

Winter 2026 Schedule Virtual Initiative Spotlights

Oceans Protection Plan Pacific Marine Dialogue Forum

This winter, Transport Canada will host Virtual Initiative Spotlights every Thursday from 10:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. Pacific Time on Microsoft Teams. These sessions, part of the Pacific Marine Dialogue Forum, will provide updates on Oceans Protection Plan and marine transportation-related initiatives to First Nations, coastal communities, industry, NGOs, academia, and all levels of government.

For the most up-to-date schedule, please refer to the [online version](#). Sessions may change; avoid downloading the document to ensure access to the latest information.

February 05, 2026	B.C. Coastal Marine Strategy: An Overview of Co-Development and Early Implementation
February 12, 2026	Overview of Transport Canada's Legislative and Regulatory Processes
February 19, 2026	Pre-Shoreline Cleanup Assessment Technique (SCAT) in BC: Results and Planned 2026 Fieldwork
February 26, 2026	Shoreline Cleanup Assessment Technique (SCAT) and Its Role in Marine Oil Spill Response
March 05, 2026	Western Canada Marine Response: Preparedness, Response and Collaboration on Canada's West Coast
March 12, 2026	The Voyage of a Vessel: Canada's Marine Safety System
March 19, 2026	Commercial Anchoring Impacts in British Columbia: Collaborative Research in Chatham Sound
March 26, 2026	CANCELLED

Tip: Scroll down for session descriptions and presenter bios.



February 05, 2026 - B.C. Coastal Marine Strategy: An Overview of Co-Development and Early Implementation

Sharing Information

Building Awareness of Future Engagements

Target Audience: Indigenous Groups, Local Communities, North Coast, South Coast, Industry, Non-Governmental Organizations, Government

Released in 2024, the B.C. Coastal Marine Strategy established the province's first shared vision for the coast. Co-developed with many coastal First Nations, the Strategy is designed to improve the health and stewardship of coastal marine environments, build climate change resiliency, nurture a sustainable blue economy, support coastal community well-being and advance reconciliation. With a 20-year vision, the Strategy will be implemented in phases. The Province and First Nations have worked together over the last year to set priorities for the first phase of implementation (2025-28), with policy research and 'on the water' projects now underway.

Presenter

Kristin Worsley

Director, Coastal Marine Policy

BC Ministry of Water, Land, and Resource Stewardship

Kristin has worked for the provincial government since 2005 in a variety of areas, including strategic environmental policy, environmental assessment and most recently marine planning and policy. Prior to that, she worked on marine conservation projects overseas, after completing her BSc in Biology/ Environmental Studies at McGill University and her MSc in Geography (marine protected area planning) at the University of Victoria.

February 12, 2026 - Overview of Transport Canada's Legislative and Regulatory Processes

Sharing Information

Building Awareness of Future Engagements

Target Audience: Indigenous Groups, Local Communities, North Coast, South Coast

Providing the foundation of the regulatory and legislative processes and where there are various opportunities to provide advice.



Presenters

Chantelle Ladner-Holmes

Senior Policy Advisor - Indigenous Regulatory Roundtable Secretariat
Transport Canada

Chantelle Ladner-Holmes is in service to the Indigenous Regulatory Roundtables under Transport Canada, which is an Indigenous-led process for earlier and more meaningful advice on marine safety and environmental protection regulations.

Trystan Underhill

A/Manager, Regulatory Affairs, Oceans Protection Plan
Transport Canada

Trystan Underhill works with the Oceans Protection Plan on marine safety and environmental protection regulations.

February 19, 2026 - Pre-Shoreline Cleanup Assessment Technique (SCAT) in BC: Results and Planned 2026 Fieldwork

Seeking Feedback

Building Awareness of Future Engagements

Target Audience: Indigenous Groups, Local Communities

The Emergencies Science and Technology Section (ESTS) of Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC) supports Canadian emergencies science through laboratory analysis, response countermeasures, and shoreline field-based research. Since 2014, ESTS has partnered with Indigenous Peoples to develop, gather, and complete Pre-Shoreline Cleanup Assessment Technique (Pre-SCAT) data to characterize Canadian shorelines.

Pre-SCAT surveys support environmental spill preparedness, response, and recovery by gathering information about different types of shorelines before spill incidents occur. Pre-SCAT surveys in recent years have included partnering with First Nations for discussions and field participation for site identification, cultural importance of shoreline segments, and knowledge sharing of shoreline sensitivities. The resulting reports improve decision-making capacity in coastal communities in the context of a response to an environmental emergency. The presenters will review results and plans for a Summer 2026 field campaign on Vancouver Island.

Presenters

Sonia Laforest

*Unit Head, Shoreline and Assessment Unit
Environment and Climate Change Canada*

Sonia Laforest has been a shoreline treatment expert with Environment and Climate Change Canada since 2001. While part of the National Environmental Emergencies Centre, she travelled across the country and the world responding to oil spills. For the last 10 years, she has been with the Emergencies Science and Technology Section and is now the head of a Shoreline Unit, sharing knowledge to protect Canada's shorelines for years to come.

February 26, 2026 - Shoreline Cleanup Assessment Technique (SCAT) and Its Role in Marine Oil Spill Response

Sharing Information

Building Awareness of Future Engagements

Target Audience: Indigenous Groups, Local Communities, North Coast, South Coast, Industry, Non-Governmental Organizations, Government

During marine oil spills, the Shoreline Cleanup Assessment Technique (SCAT) is a critical tool for visually assessing and documenting the distribution and extent of oil on shorelines. SCAT surveys are collaborative, bringing together representatives from Indigenous communities, the Government of Canada, provincial authorities, and local municipalities. This approach ensures that shoreline oiling conditions are accurately recorded and communicated, supporting an informed and collaborative decision-making process. Beyond assessment, SCAT provides recommendations on appropriate cleanup methods and tactics, helping responders set treatment targets or "how clean is clean."

This presentation will introduce the fundamentals of SCAT, outline its implementation during marine incidents, and highlight how its recommendations can guide shoreline response.

Presenter

Lee Britton

*Sr. Emergencies Scientist, National Environmental Emergencies Centre (NEEC)
Environment and Climate Change Canada*

Lee has nearly two decades of experience in terrestrial and aquatic oil spill response across North America. He holds a BSc and an MSc in Coastal Geomorphology and is currently pursuing a PhD in Environmental Engineering, with a focus on the study of oil penetration and retention in shoreline sediments and the formation of sunken oil. During emergencies, Lee serves in leadership and technical roles, applying science to guide response strategies.

March 05, 2026 - Western Canada Marine Response: Preparedness, Response and Collaboration on Canada's West Coast

Sharing Information

Target Audience: Indigenous Groups, Local Communities, North Coast, South Coast, Industry, Non-Governmental Organizations

Western Canada Marine Response (WCMRC) is the Transport Canada-certified marine spill response organization for Canada's West Coast. Their mandate, under the Canada Shipping Act, is to be prepared to respond to marine oil spills along all 27,000 km of British Columbia's coastline and to mitigate the impact when a spill occurs. This includes the protection of wildlife, economic and environmental sensitivities, and the safety of both responders and the public.

This session will offer an inside look at how WCMRC prepares for and responds to marine spills, while driving innovation and building partnerships that enhance safety and environmental protection. Through real-world case studies, WCMRC will demonstrate its operational capacity, share the strategies behind effective response, and highlight the collaborative approach taken with science, technology, and community partners.

Presenters

Michael Lowry

*Director, Public & External Relations
Western Canada Marine Response Corporation*

Michael Lowry is the Director of Public & External Relations at WCMRC. He has experience supporting spill and emergency response efforts, helping ensure clear and timely public information during incidents. Michael has a BA in Communications from the University of Calgary and a B.Sc. in Politics and International Relations from the London School of Economics.

Paula Lash

*Emergency Services Research and Planning Advisor
Cowichan Tribes*

Paula Lash brings two decades of experience in marine science to her work in emergency management. Her background in marine research has played a key role in shaping Cowichan Tribes' marine pollution response within the Emergency Services Department, where she integrates scientific insight with community driven stewardship. She has lived and worked in the Cowichan Valley—on the traditional, unceded territory of the Quw'utsun Mustimuhw—for the past six years, contributing her expertise to the protection and resilience of local waters and shorelines.

March 12, 2026 - The Voyage of a Vessel: Canada's Marine Safety System

Sharing Information

Target Audience: Indigenous Groups, Local Communities, North Coast, South Coast, Industry, Academia, Non-Governmental Organizations, Government

This session will provide a step-by-step overview of how Canada's marine safety system supports the safe and efficient transit of large commercial vessels on the West Coast. It will use the recent inbound and outbound voyage of a real vessel that called to the Port of Vancouver in December 2025 to show how these processes work in practice.

Participants will gain a practical understanding of how Transport Canada, the Canadian Coast Guard, the Vancouver Fraser Port Authority, the Pacific Pilotage Authority, and other partners work together to manage vessel traffic from the open ocean to terminal and back to sea. The session will also outline the coordinated safety, navigation, and environmental measures that guide vessels throughout their transit.

Presenters

Brian Young

*Chief Operating Officer
Pacific Pilotage Authority*

Brian Young is the Chief Operating Officer for the Pacific Pilotage Authority (PPA). An experienced Master Mariner, Brian began his career overseas sailing aboard liquid bulk carriers and later managed local shore-based operations at the Dubai branch of a major global shipping company. Prior to joining the PPA in 2008, Brian held positions as Chief Instructor-Nautical at the BC Institute of Technology's marine campus and as a Senior Investigator with the Transportation Safety Board of Canada.

Sean Baxter

*Director, Marine Operations & Harbour Master
Vancouver Fraser Port Authority*

Sean is the Director, Marine Operations & Harbour Master at the Vancouver Fraser Port Authority. With over 20 years of experience in the maritime and ports industry, he is a recognized leader in marine and port operations. Sean is responsible for safe and efficient navigation and environmental protection at Canada's largest port. He led the implementation of the Active Vessel Traffic Management program and was named a Business in Vancouver Forty Under 40 award recipient in 2025.

Scott Rear

*A/Regional Director Navigational Programs
Canadian Coast Guard*

Scott Rear has been with the CCG for 22 years. He started as a Marine Communications and Traffic Services Officer in Vancouver and has held the roles of Shift Supervisor, Regional Program Specialist and is the substantive Superintendent of MCTS Western Region. He is currently A/Regional Director Navigational Programs and oversees the MCST and Aids to Navigation Programs. Scott has been involved with Voyage of a Vessel since 2019.

Danielle Wensauer

*Associate Director, Marine Safety and Security, Pacific Region
Transport Canada*

Danielle Wensauer is the Associate Director of Marine Safety and Security at Transport Canada, Pacific Region. With over 20 years of experience at Transport Canada, Danielle has an extensive background in marine policy, environmental assessment, and Indigenous consultation. A dedicated public servant, Danielle's career highlights include leading the marine safety and environmental provisions for the Trans Mountain Expansion Project and supporting ongoing marine trade throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. Danielle holds a Bachelor of Science in Physical Geography from the University of British Columbia and a Graduate Diploma in Environmental Science from Capilano University.

March 19, 2026 - Commercial Anchoring Impacts in British Columbia: Collaborative Research in Chatham Sound

Sharing Information

Seeking Feedback

Target Audience: Indigenous Groups, Local Communities, North Coast, South Coast, Industry, Academia, Non-Governmental Organizations, Government

Anchoring of commercial vessels can have a range of social, cultural, ecological, and physical impacts in coastal marine systems. Using a combination of spatial data, field observations, and vessel activity records, Dr. Fiona Francis (Fisheries and Oceans Canada; DFO) will overview the physical and biological impacts commercial anchoring can have on benthic ecosystems in both the Salish Sea and on the North Coast of British Columbia. This talk highlights an ongoing collaboration between researchers from the Government of Canada and coastal First Nations, and demonstrates the need for baseline ecological data in areas of commercial anchoring, particularly in regions with rapid increases in commercial shipping activity.

Fiona Francis

Research Biologist

Fisheries and Oceans Canada

Dr. Fiona Francis is a research biologist in the Ecosystem Stressors Program at Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO). She completed her PhD at Simon Fraser University in tropical marine ecology and has since worked on a range of topics in the Pacific Northwest including glass sponge reef ecology in Átl'ka7tsem/Howe Sound with Oceanwise Conservation Association and Rockfish Conservation Area monitoring at DFO. Her current work focuses on studying the effects of commercial anchorages on benthic ecosystems in collaboration with other Federal and First Nations researchers.

March 26, 2026 - **CANCELLED**

We regret to inform you that, due to unforeseen circumstances, the Virtual Initiative Spotlight scheduled for March 26 has been cancelled. We apologize for any inconvenience this may cause.

As this is the final session in the Winter 2026 Virtual Initiatives Spotlights, we would like to sincerely thank you for your participation throughout the series. Your contributions were greatly valued and helped make these sessions meaningful.

If you have any questions, or require access to any of the recordings, please feel free to contact us at tc.oppbcreg-ppocbenreg.tc@tc.gc.ca. All session materials remain available online here: https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/14Eo1dyLJ-xnmF2jzKwAVuQR_Fh5BLiAx?usp=sharing