

RCW 88.16.190 Oil tankers—Restricted waters—Requirements. (1)

Any oil tanker, whether enrolled or registered, of greater than one hundred twenty-five thousand deadweight tons shall be prohibited from proceeding beyond a point east of a line extending from Discovery Island light south to New Dungeness light, unless authorized by the United States coast guard, pursuant to 33 C.F.R. Sec. 165.1303.

(2) (a) (i) An oil tanker of forty to one hundred twenty-five thousand deadweight tons may operate in the waters east of a line extending from Discovery Island light south to New Dungeness light and all points in the Puget Sound area, including but not limited to the San Juan Islands and connected waterways and the waters south of Admiralty Inlet, to the extent that these waters are within the territorial boundaries of Washington, only if the oil tanker is under the escort of a tug or tugs that have an aggregate shaft horsepower equivalent to at least five percent of the deadweight tons of the escorted oil tanker.

(ii) Effective September 1, 2020, the following may operate in Rosario Strait and connected waterways to the east only if under the escort of a tug or tugs that have an aggregate shaft horsepower equivalent to at least five percent of the deadweight tons of a forty thousand deadweight ton oil tanker: (A) Oil tankers of between five thousand and forty thousand deadweight tons; and (B) both articulated tug barges and towed waterborne vessels or barges that are: (I) Designed to transport oil in bulk internal to the hull; and (II) greater than five thousand deadweight tons.

(iii) The requirements of (a) (ii) of this subsection: (A) Do not apply to vessels providing bunkering or refueling services; (B) do not apply to a towed general cargo deck barge; and (C) may be adjusted or suspended by rule by the board of pilotage commissioners, consistent with RCW 88.16.260(1) (c).

(b) An oil tanker, articulated tug barge, or towed waterborne vessel or barge in ballast or when unladen is not required to be under the escort of a tug.

(c) A tanker assigned a deadweight of less than forty thousand deadweight tons at the time of construction or reconstruction as reported in Lloyd's Register of Ships is not subject to the provisions of RCW 88.16.170 and 88.16.180.

(3) The definitions in this subsection apply throughout this section unless the context clearly requires otherwise.

(a) "Articulated tug barge" means a tank barge and a towing vessel joined by hinged or articulated fixed mechanical equipment affixed or connecting to the stern of the tank barge.

(b) "Oil tanker" means a self-propelled deep draft tank vessel designed to transport oil in bulk. "Oil tanker" does not include an articulated tug barge tank vessel.

(c) "Towed general cargo deck barge" means a waterborne vessel or barge designed to carry cargo on deck.

(d) "Waterborne vessel or barge" means any ship, barge, or other watercraft capable of traveling on the navigable waters of this state and capable of transporting any crude oil or petroleum product in quantities of ten thousand gallons or more for purposes other than providing fuel for its motor or engine. [2019 c 289 § 2; 1994 c 52 § 1; 1975 1st ex.s. c 125 § 3.]

Finding—Intent—2019 c 289: "The legislature finds that a variety of existing policies designed to reduce the risk of oil spills have

helped contribute to a relatively strong safety record for oil moved by water, pipeline, and train in recent years in Washington state. Nevertheless, gaps exist in our safety regimen, especially deriving from shifts in the modes of overwater transportation of oil and the increased transport of oils that may submerge or sink, contributing to an unacceptable threat to Washington waters, where a catastrophic spill would inflict potentially irreversible damage on the endangered southern resident killer whales. In addition to the unique marine and cultural resources in Puget Sound that would be damaged by an oil spill, the geographic, bathometric, and other environmental peculiarities of Puget Sound present navigational challenges that heighten the risk of an oil spill incident occurring. Therefore, it is the intent of the legislature to enact certain new safety requirements designed to reduce the current, acute risk from existing infrastructure and activities of an oil spill that could eradicate our whales, violate the treaty interests and fishing rights of potentially affected federally recognized Indian tribes, damage commercial fishing prospects, undercut many aspects of the economy that depend on the Salish Sea, and otherwise harm the health and well-being of Washington residents. In enacting such measures, however, it is not the intent of the legislature to mitigate, offset, or otherwise encourage additional projects or activities that would increase the frequency or severity of oil spills in the Salish Sea. Furthermore, it is the intent of the legislature for this act to assist in coordinating enhanced international discussions among federal, state, provincial, first nation, federally recognized Indian tribe, and industry leaders in the United States and Canada to develop an agreement for an additional emergency rescue tug available to vessels in distress in the narrow Straits of the San Juan Islands and other boundary waters, which would lessen oil spill risks to the marine environment in both the United States and Canada." [2019 c 289 § 1.]

Severability—1975 1st ex.s. c 125: See note following RCW 88.16.170.