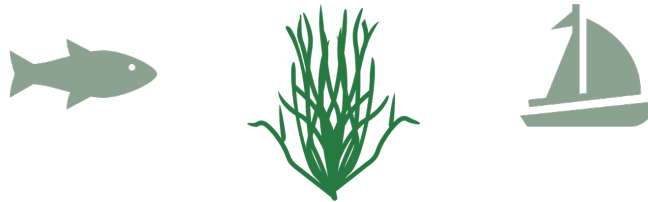


# Have you seen these marker buoys in Mannion/Deep Bay/Kwil'akm?

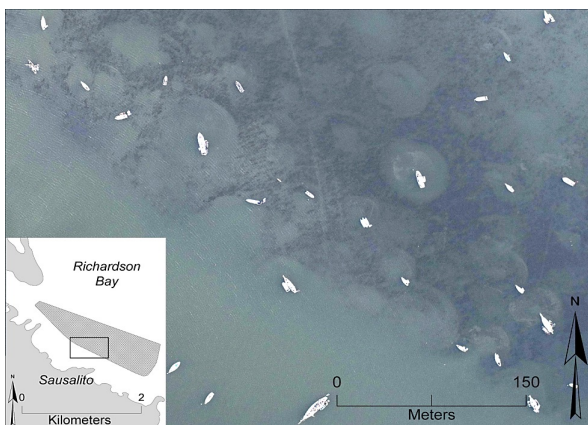


*Wondering what they do and why?*



## These buoys outline a **Voluntary No-Anchor Zone** to protect eelgrass health in the Salish Sea

- **Why is eelgrass important?** Eelgrass meadows provide home and shelter to hundreds of marine creatures in the Salish Sea, including Dungeness crab, juvenile wild Pacific salmon, and Pacific herring. These lush underwater meadows can also provide services to humans, including playing a role in fighting climate change by sequestering carbon in their roots, and reducing erosion by stabilizing sediments
- **What is the state of eelgrass worldwide and in the Salish Sea?** Unfortunately, eelgrass meadows are one of the fastest declining habitats worldwide: since the 1880s, eelgrass beds have declined by 30%. In the Salish Sea, eelgrass has decreased in area by 22-45% over the past 30 years (Beaty and Sanford, 2019)
- **How do humans impact eelgrass?** One human activity that threatens eelgrass is when docks, mooring buoys, and boat anchoring occurs within and fragments eelgrass meadows. This fragmentation can be visualized by aerial images that show halos around mooring buoys, where the anchors and chain scour the seafloor and rip out the surrounding plants (see photo below from Kelly et al. 2019). Climate change is another human-caused threat to eelgrass health
- **Why should Bowen care?** Mannion Bay's eelgrass meadows are some of the largest on Bowen Island, and provide critical habitat to juvenile salmon that migrate out from Terminal creek and forage fish that visit the bay. These meadows support the fish and wildlife that Bowen Islanders care deeply about

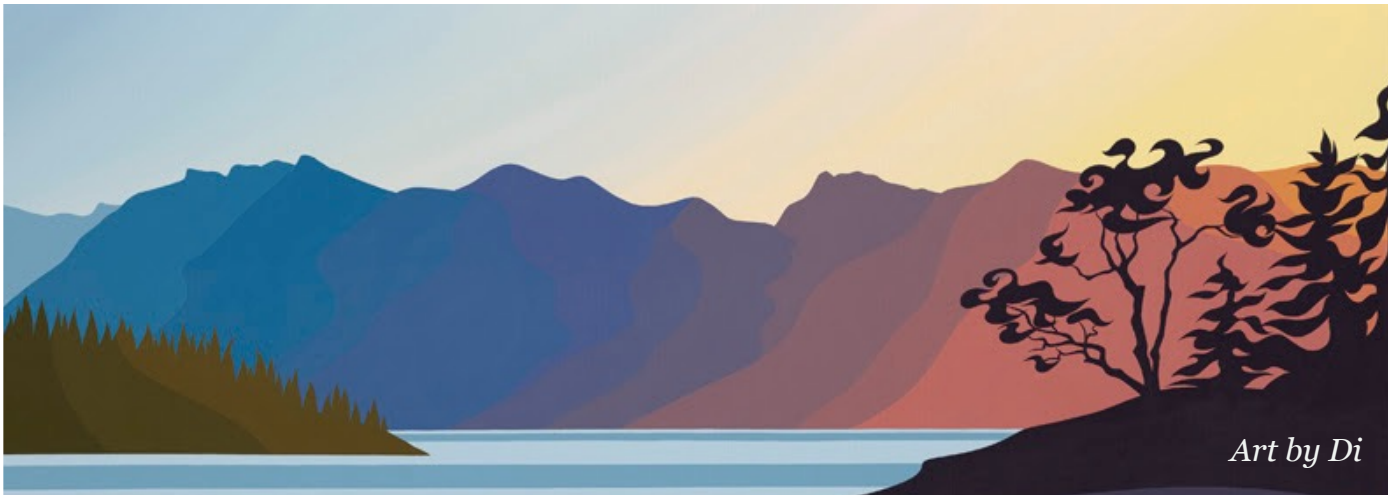


This is why the Bowen Island Municipality and SeaChange Marine Conservation Society partnered to create

## a voluntary no-anchor zone in Mannion / Deep Bay / Kwil'akm

The marker buoys that outline this zone ask boaters who visit the bay to proactively anchor outside of the eelgrass habitat

- This innovative and grassroots stewardship initiative is **the first of its kind in the Canadian side of the Salish Sea** and builds upon a successful model implemented in Washington State
- Importantly, the no-anchor zone is **voluntary**. This means that the successful protection of Mannion Bay's eelgrass relies upon the support and collaboration of Bowen Island community members and frequent visitors to the Bay! See the next page for actions you can take to protect eelgrass health in the Salish Sea



## Actions you can take to protect eelgrass in Mannion/Deep Bay/Kwil'akm!

### Anchor out for eelgrass!



If you are a boater, please help us spread the word about the importance of anchoring outside of eelgrass depth (7m/23ft chart datum in the Salish Sea) and complying with voluntary no-anchor zones

### Share your observations!



If you live in and around the area, you are the eyes and ears of the bay! Let us know how well these marker buoys are working (or not) by sharing when you see boats anchoring inside or outside of the marker buoys.

Contact [bim@bimbc.ca](mailto:bim@bimbc.ca)

### Spread the word!



Chat with community members, boating groups, and tourists about what this voluntary no-anchor zone does and why it is important to protect eelgrass



### Learn where eelgrass grows!

Check out mapping resources like the Howe Sound/Átl'ka7tsem Marine Reference Guide and chat with locals to learn about where eelgrass grows in your area and the bays where you visit!

