

RESOLUTION NO. 2019-12

A RESOLUTION of the City Council of Bainbridge Island, Washington, affirming the importance of the Southern Resident orca whales to the identity and values of Bainbridge Island and the broader Salish Sea region; urging the Washington State Legislature to approve and fund the Governor's Orca Emergency Response package in full; encouraging the Governor's Orca Task Force to make additional bold recommendations in 2019; declaring June to be Orca Awareness Month; and reaffirming the City's commitment to protecting critical salmon and forage fish habitat, reducing toxic pollution, and taking other actions to help recover endangered orcas.

WHEREAS, the Southern Resident orca whales are an essential part of our Pacific Northwest identity, an iconic species, and an indicator of the health of the Puget Sound, and it is the City of Bainbridge Island's desire that future generations in our community are able to witness their majesty; and

WHEREAS, the Southern Resident orcas are endangered, are at their smallest population size in 30 years, are showing signs of starvation, and are struggling to birth and raise healthy calves; and

WHEREAS, the extinction of the Southern Resident orcas is unacceptable and would be a devastating blow to our local community, regional culture and economy, and to the broader ecosystem; and

WHEREAS, the major threats facing the Southern Resident orcas are: a lack of their principal food source, Chinook salmon, including as a result of the degradation of salmon and forage fish habitat; noise and disturbance from ships, small boats, and even non-motorized vessels, all of which affect their ability to echolocate, communicate, and forage; pollutants and chemicals of emerging concern, which are inhibiting orcas' ability to raise healthy young orcas; and the potential for a devastating oil spill, which could wipe out some or all of the Southern Resident orca population; and

WHEREAS, the Governor has proposed an Orca Emergency Response package based on Southern Resident Orca Task Force recommendations, addressing these key threats; and

WHEREAS, the City of Bainbridge Island recognizes that the need for action is urgent and supports the enactment of policies that can address the critical threats facing the Southern Resident orcas; and

WHEREAS, the City of Bainbridge Island Comprehensive Plan includes a policy of undertaking appropriate, adequate, and timely actions to protect and recover state

priority species, species listed under the federal Endangered Species Act, and local species of concern and their habitats located within the City to 1) avoid local extirpation of such species from the lands or fresh waters or nearshore of the City and 2) contribute to the protection and recovery of such species throughout the greater region in cooperation with federal, state, and other local agencies.

NOW, THEREFORE, THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BAINBRIDGE ISLAND DOES RESOLVE AS FOLLOWS:

Section 1. The City of Bainbridge Island strongly encourages Washington state legislators to approve the following legislation currently under consideration, and to allocate full funding for these and other Orca Emergency Response measures in line with the Governor's budget request:

- a. HB 1580 and SB 5577: Reducing vessel noise and disturbance so the orcas have an easier time finding prey.
- b. HB 1194 and SB 5135: Reducing toxic pollution to clean up our waters and improve survival rates for orca calves.
- c. HB 1579 and SB 5580: Protecting salmon and forage fish habitat by clarifying and expanding the Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife's enforcement capacity over shoreline armoring permits under the Hydraulic Code.
- d. HB 1578 and SB 5578: Reducing threats to southern resident killer whales by improving the safety of oil transportation, including by requiring some oil tankers and articulated tug barges to be under the escort of a tug.

Section 2. The City of Bainbridge Island urges the Governor's Orca Task Force to consider additional bold actions that could further advance orca recovery, including reducing the human harvest of Chinook salmon to increase food available to the Southern Resident orcas while respecting tribal treaty rights.

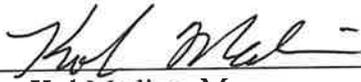
Section 3. The City of Bainbridge Island will consider and seek to minimize impacts on Southern Resident orcas, Chinook salmon, and forage fish when making decisions about stormwater management and shoreline development.

Section 4. The City of Bainbridge Island will declare the month of June to be Orca Awareness Month as the Governor has declared it to be statewide in past years and will encourage local events to raise awareness about the Southern Resident orcas and ways in which Bainbridge Islanders can take action to improve conditions necessary for orca survival.

Section 5. This resolution shall take effect immediately after its passage.

PASSED by the City Council this 12th day of February, 2019.

APPROVED by the Mayor this 12th day of February, 2019.

By: 
Kol Medina, Mayor

ATTEST/AUTHENTICATE:

By: 
Christine Brown, CMC, City Clerk

FILED WITH THE CITY CLERK:
PASSED BY THE CITY COUNCIL:
RESOLUTION NO.

February 6, 2019
February 12, 2019
2019-12