysis, which provides a comprehensive and objective evaluation of probable environmental impacts, reasonable alternatives, and mitigation measures that would avoid or minimize impacts. The EIS prepared by Ecology for the tug escort rulemaking will be used to inform final rule language.

Scoping is the first step in the EIS process. Additional formal public involvement and comment opportunities will be available once the Draft EIS is available for public review. Workshops and informal opportunities for input will continue throughout the Draft EIS development.

## Scoping Process and Purpose

Scoping is designed to establish and confirm the focus of the EIS by seeking input from Tribes, agencies, members of the public, and stakeholders on the content of the EIS. For scoping, these parties are notified that an EIS is being prepared, thus initiating their involvement.

The co-lead agencies conducted an EIS scoping period in accordance with SEPA requirements pursuant to WAC 197.11.408. More information about the scoping process is provided below in Section 3. Ecology invited Tribes, agencies, members of the public, and stakeholders to provide input on the scope of the EIS related to the following:

- Alternatives
- Mitigation measures
- Probable significant adverse impacts

After considering comments received so far, inputs from the [Ecology Rescue Tug Analysis Model](#) (Ecology Model), and initial research, the BPC voted on the preliminary scope of the EIS on March 21, 2023, based on a recommendation from the OTSC. The BPC decision document is included in Appendix A. Not all elements of the environment outlined in WAC 197.11.444 will be included in the EIS.



# Rulemaking Background

## Description of Rulemaking

The BPC, in consultation with Ecology, announced a rulemaking in February 2023 to amend Chapter 363-116 WAC, Pilotage Rules. Chapter 363-116 WAC describes the training, licensing, and regulation of Washington State maritime pilots to ensure safe pilotage. Chapter 363-116 WAC also describes tug escort requirements for oil tankers in Washington waters.

The rulemaking will amend WAC 363-116-500 and, if needed, add new sections to Chapter 363-116 WAC. The rulemaking will consider 2019 legislative changes made to Chapter 88.16 RCW (Pilotage Act) through the passage of Engrossed Substitute House Bill (ESHB) 1578. The rules will be designed to achieve best achievable protection, as defined in RCW 88.46.010, and will be informed by other considerations in ESHB 1578. The rulemaking will:

- Describe tug escort requirements for the following vessels operating in the waters east of the line extending from Discovery Island Lighthouse south to New Dungeness Lighthouse and all points in the Puget Sound area:
  - Oil tankers of between 5,000 and 40,000 DWT.
  - Articulated tug barges (ATB) and towed waterborne vessels or barges greater than 5,000 deadweight tons that are designed to transport oil in bulk internal to the hull.
- Specify operational requirements for tug escorts, where they are required.
- Specify functionality requirements for tug escorts, where they are required.
- Consider the existing tug escort requirements applicable to Rosario Strait and connected waterways to the east, established in RCW 88.16.190(2)(a)(ii), including adjusting or suspending those requirements, as needed.
- Describe exemptions to tug escort requirements, including whether certain vessel types or geographic zones should be precluded from the escort requirements.
- Make other changes to clarify language and make any corrections needed.

The 2019 Legislature passed The Reducing Threats to Southern Resident Killer Whales (SRKW) by Improving the Safety of Oil Transportation Act, ESHB 1578. The Act provides a measured approach to preventing a catastrophic oil spill in the Puget Sound by closing important safety gaps related to vessels carrying oil in bulk. The bill also directs the co-lead agencies to consider the following in developing the rule:

- Avoiding or minimizing additional underwater noise from vessels in the Salish Sea,
- Focusing vessel traffic into established shipping lanes,
- Protecting and minimizing vessel traffic impacts to established treaty fishing areas, and
- Respecting and preserving the treaty-protected interests and fishing rights of potentially affected federally recognized Indian Tribes.

## Determination of Significance

Scoping under SEPA began with issuance and publication of the DS and Scoping Notice (Appendix B). The DS and Scoping Notice included a description of the rulemaking and made the determination that the rulemaking is likely to have a significant adverse impact on the environment and would require an EIS under RCW 43.21C.030 (2)(c). The DS and Scoping Notice also announced public scoping meeting dates and the duration of the scoping comment period.

Probable project impacts and areas of proposed study for the EIS were identified by Ecology to include (but not be limited to) the following:

- Air Quality
- Water Quality
- Plants and Animals
- Environmental Health: Noise
- Environmental Health: Releases or potential releases to the environment affecting public health
- Energy and Natural Resources
- Light and glare
- Aesthetics
- Recreation
- Historic and Cultural Resources
- Transportation

Note that considerations for threatened and endangered species, including SRKW, are included the “Plants and Animals” element. See Appendix B for a copy of the DS.

## Rulemaking Objectives for the EIS

Under SEPA, the objectives of the action (proposal, rulemaking, plan, etc.) are linked to the determination of reasonable alternatives for the EIS. Chapter 197-11-786 WAC (Reasonable Alternatives) defines reasonable alternatives as “an action that could feasibly attain or approximate a proposal's objectives, but at a lower environmental cost or decreased level of environmental degradation. Reasonable Alternatives may be those over which an agency with jurisdiction has authority to control impacts, either directly, or indirectly through requirement of mitigation measures.”

Because this EIS is assessing a rule, rather than a project, the co-lead agencies reviewed the rulemaking scope and ESHB 1578 to define the objectives that will be used in the EIS, as described below.

**Draft Rulemaking Objective for Use in the EIS:** Reduce the risk of a major oil spill through potential tug escort requirements for oil tankers 5,000-40,000 DWT, and barge and ATBs over 5,000 DWT. Design requirements in a way that minimizes underwater noise, focuses vessel traffic into the established shipping lanes, and minimizes impact to treaty fishing areas.

# Scoping Process

## Overview

Ecology conducted a formal EIS scoping period from February 22, 2023, through April 8, 2023. During the scoping period, Ecology held one online public scoping meeting on March 21, 2023, for the public to provide oral comments. A variety of scoping materials were available for public review throughout the entire length of the scoping period on the rulemaking website<sup>2</sup>.

The Ecology project website was developed to provide information through the duration of the rulemaking process, including the SEPA process. During the formal scoping period, the website included a link to an online comment form.

Ecology also hosted an additional informal scoping workshop on March 5, 2024, which included a second round of direct outreach to Tribes and interested parties. Rulemaking workshops were held throughout 2023 and early 2024, and will continue through Spring of 2025. SEPA-related comments were captured and recorded and will continue to be throughout this process.

Tribes, agencies, members of the public, and stakeholders were invited to participate in the scoping process and provide comments, as described in the following sections.

## Ways to Provide Comments

During the scoping period, Ecology provided multiple ways to submit scoping comments, including using the online comment form, by mail, and orally during the public hearings.

## Scoping Notifications

Ecology conducted the following public notice and outreach activities to notify Tribes, agencies, members of the public, and stakeholders of the scoping period and announce upcoming public scoping meeting dates. Ecology also offered translation services, if requested. A variety of outreach and notification methods were used to communicate information about scoping to reach the largest audience possible:

- Published legal notices (Appendix B):
  - The DS and Request for Comments on the Scope of the EIS, including a description of the rulemaking, how to submit comments, and scoping meeting announcements, was issued on February 22, 2023.
  - Ecology's SEPA Register published the DS and Scoping Notice on February 22, 2023.

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<sup>2</sup> <https://ecology.wa.gov/About-us/Who-we-are/Our-Programs/Spills-Prevention-Preparedness-Response/Legislative-work/BPC-tug-escort-rulemaking>

- Public and media notifications (Appendix C)
  - Information was published on Ecology’s Public Input and Events Listing website.
  - Consistent with the rulemaking requirements under the APA, Ecology developed a detailed outreach list which included regulated businesses, Tribal Governments, OTSC representatives, ports, cities, counties, Clean Air Agencies, State Emergency Response Commissions and Local Emergency Planning Committees, environmental non-profits, federal and state agencies, and other interested parties. A notification of the scoping period was sent February 22, 2023. A second email to this broader outreach list specifically announcing the second informal scoping workshop (on March 5, 2024) was sent on February 13, 2024.
  - Announcements regarding the EIS scoping process have been made periodically at rulemaking workshops, the Puget Sound Harbor Safety Committee, the BPC meetings (open to the public), Regional Response Team/Northwest Area Committee meetings, and Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians (ATNI) events.
- Website
  - Ecology developed and published a project-specific website at [BPC tug escort rulemaking - Washington State Department of Ecology](#)
- Tribal Government notifications (Appendix D)
  - Email notifications with an invitation to Government-to-Government Consultation were sent to Northwest Tribal Governments (Chairs and Natural Resource Directors)
    - Announcing the formal EIS Scoping Period (2/22/2023)
    - Announcing the informal Scoping Workshop (2/12/24)
  - The BPC Executive Director presented on this rulemaking at the ATNI Meeting in September 2023.
  - Prior to the finalization of this report, two emails and a phone call were made to natural resources staff at Tribes that have engaged in the rulemaking process at any time and/or those Tribes identified as potentially interested/affected based on the geographic scope of the rule. Additional staff-staff meetings were held with the following tribal staff:
    - Makah Tribe
    - Swinomish Indian Tribal Community
    - Jamestown S’Klallam Tribe
- Agency notifications
  - State agencies were notified by email, listserv, and SEPA register notices.

## Public Scoping Meetings

As mentioned previously, one online public scoping meeting was held during the formal scoping period on March 21, 2023.

The meeting included a presentation and an opportunity for the public to provide verbal comment. The PowerPoint presentation from the scoping meeting is available on the [rulemaking website](#).

## OTSC Recommendations and BPC Vote

Ecology and the BPC have an inter-agency agreement which supports and outlines coordination on this rulemaking. However, the BPC remains responsible for decision-making. The BPC's OTSC makes formal recommendations to the BPC to support their voting process. The rule team has built in several interim decision-making steps where we will work with the OTSC to develop a recommendation for a BPC vote to support the EIS development and rulemaking decisions.

After three two-hour OTSC meetings (February 13 and 24, and March 11, 2024) specifically focused on preliminary EIS scope, the OTSC made a recommendation to the BPC regarding alternatives to be assessed in the EIS and elements of the environment to be included. The BPC reviewed and voted on preliminary EIS scope at their meeting on March 21, 2024. The BPC meetings are open to the public and there is time for public comment on BPC agenda items. The formal record of the BPC vote is included as Appendix A.

## Summary of Scoping Comments

During the formal scoping period, a total of six comments were received via the online form and two additional formal comments were received during the public scoping meeting. As of the finalization of this report, the rule team has received 77 comments specific to the SEPA process, which are considered in this summary below.

All formal comments received during the scoping period are recorded and tracked consistent with the requirements of the APA. This section *summarizes* the key themes of the comments received during the scoping period and is not a comprehensive or detailed listing of all comments.

## Comments on Reasonable Alternatives to be Assessed

See the section on Preliminary Scope below, for the BPC vote on alternatives to be assessed in the EIS. Comments received regarding alternatives are summarized below:

### **No Action Alternative:**

(Note: The No Action Alternative is the status quo, no change from current conditions. In the case of this rulemaking, the No Action alternative includes the tug escort requirements as implemented by ESHB 1578)

- Support a no action alternative, which provides a good benchmark for comparison.

### **Limit or Reduce Scope:**

- Ecology should consider a limited area alternative which focuses on a reduced boundary for rule implementation.
- The 2023 Tug Escort Analysis Report<sup>3</sup> developed by Ecology do not support expanding the current tug escort requirements; do not recommend an expansion.
- Possible benefits of removing existing requirements would be less greenhouse gas emissions, less vessel congestion in those waterways, and less underwater noise that can impact echolocation by SRKW.
- The 2023 Summary of Tug Escort Analysis Report<sup>4</sup> shows negligible (zero percent) reduction in spill risk from additional tug escorts. Without clear benefit, additional tug traffic only has drawbacks for SRKW. Consider adverse effects of underwater noise and physical disturbance to SRKW if tug escorts are to be expanded beyond status quo.
- Removing 2020 requirements would be a negative, as it would not cover all the critical habitat (for SRKW). Idea 4, escorts for all vessels in all zones, would provide better protection.
- Dangerous to reduce or eliminate tug escorts from the current rulemaking. Enough damage is done to the environment with existing traffic. Don't increase spill risk also.

### **All Vessels, All Zones (Maximum Expansion):**

- Removing 2020 requirements would be a negative, as it would not cover all the critical habitat (for SRKW). Escorts for all vessels in all zones would provide better protection.
- Idea 4 (All Vessels All Zones): This would increase vessel congestion, air emissions, and underwater noise throughout the region. (Note: The OTSC reviewed this alternative idea and decided not to proceed with it).

### **Other Alternatives/General Comments on Alternatives:**

- Consider an alternative that excludes ATBs.
- Consider requiring tugs to be available within 30 minutes as an alternative to escort tugs.
- Recommendation to tailor the rule to location-specific risks of each geographic area.
- Recommendation to describe the Ecology Mode results for each alternative.
- Recommendations for escort scenarios should be developed with consideration of both impacts and benefits. Drift groundings are rare (2023 Tug Escort Analysis Results), and the Ecology Model is not based on actual data.

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<sup>3</sup> [Summary of Tug Escort Analysis Results \(wa.gov\)](#)

<sup>4</sup> [Summary of Tug Escort Analysis Results \(wa.gov\)](#)

## Comments on Elements of the Environment to Include

The final BPC vote, based on a recommendation from the OTSC, identified six priority elements, which will be the focus of resources and capacity for the EIS. These six priority elements are listed first below. The remaining elements will be included, but at a higher level of assessment based on anticipated likelihood of significant impact.

### Plants and Animals (Priority Element)

By far, the primary focus of comments on this element has been regarding SRKW and marine mammals.

- Underwater noise and physical disturbance of increased traffic to SRKW
- Risk of oil spills to SRKW
- Risk of SRKW extirpation
- Underwater noise and risk to marine life (especially marine mammals and SRKW)
- Consider fisheries studies

### Noise: Underwater and Operational (Priority Element)

It is clear to the rule team that there are conflicting views of the science of underwater noise and potential impacts to SRKW and other species. This highlights the need for careful assessment through the EIS process.

- EIS should fully examine the potential for underwater noise impacts to SRKW (including spatial and temporal interactions).
- Slowing tugs down does not reduce their underwater radiated noise. Mitigating noise impacts of tugs on SRKW is not easy.
- Important to consider ambient noise, noise from operations, vessel horns or sound signals. It's a safety issue, especially in foggy conditions. Foghorns, generators, engines. Important to consider above-ground noise.
- Noise is not additive when tugs are escorting a larger vessel.
- Noise is additive. Especially if sound is being emitted at similar frequencies. Constructive interference.

### Vessel Traffic (Priority Element)

- Vessel disturbance impacts to SRKW from additional vessels (including spatial and temporal interactions).
- Overall reduction in oil spill incidents is negligible while significantly increasing vessel traffic.
- Increase in vessel traffic, vessel casualties, and spill risk from additional tugs (see recent ARTEMIS collision as example).

- Using more tugs in escort service will reduce the number of tugs available to be redirected as tugs of opportunity in an emergency.
- Expanding tug escort requirements could result in more collisions and spills, risks to navigation in congested waterways.
- Need to study where the additional traffic will be. Where the transits will be, how much of the time will be within shipping lanes, and the interaction with tribal fishing or general commercial fishing.
- BPC and Ecology should further evaluate impact of increased tug escorts on tightening navigation channels and increased collision risk.
- Potential increase in underway time represents a significant increase in vessel traffic.

### **Oil Spill Risk (Priority Element)**

- Consider potential for spill risk reduction.
- Consider potential increases in risk from additional vessel traffic and congestion.
- Consider spill risk when fueling and bunkering.
- Should include an assessment of oiling risk to historic and cultural resources from a spill.

### **Air Quality (Priority Element)**

- GHG emissions/pollutants are incremental compared to existing background emission levels.
- Air emissions are a concern: increase in transits and increased idling time.
- Consider the State's and NW Sea Port Alliance sustainability goals for emissions.
- The main impact is likely diesel emissions/diesel particulate matter, but it's worthwhile to consider if there are other pollutants of concern.
- Starting with port communities is a good idea as they are already overburdened with exposure to diesel emissions. You could also look at the other communities that Ecology has identified as overburdened by air pollution within the CCA framework.
- Consider the public health impact. Diesel exhaust is a carcinogen, and that means we have to think about chronic exposure. If the dispersion modeling suggests a non-trivial increase in diesel emissions, or if we think it will be a long term even small increase, in port or other communities, it might be worthwhile to do an assessment of the projected increase in cancer outcomes.
- Not sure that air quality/emissions is a significant impact. Dispersion modeling is not that common.

### **Tribal Natural and Cultural Resources (Priority Element)**

- Importance of consulting with Tribes.
- Consider impacts to treaty fishing, vessel interaction with Tribal fishers.
- All of these ideas (alternatives) have impacts to Tribes in the region. In particular, maintaining tug escorts in Rosario and waters east impacts Tribes that fish in these



areas. The U.S. Coast Guard has received complaints of tug activity and tug wakes, this is a real issue that is impacting people.

- Need to understand spatial and temporal distribution of additional vessel traffic in order to understand impacts.

## **Water Quality**

- There is the no-discharge zone in Puget Sound so they wouldn't be allowed to discharge there. (<https://ecology.wa.gov/Water-Shorelines/Puget-Sound/No-discharge-zone/Resources-studies>). Unsure of other information on other kinds of water quality impacts from boat traffic.
- Limited pump out availability for additional tugs to meet the NDZ standards.
- NPDES/VIDA-related discharge (hydraulic fluid spills, chain locker, effluent, deck runoff, gray water discharges, etc.) should be considered.

## **Energy and Natural Resources**

- For industry, there has been a fuel increase with the 2020 rule implementation, but may not be hugely significant delta from what they already have.
- Consider alternative fuel use/transition to alternative fuels and whether that would be an important consideration.
- More alternative fuels will be transported in the Salish Sea.

## **Light, Glare, Aesthetics**

- Check with USCG on where they get light and glare and noise complaints with existing tug levels.
- Normal anchorages are fine. More complaints are made when they're in smaller, more unusual places like Blake Island or Quartermaster Harbor or Indianola. All legal anchoring zones. Tugs will anchor there and do maintenance, which can be loud.

## **Recreation**

Not a focus of comments during the formal scoping period or the later workshop.

## **Comments on Mitigation, Process, or Other Topics**

### **Mitigation**

- Consider electric tugs as a mitigation option.
- Potential impacts may be mitigated by how professional mariners implement the rule.
- Mitigating noise impacts of tugs on SRKW is not easy. Canada has asked tugs to move away from areas with high SRKW use. Transport Canada may also have additional mitigation strategies to consider.
- Consider Transport Canada's Quiet Vessel Initiative.

- Consider more modern designs of tugs - maybe a lower horsepower would be better for limiting underwater noise even though horsepower and engines are not necessarily the biggest emitter of noise on the vessels. Consider how can we use vessels that are quieter.
- Consider Puget Sound Harbor Safety Committee (PSHSC) standard of care on voluntary vessel speed reduction program and wheelhouse watch stander standard.<sup>5</sup> BPC and Ecology should consider working with PSHSC to evaluate new protocols or standards that would reduce risk of drift groundings. For example - tug of opportunity. Web of protection without impacts of tug escorts.
- Consider measures that would reduce conflict with treaty fisheries (e.g. refinery lease agreements).
- Consider mitigation measures related to reducing mariner fatigue.

## Other/General Comments

- Support for continued transparency and clarity about roles of the co-lead agencies in this process.
- Include cumulative impacts of future projects that would increase ATB and barge traffic.
- Consider challenges of modeling when interpreting model results.
- Impacts are primarily limited to when tugs are returning to port without a vessel to escort.
- Impacts of additional tugs have less impact than a spill (balancing this is outside of SEPA scope).
- Consider costs to the oil industry.
- Request for benefit of escort tugs to be included in the EIS.
- Concerns about previously published Ecology risk model reports.
- Important to consider when impacts are additive and when they are not, nuances of when tugs are escorting vs. when they are transiting to and from an escort job The system is complex. Not sure that the model captures that complexity.
- We cannot conduct maritime operations without impact, but what's important is the change from the baseline. Some of these considerations will be de minimis.
- 2019 Vessel Traffic/Vessel traffic Safety Report uses actual data. Vessel incidents 2008-2017 show that incidents are rare and tug escorts would not likely have been helpful in most of them. Better prevention benefits from other measures such as Facility Oil Handling Standards and Advance Notice of Oil Transfer rules.

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<sup>5</sup> See description in Ecology's 2019 Report of Vessel traffic and Vessel Traffic Safety: Strait of Juan de Fuca and Puget Sound Area (Publication 19-08-002).

# Preliminary Scope: OTSC Recommendation and BPC Vote

The OTSC met three times in late February – early March 2024 to develop a recommendation to the BPC for the preliminary scope of the EIS. This recommendation included a list of five reasonable alternatives to be assessed in the EIS, as well as a list of elements of the environment to be included. A record of the BPC decision is included as Appendix A, as well as summarized below.

## Reasonable Alternatives to be Assessed

The OTSC made a recommendation to the BPC for the inclusion of five alternatives for assessment in the EIS scope. To support this preliminary decision-making, Ecology provided information to the OTSC including model outputs and queries and review of relevant literature. The OTSC and the BPC relied on both the information provided and professional and lived expertise in determining these preliminary alternatives for analysis.

Table 1. List of OTSC recommendations and BPC vote for alternatives to be assessed.

| <b>OTSC Recommendation</b>  | <b>BPC Vote</b> |
|---|-----------------|
| 1. Remove Rosario and Waters East requirement (pre-2020)  | Include         |
| 2. Maintain Rosario and Waters East requirement (no change, no action alternative)                      | Include         |
| 3. Expand 2020 escort requirements to Strait of Georgia South Zone + a corner of Strait of Georgia Zone | Include         |
| 4. Expand 2020 escort requirements to Haro Strait and Boundary Pass                                     | Do Not Include  |
| 5. Remove requirements in the Bellingham Channel, Sinclair Island, and Waters East Zone                 | Do Not Include  |

## Elements of the Environment to be Assessed

The OTSC made a recommendation to the BPC for the inclusion of nine elements in the EIS scope. The OTSC also identified six priority elements identified with an asterisk (\*) in the table below, which will be the primary focus of the EIS.

To support this preliminary decision-making, Ecology provided information to the OTSC on the basis for the initial DS Scope, themes and priorities identified in early comments, review of other EISs that included a vessel traffic element, and information provided to the co-lead agencies from subject matter expertise where appropriate.

Table 2. List of OTSC recommendations and BPC vote for elements of the environment to be assessed.

| Element of the Environment to Assess  | OTSC Majority Recommendation | BPC Vote       |
|---|------------------------------|----------------|
| *Air quality and greenhouse gas emissions   | Yes, include                 | Include        |
| Water quality   | Yes, include                 | Include        |
| *Plants and animals (including SRKW and marine mammals)                                 | Yes, include                 | Include        |
| Energy and natural resources  | Yes, include                 | Include        |
| *Environmental health: releases (oil spill)   | Yes, include                 | Include        |
| *Environmental health: noise (including underwater noise and ambient/operational noise) | Yes, include                 | Include        |
| Aesthetics, light, and glare  | Yes, include                 | Include        |
| *Tribal natural and cultural resources  | Yes, include                 | Include        |
| Historic and cultural resources (other, non-tribal)                                     | No, do not include           | Do Not Include |
| *Transportation: vessel traffic   | Yes, include                 | Include        |

## Next Steps

The next step in Ecology’s environmental review process is to begin work on the Draft EIS. This will include gathering data, conducting studies, and analyzing information. Scoping comments will continue to be considered in refining the EIS scope and alternatives, and while developing the environmental analysis. We will continue to hold SEPA-focused workshops for the OTSC, Tribes, and stakeholders. Once a Draft EIS is published, Tribes, agencies, members of the public, and stakeholders will be invited to review and formally comment on the document and participate in public hearings.

The Ecology rulemaking-specific website (<https://ecology.wa.gov/About-us/Who-we-are/Our-Programs/Spills-Prevention-Preparedness-Response/Legislative-work/BPC-tug-escort-rulemaking>) will be maintained and updated through the environmental review process. Interested parties can receive updates on this SEPA process by sending a request to Haley Kennard, Tug Escort Environmental Analysis Coordinator at the Department of Ecology Spills Program at [haley.kennard@ecy.wa.gov](mailto:haley.kennard@ecy.wa.gov) or 564-233-5178.

# Appendix A. Record of BPC Decision-Making











## **Appendix B. Determination of Significance and Scoping Notice**







## Appendix C. Public and Media Notifications















## Appendix D. Letters to Tribal Governments



















