

**SB 5577 - DIGEST**

Finds a person guilty of a natural resource infraction if the person causes a vessel or other object to: (1) Approach within four hundred yards of a southern resident orca whale; or

(2) Exceed a speed greater than seven knots over ground at any point located within one-half nautical mile of the whales.

Prohibits commercial whale watching operators from approaching or intercepting within six hundred fifty yards in the direction of the whales.

Requires a commercial whale watching license for businesses engaged in commercial whale watching activities.

Requires the department of fish and wildlife to implement a limited-entry whale watching license program for the inland waters of the state for all whale species.