



## CNCo supports Vancouver Fraser Port Authority's commitment to saving whales

*Photo right:*

There are 74 endangered southern resident killer whales living in Vancouver waters



The Enhancing Cetacean Habitat and Observation (ECHO) Programme is a Vancouver Fraser Port Authority-led initiative aimed at better understanding and managing the impact of shipping activities on at-risk whales throughout the southern coast of British Columbia.

The long-term goal of the ECHO Programme is to develop mitigation measures that will lead to a quantifiable reduction in potential threats to whales as a result of shipping activities. The initiative aims to save southern resident killer whales which number 74 currently, a 30 year low. This population has been listed as "endangered" by the Environmental Protection Agency since 2015. The killer whales have been listed as an endangered species in both Canada and the US and are commonly referred to as "the orcas of the Salish Sea". Both governments have highlighted the need to develop and implement measures to reduce underwater vessel noise. Research has shown that noise can interfere with the ability of whales to hunt, navigate and communicate with each other.

The programme started in 2017 and continued in 2018. During the months of the trial vessels were achieving a speed of



less than 12 knots during transits. Analysis of vessel source levels indicated that slowing vessels down significantly reduced underwater noise emissions, when compared to normal speeds. Just a 3 knot decrease in speed can result in a 50% reduction in sound intensity for some vessels.

CNCo participated in this voluntary speed reduction initiative on West Coast Canada under the ECHO Programme to do its part for the recovery and survival of killer whales. The speed reduction applied to a small area named Haro Strait. This is a 16.6NM distance in the Southern Pilotage waters. With speed reduction and depending on vessel type, transit times may increase between 11 and 18 minutes.



Industry's commitment to this voluntary research trial is a clear demonstration of the collective focus we have on ensuring a healthy marine environment, and we greatly appreciate our partners' support.

**Robin Silvester**

President and Chief Executive Officer of the Vancouver Fraser Port Authority.



Depending on the whale's foraging habits we expect this programme to continue. CNCo remains fully committed to doing the right thing and will continue to participate in programmes that help to save the whales.

"We are really proud to be part of this voluntary programme in the ongoing efforts for the recovery and survival of the killer whale population. We hope our efforts will help, as part of our wider commitment to playing a positive role in the communities we work and live in," said Frank Leigh-Spencer, Port Captain North America, CNCo.

*Community feedback*



Thank you for taking part in the Echo Programme's underwater noise reduction initiatives over the summer. We greatly appreciate the extra time you took to make adjustments to your schedule and operations in order to participate. Your efforts helped reduce underwater noise from vessels in key southern resident killer whale feeding areas, and will continue to help us better understand the effect of shipping activities on at-risk whales in our region.

**Robin Silvester**  
President and Chief Executive Officer of the Vancouver Fraser Port Authority.

*Image source:*  
<https://www.portvancouver.com/2017-echo-program>



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