



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Glacier Bay National Park
and Preserve

P.O. Box 140
Gustavus, AK 99826

907 697-2230 phone
907 697-2654 fax
www.nps.gov/glba

National Park Service News Release

Release Date: July 27, 2015

Contacts: Albert Faria, Chief Ranger, GLBA_Administration@nps.gov, 907-697-2230
Chris Gabriele, Whale Biologist, Chris_Gabriele@nps.gov, 907-697-2664

Whale Waters Update for Glacier Bay Effective July 28, 2015

BARTLETT COVE, ALASKA – Glacier Bay National Park and Preserve Superintendent Philip Hooge announced today that the vessel operating restrictions around Willoughby Island and in most of Whidbey Passage will be lifted beginning 5 AM Tuesday July 28. However, a 13 knot vessel speed limit will remain in effect in and around Berg Bay to protect numerous humpback whales that continue to feed in this area.



Whale waters in lower Glacier Bay remain unchanged. In all currently designated whale waters, vessels greater than 18 feet in length are restricted to a mid-channel course or one nautical mile offshore.

As shown on the attached map, the 13 knot speed limit and vessel course restriction are designated in the following areas.

- *Lower Glacier Bay:* This area includes the waters extending from the mouth of Glacier Bay to a line drawn between the northern tip of Strawberry Island and the northern tip of Lars Island. This boundary is shown on NOAA nautical charts of Glacier Bay.
- *Berg Bay:* This area includes all of the waters inside Berg Bay and is bounded on the north by a line drawn from southern tip of Willoughby Island due west to the mainland, and is bounded on the east by a line drawn from the southern tip of Willoughby Island to a point one nautical mile offshore of Lars Island. The southern boundary of this area is contiguous with the northern boundary of Lower Glacier Bay whale waters.

Boaters should proceed cautiously in all areas where whales may be present because whales may surface in unexpected locations, posing a hazard to both the vessel and the whale. Park managers note that there are shifting concentrations of humpback whales elsewhere in Glacier Bay, including the vicinity of South Marble Island, a common wildlife watching area. Vessels are prohibited from operating within ¼ nautical mile of a humpback whale in Park waters, including those Park waters outside Glacier Bay proper. Any vessel inadvertently positioned within ¼ nautical mile of a humpback whale must immediately slow the vessel to 10 knots or less. Boaters should proceed cautiously in all areas where whales may be present because whales may surface in unexpected locations, posing a hazard to both the vessel and the whale.

Speed and course restrictions in whale waters as authorized by Title 36 of the Code of Federal Regulations, Subpart N, 13.1174. Boaters are advised to verify whale waters designations prior to entering Glacier Bay by telephoning (907) 697-2627 or by contacting KWM20 Bartlett Cove on marine VHF radio.

