



STATE OF WASHINGTON BOARD OF PILOTAGE COMMISSIONERS

BPC Mission: to ensure against the loss of lives, loss of or damage to property and vessels, and to protect the marine environment by maintaining efficient and competent pilotage service on our State's inland waters.

THE BPC PILOTAGE QUARTERLY



Announcements



2026 Pilot Exam

Take the Ride of your Life
Become a Washington State Pilot



Find out more about the
upcoming 2026
Washington State Marine
Pilot Exam at
[Become a Pilot!](#)

Are you a Pilot Aspirant?

We have been busy
adding more information
and resources to our
website to help navigate
the pathway to pilotage!
Visit www.pilotage.wa.gov
to learn more!



Tug Escort Rulemaking Proposal and Public Comment Period

On June 11, 2025, the BPC filed proposed rule language which addresses 2019 legislative changes made to [Chapter 88.16 RCW](#) (Pilotage Act) through the passage of Engrossed Substitute House Bill [\(ESHB\) 1578](#). The bill directs the BPC, in consultation with Ecology, to adopt rules regarding tug escorts in Puget Sound by December 31, 2025. The proposed rule is designed to meet best achievable protection (BAP), as defined in [RCW 88.46.010](#), and is informed by other considerations in ESHB 1578.

The proposed rule applies to the following oil carrying tank vessels:

- Tankers between 5,000 and 40,000 deadweight tons (DWT).
- Articulated tug barges (ATBs) and towed waterborne vessels or barges greater than 5,000 DWT.

The proposed rule modifies existing tug escort requirements established in RCW [88.16.190\(2\)\(a\)\(ii\)](#), effective September 1, 2020, and will:

- Expand the tug escort area by approximately 28.9 square miles to include Rosario Strait and connected waterways to the east, extending northwest toward Patos Island (an 11% increase in area).
- Establish minimum horsepower (hp) requirements for tugs escorting these vessels based on the escorted vessel's deadweight tonnage:
 - 2,000 hp for vessels between 5,000 and 18,000 DWT, and
 - 3,000 hp for vessels 18,000 DWT or greater.
- Require tugs escorting these vessels to have a minimum of twin screw propulsion (at least two propellers).
- Require a pre-escort conference between the escort tug and tank vessel to discuss the operational details of the transit.

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD: Formal comments on this rulemaking will be accepted in the following ways between 12:00 a.m. on June 11, 2025 and August 1, 2025, at 11:59 p.m.:

- Submitted through Ecology's online comment tool at:
<https://sppr.ecology.commentinput.com?id=HihgcrTsY>
- By mail to Board of Pilotage Commissioners 2901 3rd Avenue, Suite 500 Seattle, WA 98121
- At the public hearings via webinar or in person:
 - July 17 at 10 a.m. – in person 2901 3rd Ave, 1st Floor Agate Conf. Room or [Join the online webinar](#)
 - July 22 at 1 p.m. - [Join the online webinar](#)
 - July 23 at 6 p.m. - [Join the online webinar](#)

Women Offshore Leadership Summit

In May, BPC Executive Director Jaimie Bever traveled to Houston, TX to attend Women Offshore's Leadership Summit.

This event featured presentations and panel discussions regarding navigating recent federal DEI changes, psychological safety, and a closing keynote from Captain Karynn Marchal, Unlimited Master, who offered insights from her vast experience in the maritime industry.

As always, Women Offshore provided an excellent opportunity for networking, sharing, collaboration!

The Women Offshore 2025 Conference will take place on October 9 and 10, 2025 in Houston, TX. Find information about registration at www.WomenOffshore.org.



Sarah Scherer (center) moderates a panel with attorneys Jessie Elizabeth (left) and Melanie Cruthirds (rights) about navigating recent DEI federal changes.

District Snapshots

Puget Sound



Retirements:

There were no retirements in the second quarter of 2025.

License Upgrades to Unlimited:

Captain Pete Velarde
Captain Matt Miller

Congratulations, Captains!

Training Program:

Currently training are Captains Michelson, Wood, Shuler, Britton, Boullion, Woodworth, Bolton and Butterfield.



From left: Puget Sound Pilot Trainees Captains Boullion, Woodworth, and Wood with Puget Sound Pilot Captain Cassee preparing for a trip outbound from Cherry Point via Haro Strait. Image courtesy of Puget Sound Pilots.



Pilotage Baby Boom!

We wanted to take this opportunity to celebrate the new fathers in the Puget Sound and Grays Harbor Pilotage Districts! It is rare to have so many babies born this close together within the pilot corps. But here we are with 5 newborns in each of the past 5 months!

Congratulations to these Captains and their families!



Captain Trevor Bozina with Thea Kailana born on his birthday February 25, 2025



Captain Eric Michael with Imogen born in March 2025



GH Pilot Trainee Ryan Campbell's newborn Cooper Louis who arrived his first day of training, April 1, 2025.



Captain Billy Sturgell with Rogue Isaiah born May 15, 2025



BPC Commissioner Captain Severin Knutsen with Magnus Sloan born June 9, 2025

Grays Harbor



Training Program:

Currently training is Captain Ryan Campbell



The BPC Pilotage Quarterly is a publication of the Board of Pilotage Commissioners. It is available online at www.pilotage.wa.gov. To join our distribution list, email PilotageInfo@wsdot.wa.gov, or call (206) 515-3904.

