



2. Southern Resident Killer Whales

Background

- The Government of Canada is moving forward with protection and recovery measures for Southern Resident Killer Whales (SRKW)
- October 31, 2018 announcement
 - Building on the Whales Initiative, announcement of further measures to address key threats to SRKW:
 - Prey availability;
 - Physical and acoustic disturbance; and
 - Contaminants.
- These will build on measures implemented in 2018 (including lessons learned) and be informed by consultation and engagement.



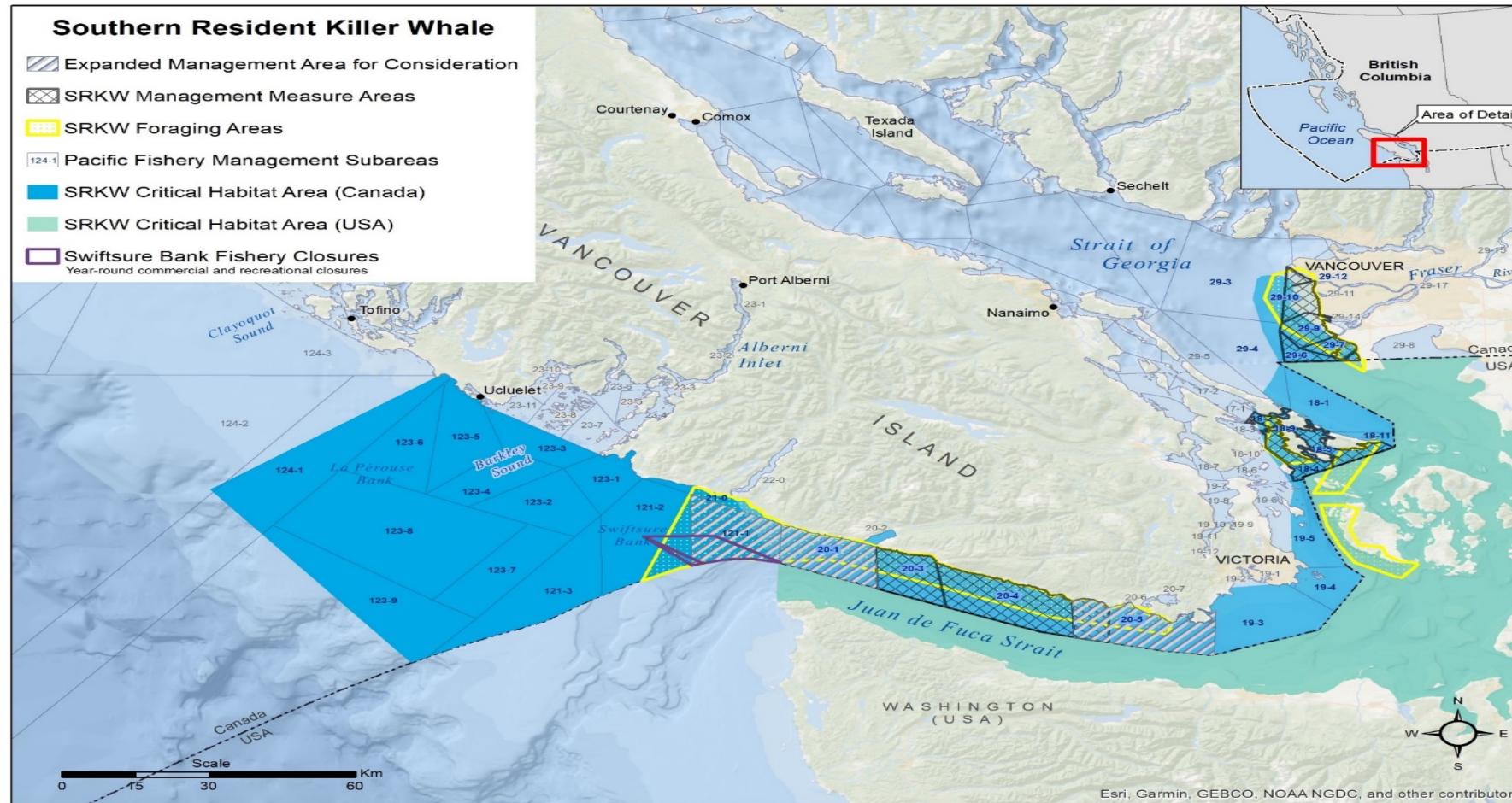
SRKW Technical Working Groups (TWGs)

- In November 2018, Departments established five Technical Working Groups (TWGs) to inform management measures for 2019 (and beyond)
 - Comprised of technical and subject matter experts from Indigenous communities, ENGOs, industry, academia and government (Canada, US)
 - Purpose: To provide recommendations to federal department heads on implementation of immediate and longer term actions to recover SRKW
 - March 1: Draft TWG proposals for immediate actions
 - June: Draft TWG proposals for longer-term actions
 - All TWGs will consider Canada-U.S. collaboration, with an immediate focus on actions out of WA State.



Overview of SRKW TWGs

TWG	Mandate and Objectives
Prey Availability (DFO)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review measures implemented in 2018, identify potential measures for 2019• Identify measures to rebuild wild Chinook stocks, in line with Wild Salmon Policy
Sanctuaries (DFO)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Advance feasibility of SRKW sanctuaries within SRKW critical habitat
Commercial Vessel Noise (TC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review effectiveness of 2018 measures and identify potential measures for 2019 season• Identify infrastructure needed to support measures
General Vessel Noise (TC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identify noise reduction targets, options for quiet-vessel design, and other actions for noise reduction• Identify measures to reduce noise of commercial whale watching and recreational vessels
Contaminants (ECCC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identify and evaluate contribution of point and nonpoint sources to contaminant loadings to the SRKW, their habitat and their prey• Develop recommendations for additional measures to address contaminants affecting the SRKW, their habitat and their prey.





Summary of TWG Draft Proposals for 2019 – for consideration

Prey Availability

- Area-based seasonal fishery closures
- Mobile (“bubble”) closures or avoidance zones
- Pre/In-season management triggers

Sanctuaries

- Definition and proposed conservation objective for sanctuaries
- Apply most conservative approach to managing human activities in key foraging areas
- Precautionary approach in candidate areas with targeted education and outreach and on-water presence

TWG1 (Commercial Vessel Noise)

- Expanded slowdown area
- Lateral displacement in Strait of Juan de Fuca

TWG2 (General Vessel Noise Measures)

- Encourage turning off echo sounders when not in use
- 1000 m go-slow (7 knots or less) buffer
- Leave engine off/neutral idle within killer whale approach distance
- Increase approach distance to 400 m all around SRKW
- Impose 650 approach/suspend viewing for SRKW for next 3 years



SRKW - Next Steps

- March-April 2019
 - Consultations with Indigenous groups, industry and stakeholders on potential SRKW recovery recommendations for 2019 from TWG groups (led by DFO and TC)
- May 2019
 - Decisions on immediate measures for the 2019 season
- May-June
 - Further discussion within TWGs on longer-term measures