**North Atlantic Right Whales (NARW)**

**Right whale to hit-** Vessel strikes are one of two main causes of death. They are hard to see- same color as the water, no dorsal fin, spend significant time just below water’s surface. Example from vessel strike last year.

**Right whale to find at our sites-** migrate to our area to calve each winter, only calving area. They are an “urban whale” found right off our coast and often spotted from shore.

**Right whale to save-** only 368 left, no calves 2018, etc.

**Do the right thing-** abide by speed rules, have observers, etc

**2020 SARBO**. Projects covered under the South Atlantic Regional Biological Opinion (2020 SARBO) must follow the North Atlantic Right Whale Conservation Plan found in Appendix F (<https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/content/endangered-species-act-section-7-biological-opinions-southeast>). What that means for your:

* USACE funds aerial surveys to look for them from November 1 through April 30 from the Virginia/North Carolina border south to Cape Canaveral, Florida
* All vessel captain, crew, and PSO on dredge vessels, survey vessels, and all supporting vessels over 33-ft in length will:

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| --- | --- |
|  | **Know if NARW and other ESA-listed species may be there****Dedicated lookout.** Have a person on the lookout for NARW at all times**Whale Alerts.** Be equipped to receive alerts Whale Alerts when NARW are spotted within 38 nautical miles and immediately slow to 10 knots according to the NARW Conservation Plan**Report a Right Whale Sighting**. Immediately report all whale sightings at 877-WHALE-HELP ((877) 942-5343). Right whale sightings in any location may also be reported to the U.S. Coast Guard via channel 16 or through the [**Whale Alert app**](http://www.whalealert.org/). Also immediately alert the USACE District POC. |
|  | **Stay 500 Yards Away.** Regulations prohibit approaching or remaining within 500 yards (1,500 feet) of a right whale—500 yards is the length of about five football fields. Call the NOAA Fisheries Enforcement Hotline at **(800) 853-1964** to report a federal marine resource violation.**Slow Down.** All vessels on our projects that are over 33-ft long must follow speed restrictions in the NARW Conservation Plan if NARW are in the area, this includes crew boats, support vessels, survey vessels, dredges, etc. |
| Marine Life In Distress | **Report Marine Life in Distress.** Report sick, injured, entangled, stranded, or dead animal and never approach or try to save an injured or entangled animal yourself—it can be dangerous to both the animal and you. [**Learn who you should contact when you encounter a stranded or injured marine animal**](https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/report) |

**Vessel Speed Requirements, if a NARW is spotted or reportedwithin 38 nautical miles**

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| Vessel Size | Within the range of North Atlantic right whale | Within the Seasonal Management Area in South Georgia/ North Florida |
| 33-65 ft | * All vessels must slow to 10 knots or slowest safe navigable speed * Slow speed maintained for 36 hours or until next North Atlantic right whale survey when no whales are observed, whichever is shorter. | * All vessels must slow to 10 knots or slowest safe navigable speed * Slow speed maintained until the next North Atlantic right whale survey when no whales are observed (no time limit). * Vessels may resume speed once outside the Southeast SMA. |
| Over 65 ft | * All vessels must slow to 10 knots or slowest safe navigable speed * Slow speed maintained for 36 hours or until next North Atlantic right whale survey when no whales are observed, whichever is shorter. | |

When transiting between projects, the NARW Conservation Plan in the 2020 SARBO does not apply and vessels must follow the NARW Ship Strike Rule explained here: <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/national/endangered-species-conservation/reducing-vessel-strikes-north-atlantic-right-whales>

