

THE WHALE MUSEUM'S SOUNDWATCH BOATER EDUCATION PROGRAM ACTIVITIES REPORT 2004

SOUNDWATCH



THE WHALE MUSEUM

THE SOUNDWATCH BOATER EDUCATION PROGRAM promotes responsible stewardship of the Salish Sea through the development, distribution and implementation of best practice guidelines for marine wildlife viewing by residents, visitors and commercial users.



PROGRAM AREA

Soundwatch operates in the boundary waters of the San Juan and Canadian Gulf Islands of the Salish Sea. The Salish Sea includes Puget Sound and the Straits of Haro, Georgia, and Juan de Fuca, the traditional homeland of the Coast Salish peoples.



PROGRAM NEED

Over the past decade worldwide marine wildlife viewing activities have grown into a billion dollar (\$USD) industry involving over 80 countries and territories and over 9 million participants (Whale Watching 2001, Special Report from the International Fund for Animal Welfare, Erich Hoyt 2001). The Canadian/U.S. boundary waters of the Salish Sea have been no exception, often sited as one of the fastest growing



whale watch areas in the world, with over 70 vessels originating from nearly 40 commercial companies in U.S. and Canadian ports. Soundwatch estimates that last year, over 400,000 people engaged in marine wildlife viewing activities in this region from commercial and private boats and kayaks.

Despite the dramatic increase in marine wildlife viewing opportunities worldwide, few governmental regulations exist to address activities specific to viewing activities. Even fewer resources are available to enforce existing regulations on a consistent and widespread basis.

Although environmental problems threatening marine wildlife are complex, viewing practices represent one area where significant and immediate changes can be made to support recovery efforts.

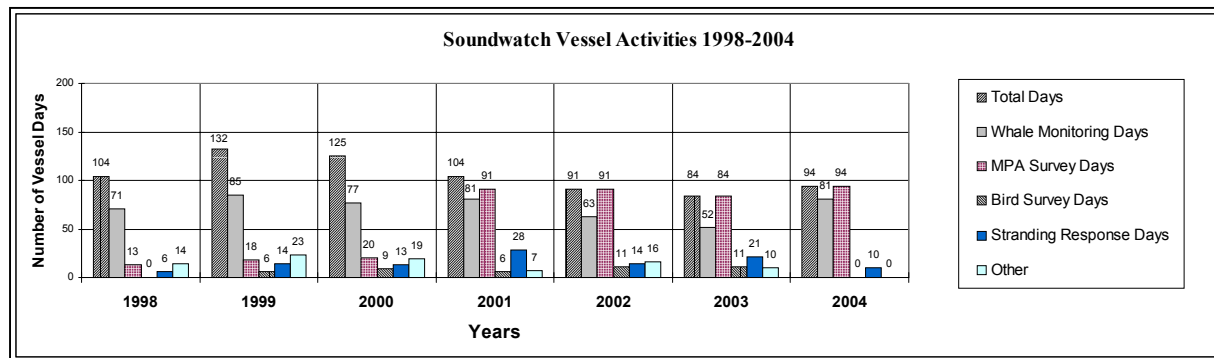
SOUNDWATCH MODEL

The Soundwatch Boater Education Program is a Stewardship Program of The Whale Museum. The Whale Museum is a 501(c) 3 nonprofit natural history museum located in Friday Harbor, on San Juan Island in Washington State. The museum has officially operated the Soundwatch Boater Education Program since 1993 to promote responsible stewardship of the marine wildlife inhabiting the Salish Sea. The program focuses on educating boaters on best practices for viewing whales and other marine wildlife. Critical to this focus is the annual cycle of development,

distribution and evaluation of current best boating practices. The primary way this is accomplished is through the operation of educational patrol vessels in the boundary region of the San Juan Islands. The vessel patrols conduct on-the-water education with boaters and collect field data on vessel activities in marine wildlife viewing areas and marine protection areas (MPA's) including the San Juan Islands National Wildlife Refuge Complex. This data has allowed Soundwatch staff to characterize regional marine wildlife-viewing trends and provide its findings to regional managers and user groups.



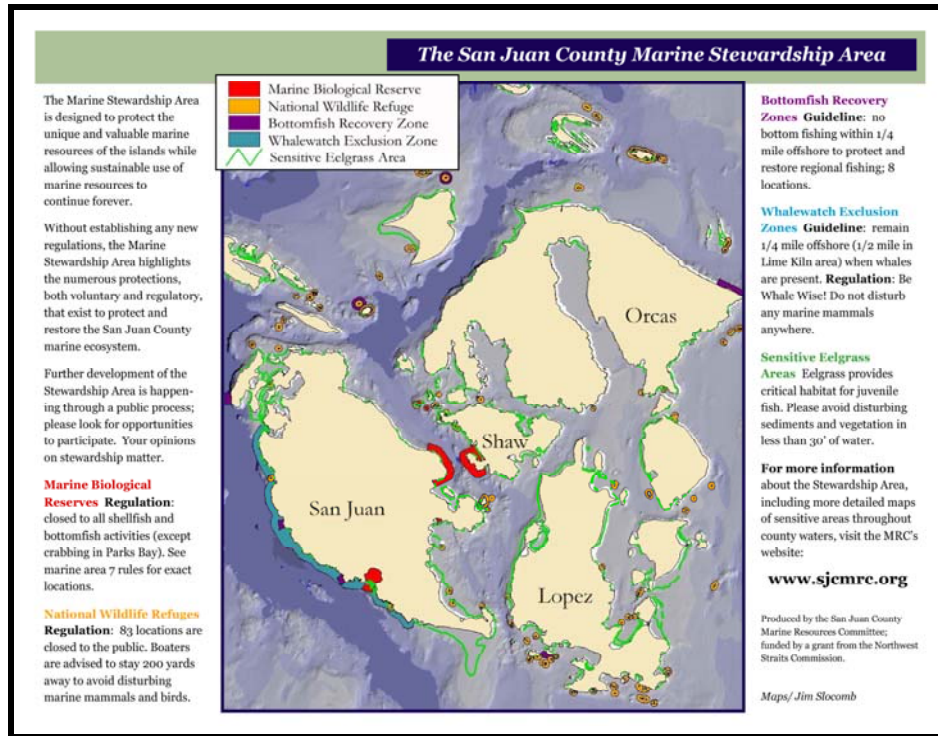
SOUNDWATCH ACTIVITIES



Marine Protection Area Education and Monitoring

Soundwatch utilizes the same on-the-water education and monitoring model to other marine wildlife projects that do not include whales. Soundwatch supports field responses for the San Juan County Marine Mammal Stranding Network by investigating remote strandings, and helping transport animals and specimens. In 1996, Soundwatch began its partnership with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service by monitoring and inventorying the 83 reserves in the San Juan Islands National Wildlife Refuge and Wilderness Areas. In 1998, this expanded into participation in the annual seabird census for the Puget Sound Ambient Monitoring Program. In 2000, Soundwatch began vessel-activity monitoring for the eight voluntary reserves in San Juan County's Bottomfish Recovery Program and the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife's restricted fishing zones in San Juan County. Soundwatch has continued to monitor vessel activities in all preserve areas within the newly declared San Juan County Marine Stewardship Area, which encompasses all marine preserves in San Juan County, including lands managed by The Nature Conservancy, Department of Natural Resources, Bureau of Land Management, Washington State and National Parks.

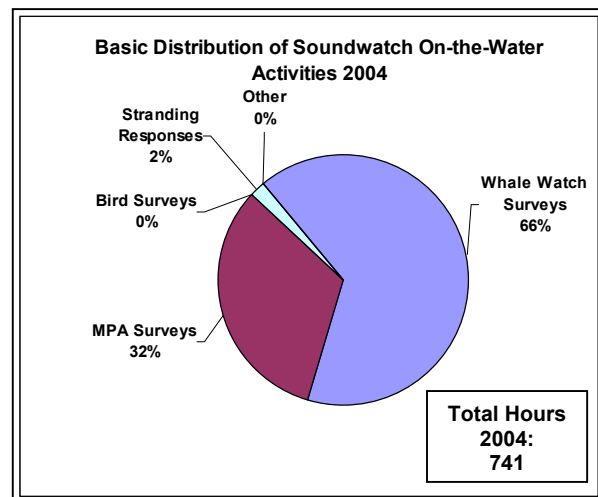
San Juan County Marine Stewardship Area



2004 Site and Compliance Monitoring

2004 Vessel Patrols

In 2004 Soundwatch operated vessel patrols an average of 5 days per week, operating on a 4-day schedule for the early and later part of the season and a 7-day schedule from the end of June thru beginning of August. Total operating days were 94 out of 123 possible days between May 15, 2004 and September 15, 2004, totaling over 741 observation hours. A total of 81 days (486 hours) were spent monitoring whale watch activities. Opportunistic MPA monitoring was conducted on average 2hrs during regular whale observation days (162 hours). Dedicated MPA monitoring was done on 13 days for a total of 78 hours. Total MPA monitoring time was 240 hours. Soundwatch responded to 10 marine mammal strandings. Nesting sea bird



surveys were not conducted as the USFWS and PSAMP monitoring program was not continued in 2004.

Public Education and Implementation of Best Practices

2004 Guideline Distribution



While on the water, Soundwatch delivered Be Whale Wise and MPA educational materials to 1,216 vessels reaching over 3,718 recreational boaters and kayakers. Less than 8% of contacted vessels had previously been contacted by Soundwatch and had some knowledge of the marine wildlife viewing guidelines. In addition to the on-the-water distribution, over 20,000 Be Whale Wise

brochures and 1,000 posters as well as over 500 of the new San Juan County Marine Stewardship Area maps were distributed regionally to federal, state, county and private parks, marinas, fuel docks, boat launching facilities and boating clubs and organizations, and at regional fairs, festivals, conferences and workshops. The Whale Museum displayed Be Whale Wise exhibits and made brochures available to over 20,000 visitors and program participants. In addition, materials were given to over 10,000 Whale Museum members and adopters through The Whale Museum's Orca Adoption Program.

2004 Media Coverage

In 2004, Soundwatch and the Be Whale Wise guidelines were featured as full page ad in the 2004/05 WDFW sports fishing rules book, the San Juan Islands Visitors Guide and the San Juan Journal during the month of August. The San Juan Marine Stewardship Area map, including the 83 NWR areas, was featured on the back page of the WDFW 2004/05 rules book having an annual printing of over 8,000 copies. The Northwest NMFS Office of Law Enforcement embarked on a Be Whale Wise campaign in 2004, producing 10 Be Whale Wise Billboards that were featured through the Puget Area, 10 Bus side Be Whale Wise Ads, 6 NPR radio broadcasts, a feature on KIRO news and produced Be Whale Wise bumper-stickers.





In Addition, Soundwatch was featured or referred to in several news pieces by regional media including TV: Seattle based KIRO, KING 5, KOMO, CH 13, and Canadian VI-LAND and KVOS; Radio: Seattle's KUOW, Bellingham's KISS FM, and CBC Radio in Canada; News print: The San Juan Islander, The Islands Weekly, The Sounder, The Journal of the San Juans, Seattle PI, Seattle Times, Seattle Weekly, The Stranger, Victoria's Times Columnists, The Vancouver Sun, and The Georgia Strait. The National Geographic Society, NTV of Japan, Video Age Productions of Ripon Wisconsin, My Turn Productions of Seattle, and the Public Broadcast System (PBS) Great Museums Program, all produced video segments featuring The Whale Museum and Soundwatch.

Soundwatch Employees and Volunteers

2004 Participants

Soundwatch relies on the help of many dedicated and enthusiastic volunteers. In 2004, Soundwatch utilized over 48 volunteers, totaling over 1,400 hours averaging 7-hours a day, 5-days a week, May-September. In addition to volunteer help, Soundwatch hired 2 seasonal employees as drivers and administrative assistants in addition to the Soundwatch Program Coordinator. Soundwatch also received advisory, data management, communications and administrative support from existing Whale Museum staff. Contracted services were used for vessel maintenance and repair, graphics, printing, vessel moorage and storage and fuel.



Participation in Collective Conservation

2004 Community Events and Management Meetings

In 2004, Soundwatch staff and volunteers participated in 15 marine/boat related community events, including the Seattle Boat Show; conducted 15 trainings on marine stewardship to marine naturalists, guides, volunteers, whale watch

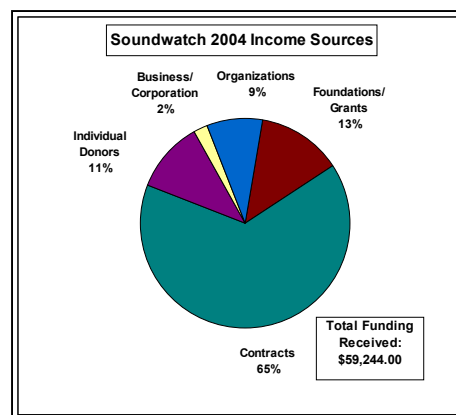
operators and NMFS and WDW enforcement officers. Soundwatch made 14 presentations to regional organizations and public agencies and participated in over 38 regional scientific/management meetings. Soundwatch staff prepared and produced 20 feedback reports to commercial whale watch operators; provided comments to the National Marine Fisheries Service, Fisheries and Oceans Canada, and the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife on Southern Resident Killer Whale status relative to whale watching and whale watch regulations; and submitted an abstract on the Soundwatch model to the Puget Sound Georgia Basin Marine Research Conference to be held in march of 2005.

2004 SOUNDWATCH INCOME AND EXPENDITURES

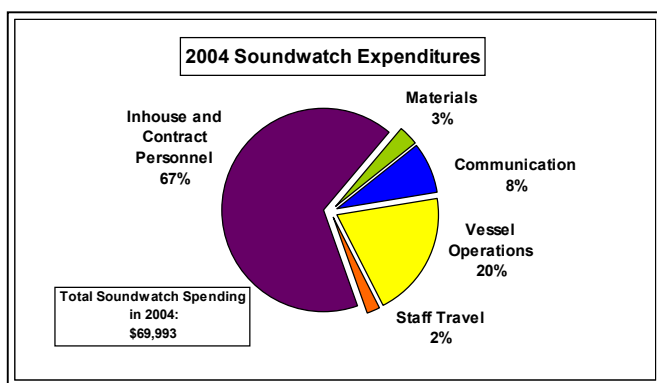
Soundwatch Program Income comes from a variety of grants and foundations, individual and business donations, contracts, as well as other organizational support and matching.

Income

Foundations and Grants	\$ 7,764
Individual Donors	6,620
Business and Corporation	1,180
Contracts	38,500
Organizations	<u>5,180</u>
	\$59,244



Soundwatch Program Expenditures are for annual salaried and seasonal contract personnel, program materials, communications, staff travel, vessel operations and administrative overhead costs of 20 percent.



Expenses

Personnel	\$47,167
Vessel Operation	14,279
Communication	5,484
Materials	1,772
Travel/Conference Fees	<u>1,291</u>
	\$69,993