

An Illustrated Guide to Park Humpback Whale Approach Regulations

Glacier Bay National Park and Preserve
National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior



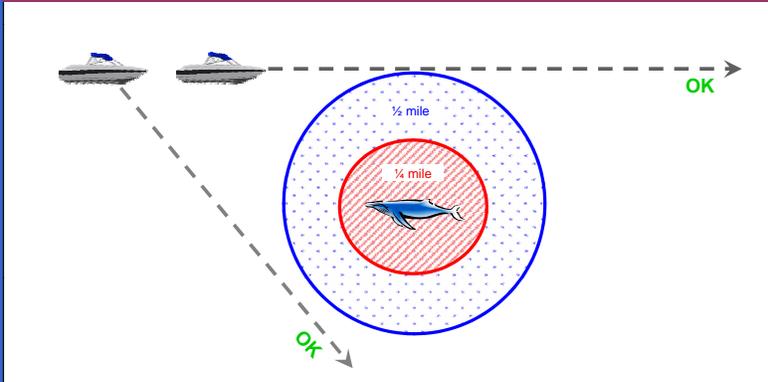
GOAL

To minimize the risk of disturbance and vessel collisions for endangered humpback whales.



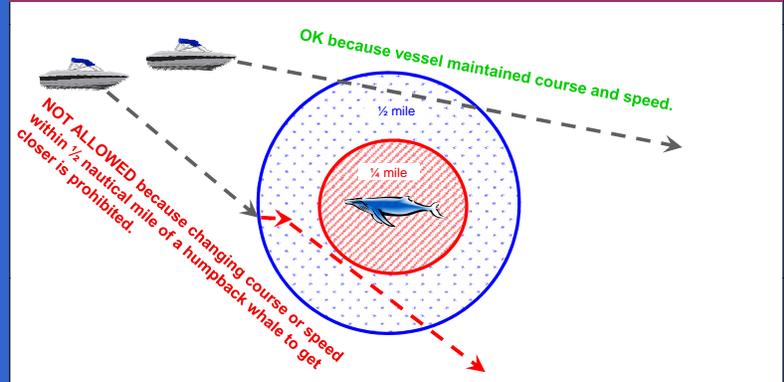
Scenario 1: Vessel in transit sees a humpback whale surface > ½ nautical mile from vessel.

Response: Maintain course and speed. Do not change course or speed to get closer to the whale. (Changing course or speed within ½ nautical mile to get closer is prohibited – see next scenario.)



Scenario 2: Vessel in transit sees a humpback whale surface less than ½ nautical mile but more than ¼ nautical mile from vessel.

Response: Maintain course and speed. Do not change course or speed to get closer to the whale. Changing course or speed within ½ nautical mile to get closer to the whale is prohibited.

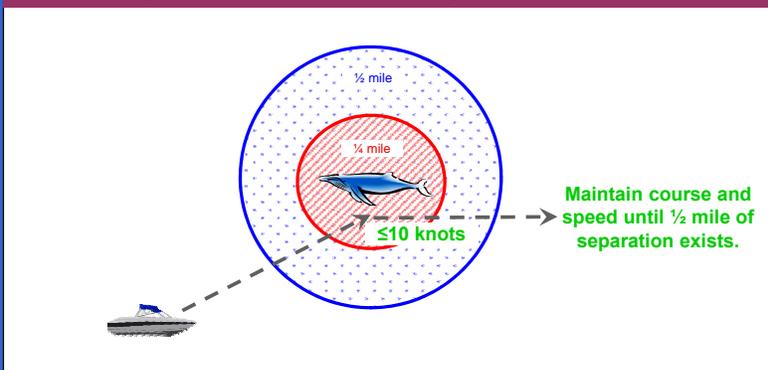


¼ nautical mile = 506 yards (~ 5 football fields)
½ nautical mile = 1,013 yards (~ 10 football fields)

When in doubt, maintain ½ nautical mile separation between your vessel and a humpback whale.

Scenario 3: Vessel is in transit when a humpback whale surfaces unexpectedly within ¼ nautical mile.

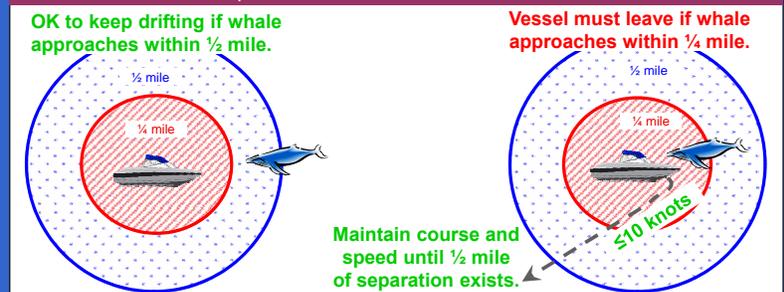
Response: Immediately slow vessel to 10 knots or less, without shifting into reverse unless impact is likely. Direct the vessel on a steady course away from the whale. Once ¼ nautical mile from the whale, maintain course and speed until ½ nautical mile of separation exists.



Scenario 4: Vessel is *drifting* (with engine on or off) – to watch other wildlife, sport fish, etc. – when a humpback whale surfaces unexpectedly within ½ nautical mile.

Response: Continue drifting if desired, or leave the area. If you leave the area, maintain a steady speed and course away from the whale until ½ nautical mile of separation exists. Changing course or speed within ½ nautical mile to get closer to the whale is prohibited.

Note: If you continue drifting and the whale approaches within ¼ nautical mile, immediately direct vessel on a steady course away from the whale at a speed of 10 knots or less. Once you are ¼ nautical mile from the whale, maintain course and speed until ½ nautical mile of separation exists.



Code of Federal Regulations Title 36, Subpart N, 13.1770 says:

- * "Operating a vessel within ¼ nautical mile of a [humpback] whale is prohibited, except for a commercial fishing vessel authorized under this subpart that is actively trolling, setting, or pulling long lines, or setting or pulling crab pots."
- * "The operator of a vessel inadvertently positioned within ¼ nautical mile of a [humpback] whale must immediately **slow the vessel to 10 knots or less, without shifting into reverse unless impact is likely. The operator must direct or maintain the vessel on as steady a course as possible away from the whale until at least ¼ nautical mile of separation is established.**"
- * "The operator of a vessel or seaplane positioned within ½ nautical mile of a [humpback] whale is prohibited from altering course or speed in a manner that results in decreasing the distance between the whale and the vessel or seaplane."

These regulations apply in all Park waters, not just Glacier Bay proper.
These regulations apply to all vessels, including kayaks.