



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Glacier Bay National Park
and Preserve

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National Park Service News Release

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Whale Waters Update for Glacier Bay Effective June 7, 2013

BARTLETT COVE, ALASKA – Glacier Bay National Park and Preserve Acting Superintendent Tom VandenBerg announced two changes today in ‘whale waters’ regulations designed to protect humpback whales from collision and disturbance. First, a vessel speed limit of 13 knots through the water will be implemented in the waters 1 nautical mile from shore around North and South Marble Islands to protect numerous humpback whales that have been sighted in this area. During the past week, at least 11 different humpback whales have been observed feeding in this area. This speed restriction will apply to all vessels from **5 AM Friday June 7** until further notice.

Secondly, there is a change in the speed limit in the lower Glacier Bay whale waters that were implemented May 8. Very few whales are using the lower bay waters, so the speed limit has been raised to 20 knots through the water. As shown on the attached map, the affected area includes waters extending north from an imaginary line between Point Carolus and Point Gustavus to a line drawn between the northern tip of Strawberry Island and the northern tip of Lars Island. Although the 13 knot speed limit has been raised to 20 knots, vessels greater than 18 feet in length are still restricted to a mid-channel course or 1 nautical mile offshore. This boundary is shown on NOAA nautical charts of Glacier Bay.

However, note that the whale waters speed restriction in Park waters just outside the mouth of Glacier Bay that went into effect May 8 is unchanged. There are still many whales just outside the mouth of Glacier Bay proper, so a vessel speed limit of 13 knots through the water will remain in effect until further notice. This area is bounded on the north by an imaginary line between Point Carolus and Point Gustavus, and on the south by the Park boundary in Icy Strait. The eastern boundary is an imaginary line running due south from Point Gustavus to the Park boundary, and the

western boundary is an imaginary line running due south to the Park boundary following longitude 136 degrees 05' West.

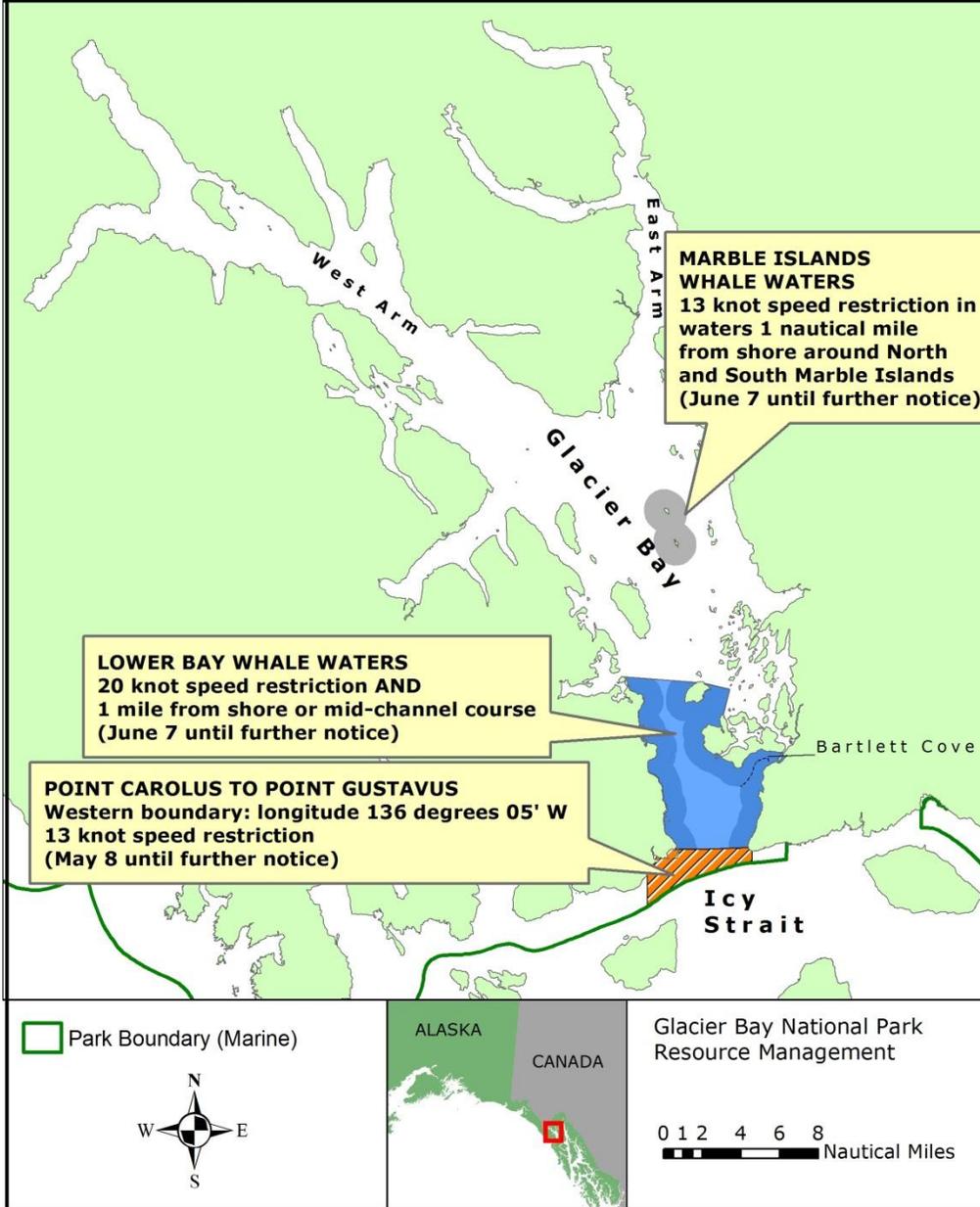
Boaters should proceed cautiously in all areas where whales may be present because whales surface in unexpected locations, posing a hazard to both the vessel and the whale. Although humpback whales tend to be distributed along the shoreline, boaters should note that whales frequently cross mid-channel as they move between feeding sites. Vessels are prohibited from operating within $\frac{1}{4}$ nautical mile of a humpback whale in Park waters, including those Park waters outside Glacier Bay proper. In addition, vessel operators positioned within $\frac{1}{2}$ nautical mile of a humpback whale are prohibited from altering their course or speed in a manner that results in decreasing the distance between the whale and the vessel. Speed and course restrictions in whale waters are intended to reduce the disruption of feeding humpback whales and to lower the risk of whale/vessel collisions.

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. Whale waters restrictions are authorized in Glacier Bay National Park in accordance with Title 36 of the Code of Federal Regulations, Subpart N, 13.1174.

Whale Waters in Glacier Bay

Effective June 7, 2013

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