

SB 6268 - DIGEST

(SEE ALSO PROPOSED 2ND SUB)

Establishes the orca protection act.

Requires the department of fish and wildlife to: (1) In order to facilitate the enforcement of RCW 77.15.740, provide extra protection to newborn calves, and protect critical feeding areas, conduct a minimum of one hundred patrols during the twenty-two most active weeks for southern resident killer whale viewing activity each year and prioritize Wednesday through Monday patrols when the activity is most active;

(2) Coordinate with appropriate federal, tribal, and nongovernmental partners to identify research and management actions undertaken that relate to impacts from human-generated marine noise; and

(3) Identify relevant research findings and management actions undertaken and identify options and recommendations on potential actions the state can take.

Includes as a natural resource infraction, when a vessel exceeds a speed of seven knots within one-half mile of a southern resident orca whale.

Requires the Salish Sea institute at Western Washington University to: (1) Convene a meeting to improve the coordination of recovery strategies for southern resident killer whales between Washington and British Columbia; and

(2) Establish timelines for recovery actions.

Makes appropriations from the general fund to the department of fish and wildlife for the purposes of the orca protection act.