



Docking & Line Handling

Techniques & Considerations
for Couples, Short-Handed Crew, & New Boaters

Close-Quarters Maneuvers



Tracy Sarich

First Sail: 2000

First Course: 2005

First Sailboat: 2009

First Van Isle Circumnavigation: 2013

First Offshore Delivery: 2016

Advanced Sailing Instructor: 2020

Owned 3 Sailboats (37', 43', 54') 15 years

Charter Industry in British Columbia

Voyage Makers Coastal Adventures (2024)



What Concerns You Most?

WHAT IS SUCCESSFUL DOCKING?

No Boat Damage – Nobody Hurt
(Physical & Emotional Safety)

TO ACHIEVE SUCCESSFUL DOCKING

Situational Awareness Vessel Control & Teamwork

Trading Bigger Problems for Smaller Problems

FACTORS INSIDE THE VESSEL YOU CAN CONTROL

FACTORS INSIDE THE VESSEL YOU CAN CONTROL

BEFORE ENTERING THE MARINA COMMUNICATION & PLANNING

“How Do We Want To Do This?”

Set Up The Boat Outside The Marina

Take the Time to Study the Environment

Express Concerns – Crew & Helm

Confirm Everyone is Ready

NO ONE IS READY – UNTIL EVERYONE IS READY

CAUSEWAY TRANSIT & COMING ALONGSIDE COMMUNICATION & RESPONDING

Observe the Environment (Headsets/Binoculars)

Relevant – Audible Feedback

Understand the Challenges of Each Role

Remember the Plan for Dock Lines

No Shame in Trying Again (Exit Early)

REMEMBER - THIS IS SUPPOSED TO BE FUN!

FACTORS OUTSIDE THE VESSEL

Trading Bigger Problems for Smaller Problems

PREDICTABLE ELEMENTS

You've Done Your Homework

Testing Boat Movements In Safe Area

You Decide When You're Ready

Anxiety

YOU'VE GOT THIS!!

UNPREDICTABLE

Depths – Not as Charted

Localized Wind & Currents

Weather

Other Moving Vessels, SUP, Small-Craft

Something Unexpected in the Water/On Dock

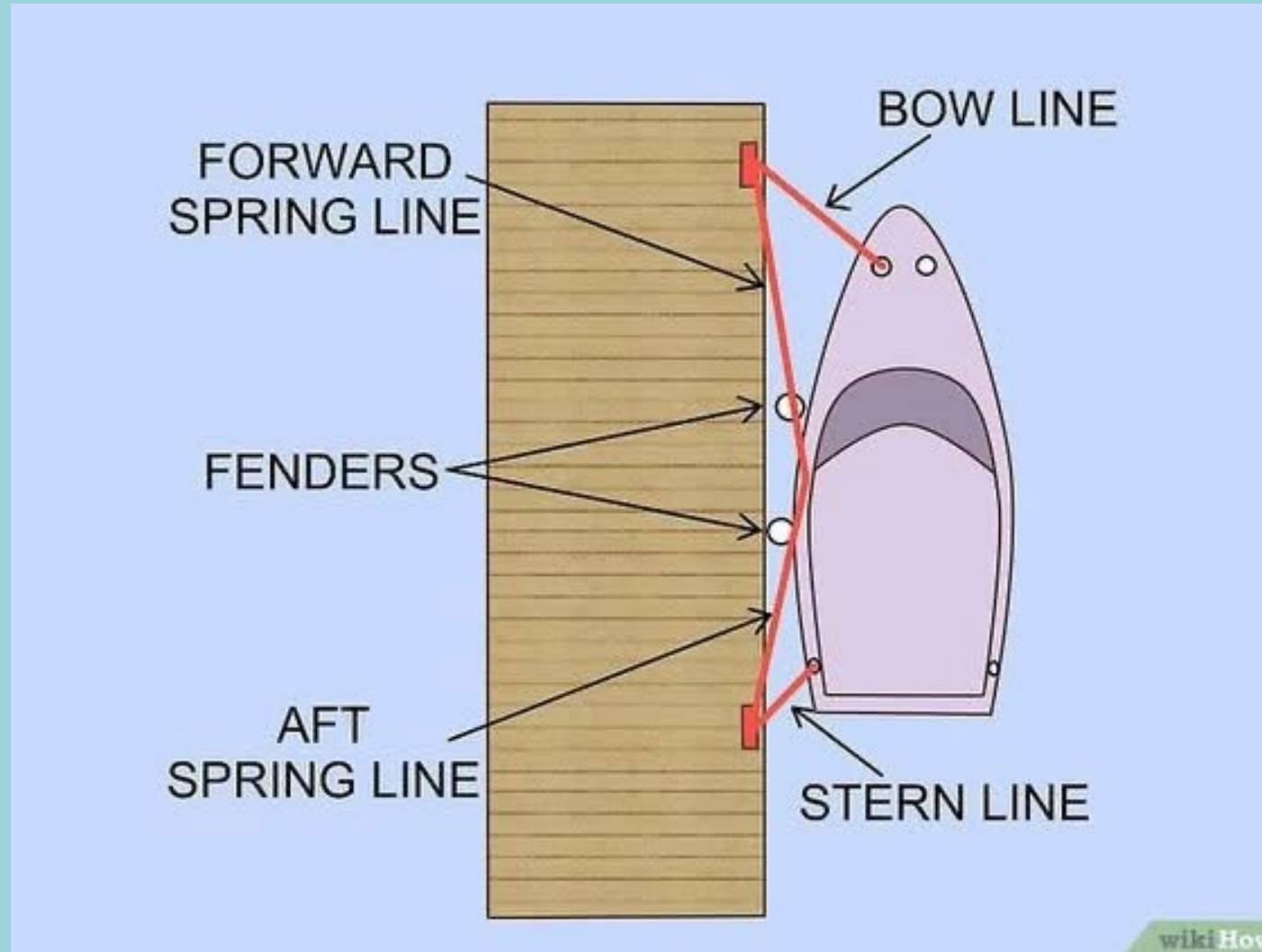
“Helpful” People on the Dock

REMEMBER – IT'S ONLY FIBERGLASS

Vessel Control

Quick Review of the Basics

Securing to a Dock





Handing Lines to Person on Dock





Searching for Coconuts2248

Vessel Control

Pivot – Reverse – Hold - Stop

Vessel Characteristics:

Keel & Keel Type

LOA (On Deck & Beyond)

Prop Walk

Horsepower - # Engines

Bow Thrusters

Cleat Position

Use of Docklines

The Environment

Wind

Current

Marina Configuration

Control in Reverse



Effect of Prop Walk

Transom Moves in Direction of Prop Rotation

Considerations/Tips:

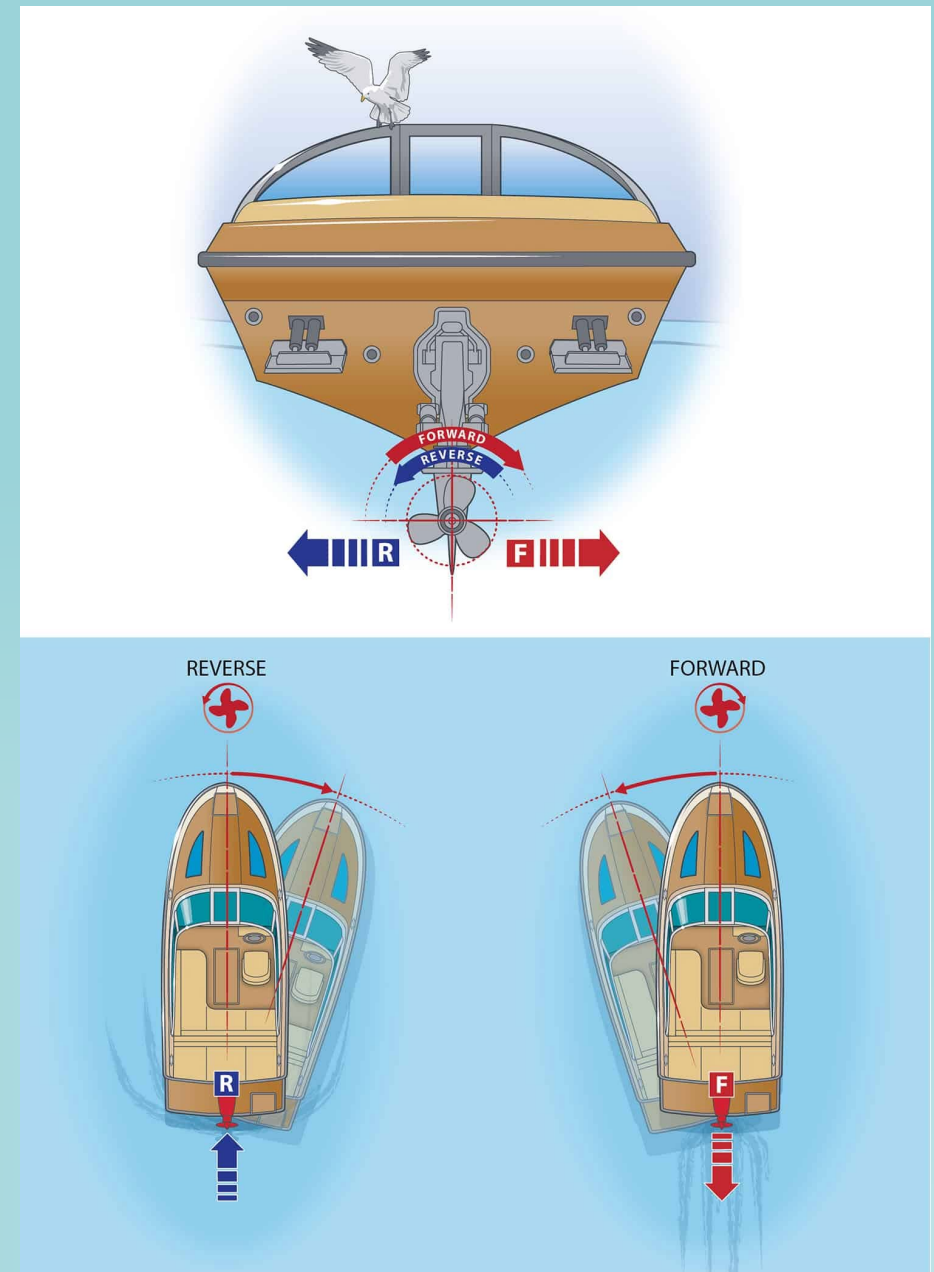
Straight Rudder

Test in Safe Space – How Long to Overcome

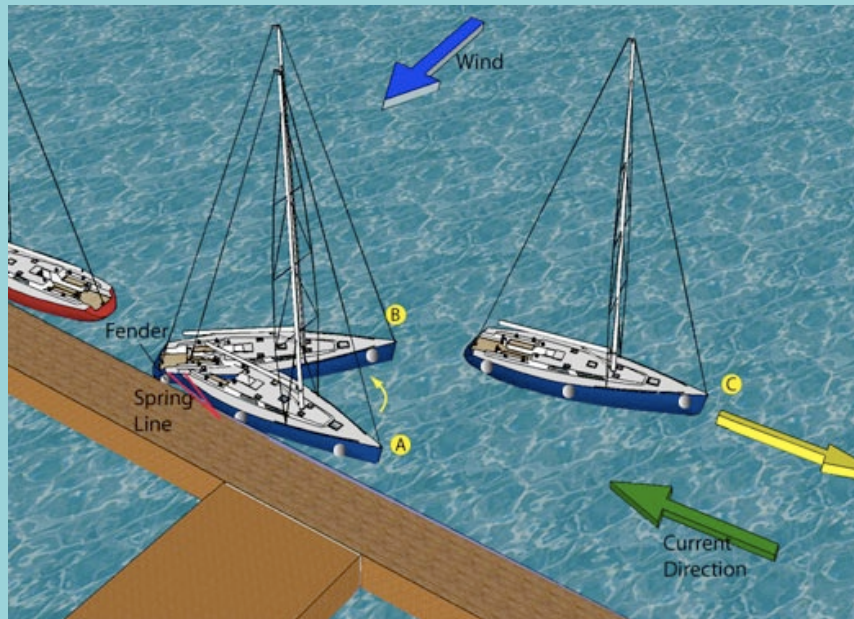
Reverse - Gain control in area with most room/easy exits

Pivot in direction of prop walk

Consider Effect when Stopping at Dock



Use of Spring Lines

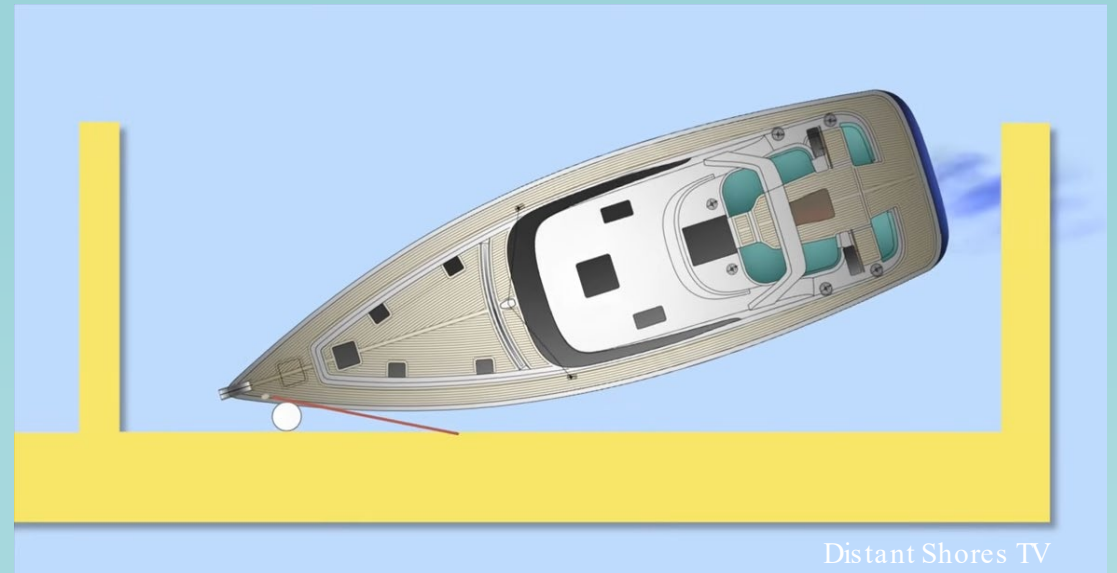


Bow Spring – Forward Throttle

Smooth/Swift Transition of Transmission

Helm Focused on Exits

UNDERSTAND YOUR ROLES!



Stern Spring – Reverse Throttle

Crew Listening for Instruction

Crew Communication Essential

SITUATIONAL AWARENESS & VESSEL CONTROL

Managing Momentum

Angle of Approach – Speed v. Steerage



APPROACHING THE DOCK – Getting the Job Done

THE CREW

DISTANCE ESTIMATES -- Keep it Simple

STEP OFF WHEN SAFE TO DO SO -- Good Guide for Distance Information

REMEMBER LINE PRIORITY – Different Colored Lines

THE HELM

SLOW IS PRO - Neutral Is Your Friend

NO BIG MOVES - Hand On The Wheel At Straight Rudder

NO SHAME IN TRYING AGAIN – Plan Your Exits

TAKE THE TIME YOU NEED

THIS ISN'T EASY

- Anxiety Is Normal
- Talk To Yourself
- Positive Affirmations



APPROACHING THE DOCK – When Do I Turn?

1/2 BOAT LENGTH

HELM: “I’m going to turn soon”
Aim at the Dock

CREW: Lines Ready to Step Off
Speak Audibly



1/3 BOAT LENGTH

HELM: “I’m going to stop soon”
Begin Turn
Focus on Side

CREW: Prepare to Step Off
Remember Order of Lines (Mid/Stern)
Plan for “Helpful” People on the Dock



ALONGSIDE

HELM: Watch for Crew Stepping Off – Stop!
Stay Aboard – Manage the Boat
Don’t be Afraid to Try Again

CREW: Step Off When Safe to Do So
Secure Quickly
Remember the Plan
Tell Helm What You Need

CELEBRATE – APPRECIATE - DEBRIEF



Wind & Current Effects

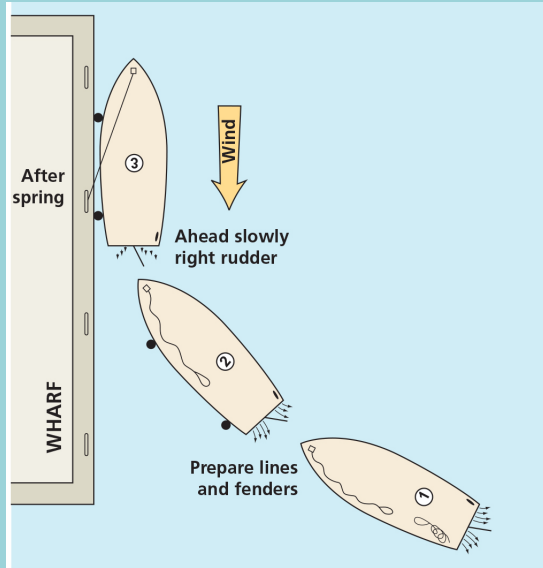


Figure A-6.11: Current/wind ahead

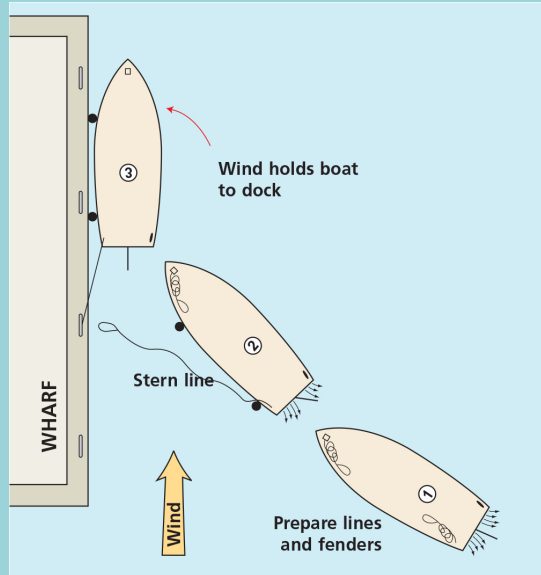


Figure A-6.10: Current/wind astern

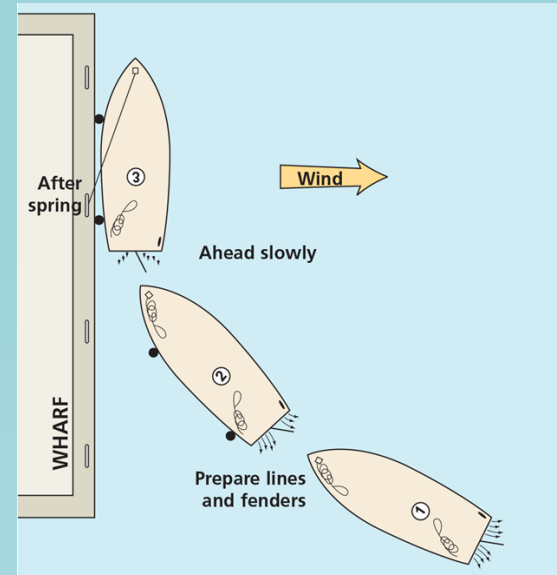


Figure A-6.12: Current/wind offshore

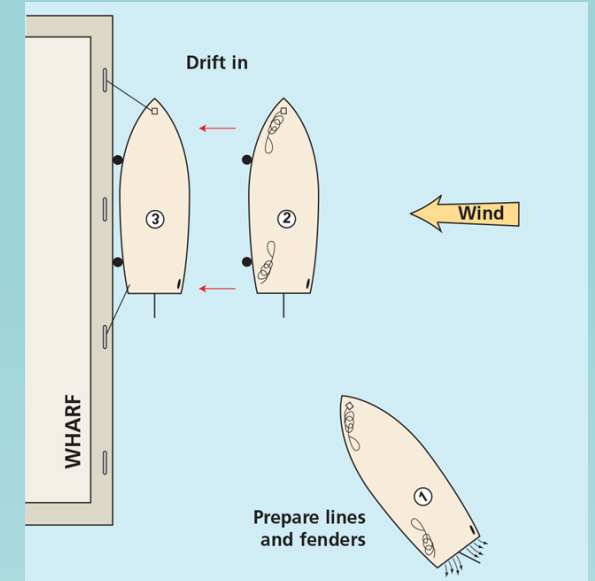
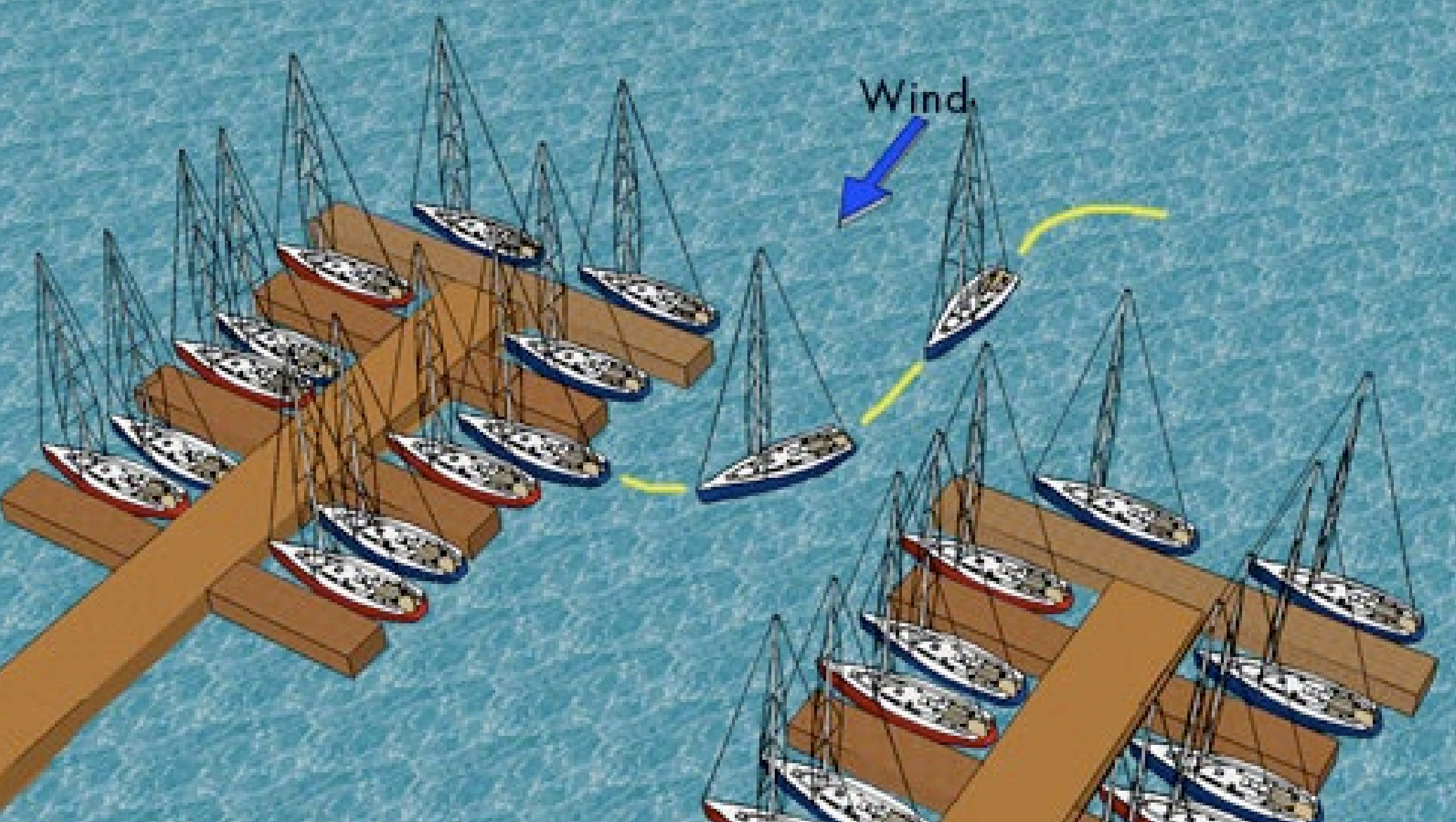


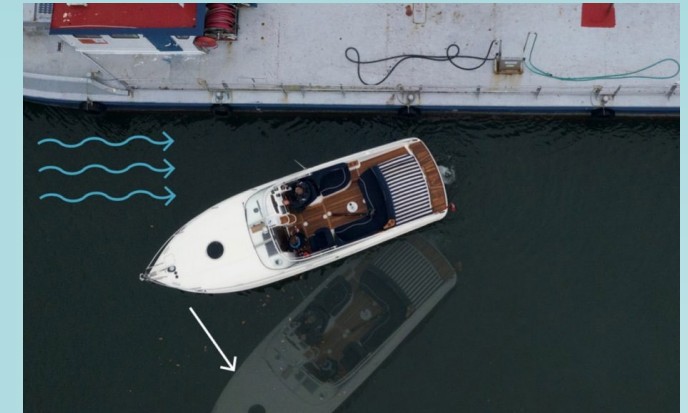
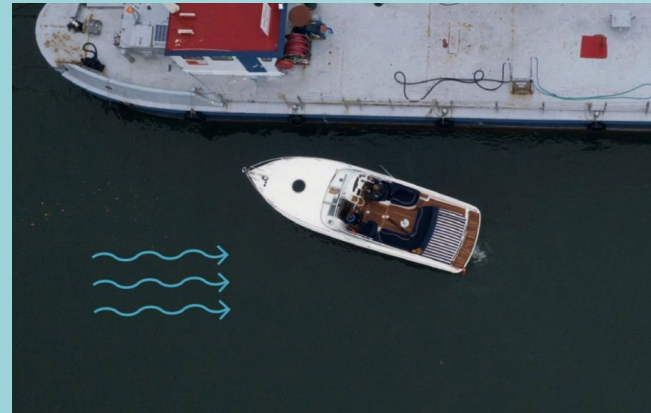
Figure A-6.9: Current/wind onshore

Slow is Pro – Enough to Maintain Steerage & Control

Test the Effects of Conditions In a Safe Space



Sideways Movement



Pro Tips

NO ONE IS READY UNTIL EVERYONE IS READY

CONTROL WHAT YOU CAN

REDUCE THE VARIABLES

SLOW IS PRO - Steerage & Maintaining Control

TEST CONDITIONS BEFORE YOU MAKE YOUR BIG MOVES

- Wind & Current Effect
- Lateral Movement
- Prop Walk – Know Before You Need It

REVERSE

- Know Your Center (Hand on Wheel)
- Alternate Gear/Neutral

ANXIETY IS NORMAL

- Practice Talking To Yourself Out Loud
- Vocalize Concerns

Situational Awareness & Teamwork

WHY?

Same Conditions
Same Outcome (Good/Bad)

Boat #1: All Smiles
Good Memories
Ready For The Next Challenge

Boat #2: Quiet Ride Home
Lost/Lowered Interest in Boating



Responsibilities v. Roles

Skipper

Ensures the safety & comfort of the vessel & crew.

Crew

Understands & follow skipper's requests (orders).

RESPONSIBILITIES v. ROLES

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ROLES

Helm & Line-Handler

Different Roles
Unique Skills
Not a Hierarchy

Roles – Task Based
Leader
Follower

Gives Direction
Receives Direction

UNDERSTANDING RISKS & DEMANDS

What is the Biggest Risk?

Risk to Vessels
Boat/Property Damage

Risk To Persons

Vessel Control
Managing Momentum

Physical & Emotional Safety
Understanding Demands of Each Role

UNDERSTAND THE CHALLENGES OF EACH ROLE

UNDERSTANDING RISKS & DEMANDS

What is the Biggest Risk?

DOCKING

Enter Harbour
Enter Causeway
Enter Slip

Come Alongside/Stepping Off
Secure Lines

ANCHORING/MOORING

Entering Anchorage/Mooring Field
Selecting Location/Mooring Ball

Operating Windlass
Dropping-Weighing Anchor
Picking Up Ball

S u c c e s s f u l D o c k i n g

T e a m w o r k

Understand & Perform Our Roles
Effective Communication

PRO TIPS

UNDERSTAND YOUR ABILITIES
AND THE ABILITIES OF YOUR CREW

Invest in Training (Refresher)
Make the Time to Take Your Time

PREPARATION & COMMUNICATION

Preparing for what you can control (Reduce the Variables)
No is Ready Until Everyone is Ready

RESPECTFUL OF ROLES

Understand Demands of Each Role & Risks of Each Task

EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

Relevant – Audible – Sensitive to the Demands of the Situation

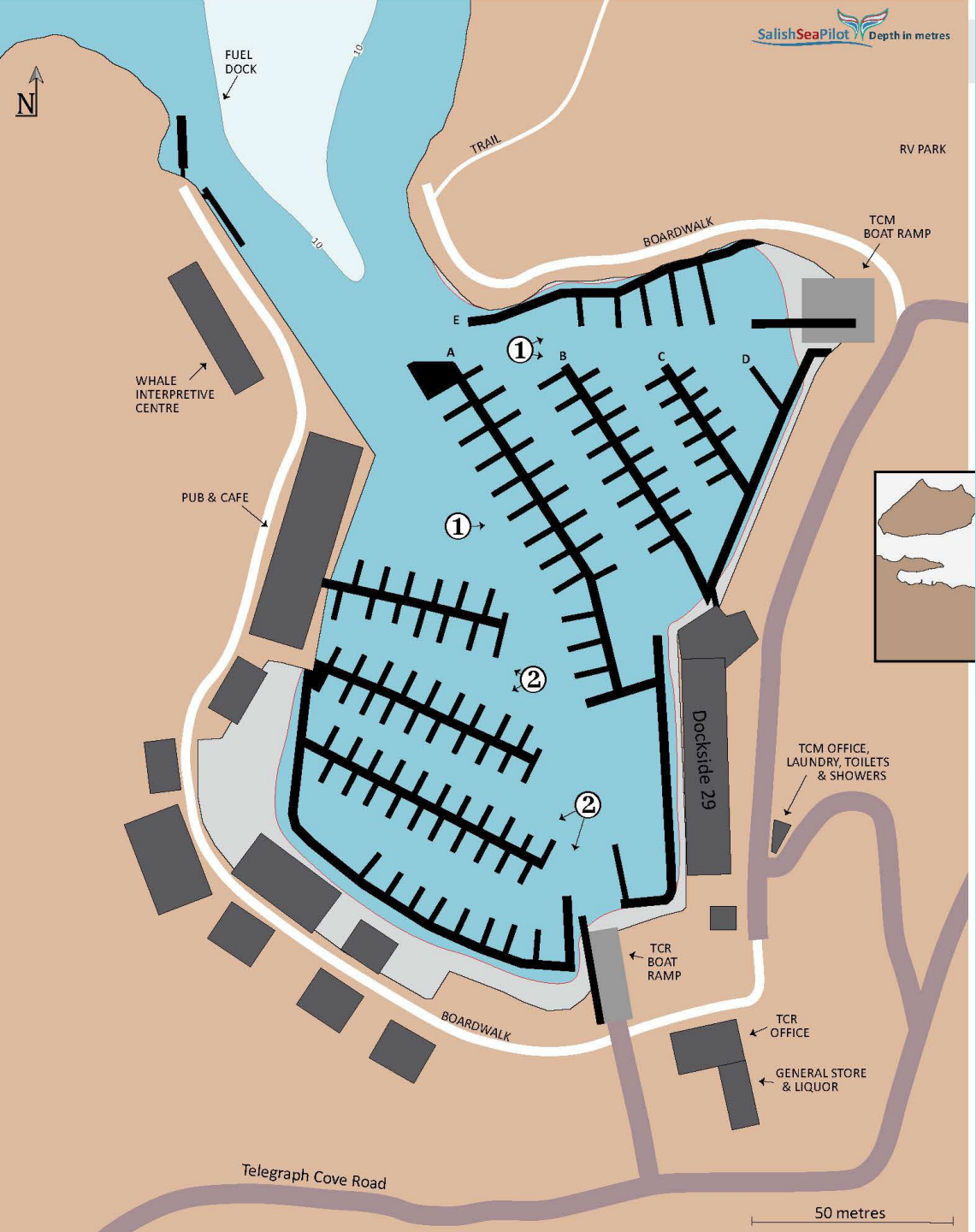
EMOTIONS

Everyone is Nervous Docking
Voice Your Concerns

CONTROL WHAT YOU CAN

Trading Bigger Problems for Smaller Problems

Telegraph Cove

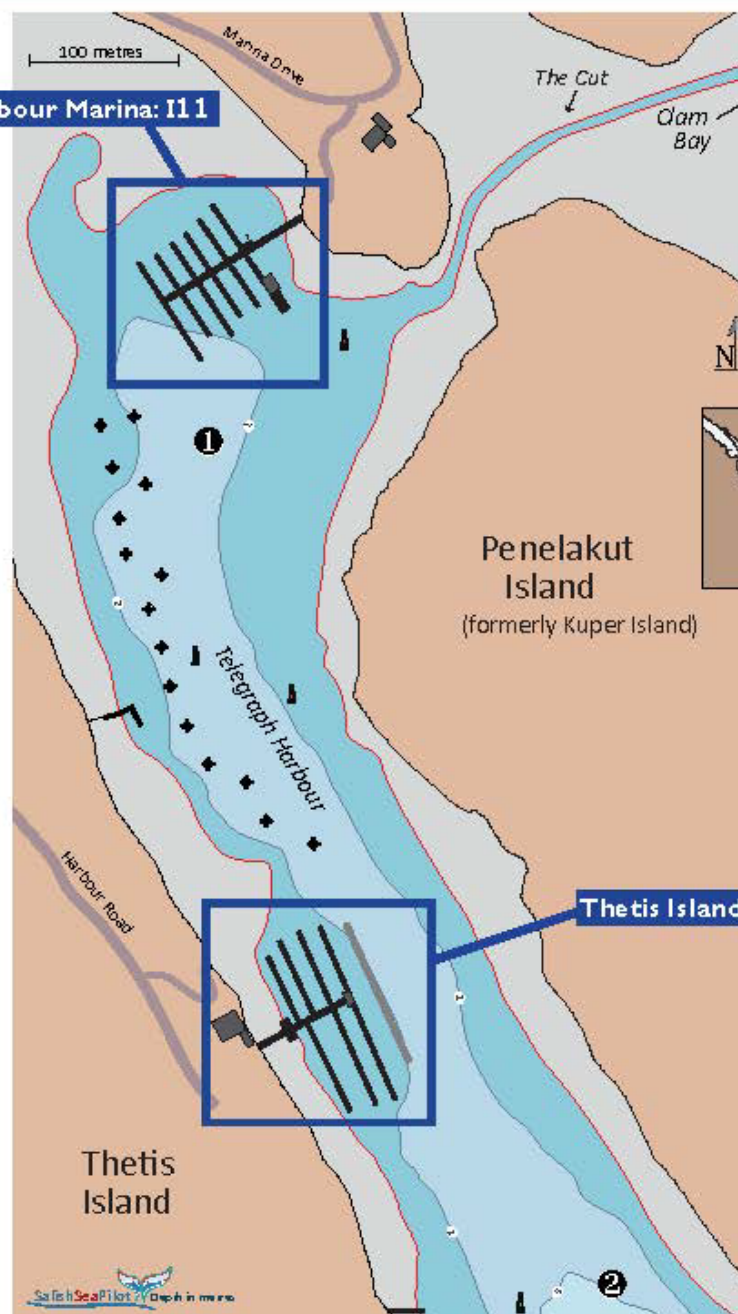


~ NOT FOR NAVIGATION
~ DEPTH CONTOURS APPROXIMATE





Telegraph Harbour Marina: I11



I9: Telegraph Harbour

Telegraph Harbour is a well-protected inlet with two friendly marinas and a safe, though congested, anchorage formed by two islands, Thetis Island to the west and Penelakut Island to the east.

The islands are separated by a narrow, shallow passage known as The Cut, which separates the harbour from **Clam Bay (I12)** to the east. The Cut can be negotiated by shallow-draft vessels at higher tide. It is wise to first investigate by dinghy.

It's a short walk to **Preedy Harbour (I8)**, from where you can catch a ferry to Chemainus, convenient for provisioning, on the mainland.

Most of Penelakut Island (formerly Kuper Island) is First Nations land.

To go ashore, it is best to obtain permission from the band office at 250-246-7155.

There are two Saturday markets in the summer, both selling food and island crafts. One is at Thetis Island Marina, 10am-2pm; the other is at Howling Wolf Farm, also 10am-2pm.

Note: Thetis Island uses well water so marina supplies are restricted.

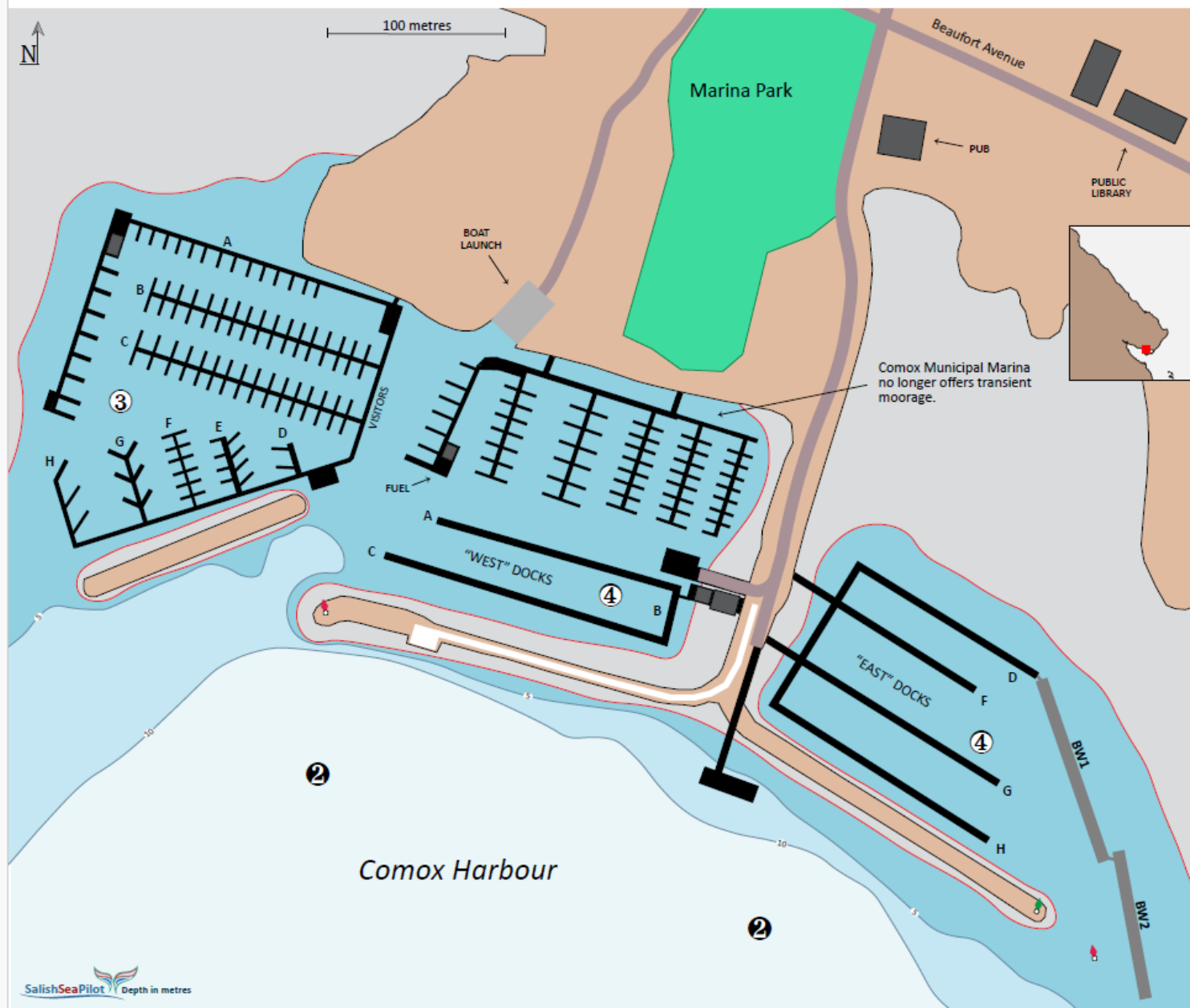
Thetis Island Marina: I10

1 Anchorage is tight. The many mooring buoys are private and, when these buoys are occupied, there is very little space for anchoring outside the channel markers. If tempted to "borrow" an unoccupied mooring buoy, note the standard of maintenance varies.

Check the marina listings for their policies regarding those who arrive by dinghy.

2 There is much more room to anchor south of Thetis Island Marina, with good holding over mud in 8-10 metres. Decent protection from westerly winds, though increased exposure to the south.

L3: Comox Marinas



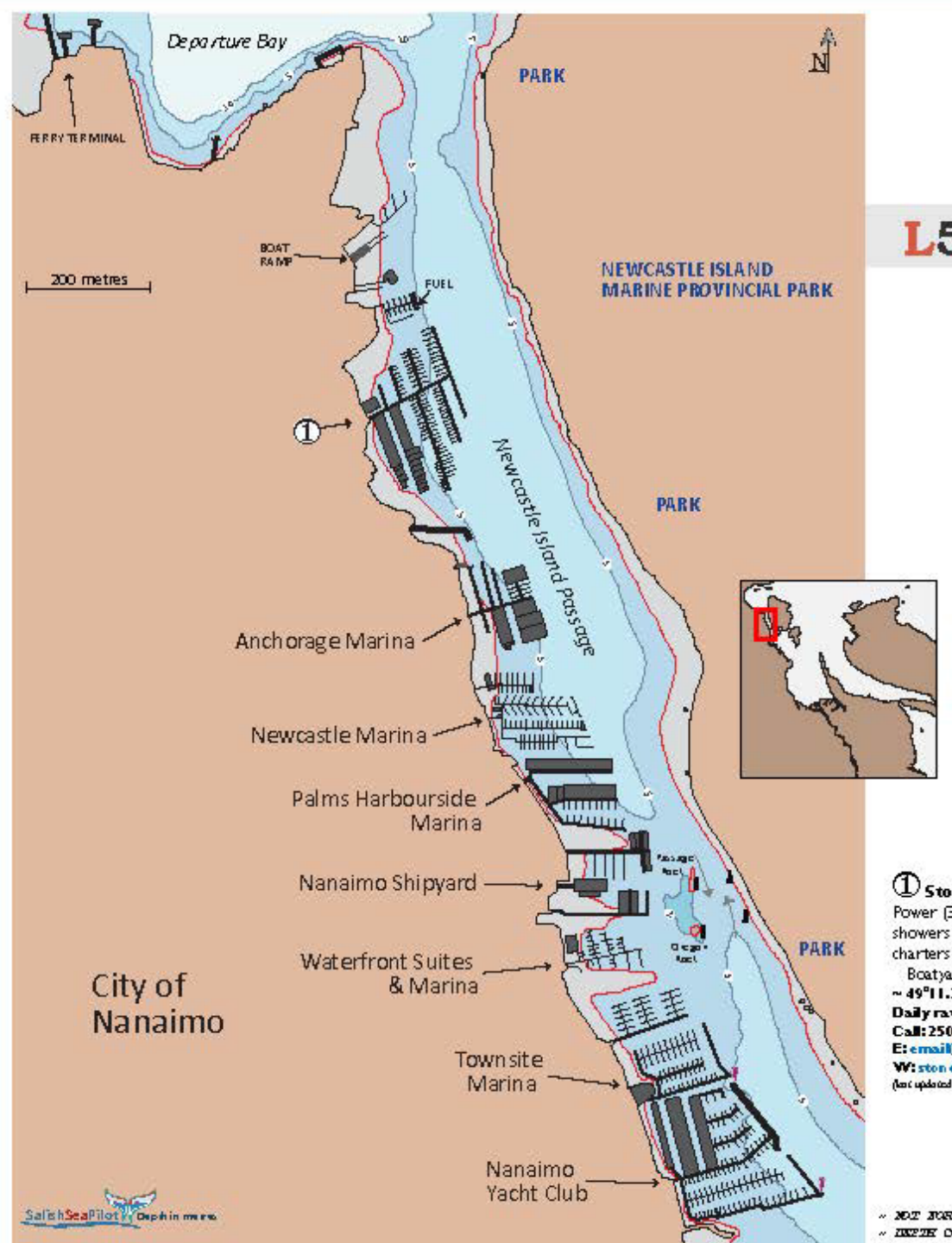
There are two marinas in Comox Harbour which accept transient boaters, the Comox Valley Marina and Fisherman's Wharf.

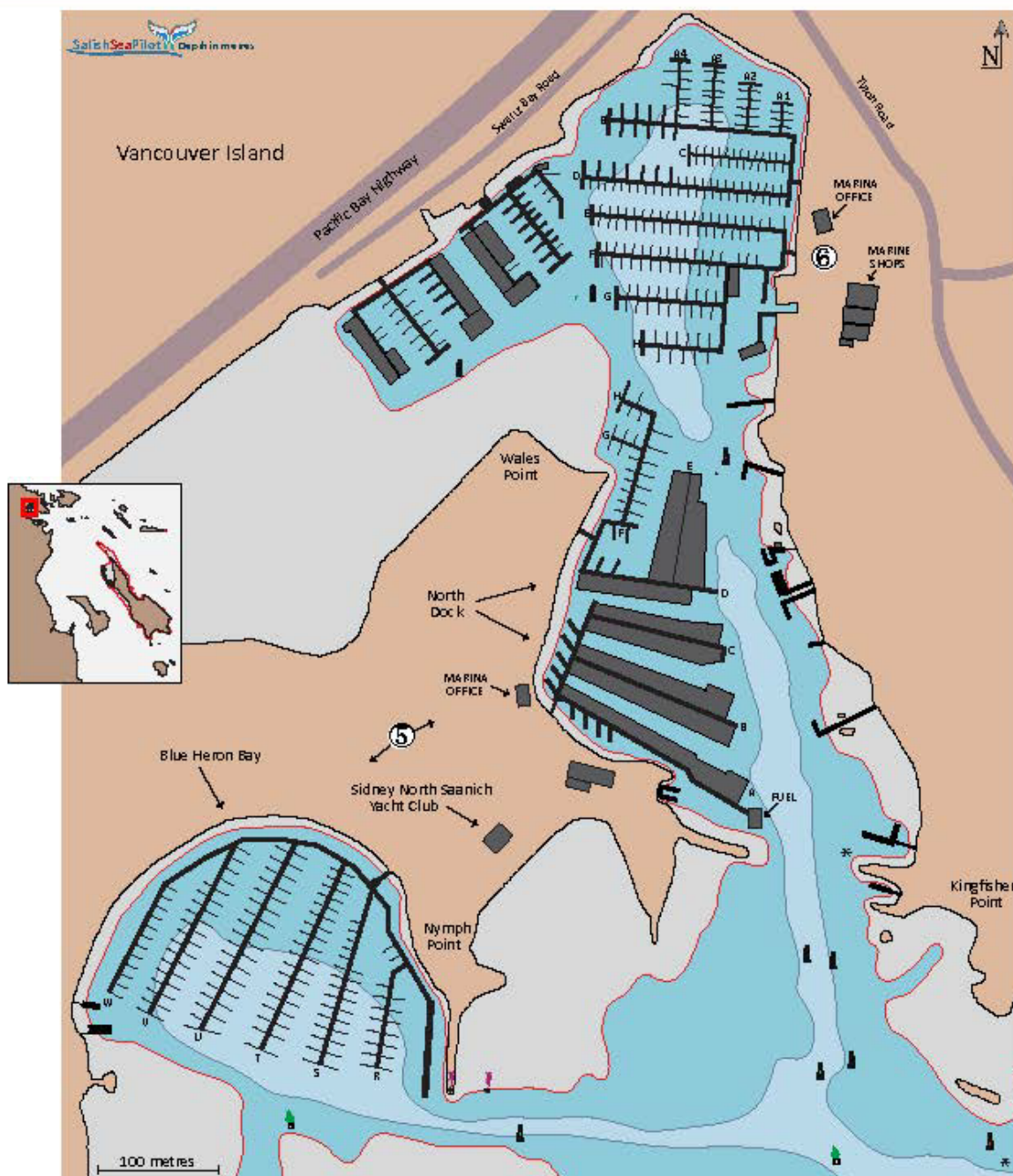
In Comox Harbour, Gas 'N' Go Marine sells fuel, snacks and fishing supplies from the end of a dock at the Comox Municipal Marina.

② See Comox Harbour (L2).

③ Comox Valley Marina: Transient moorage; reservations recommended during the summer. Power (15-30-50A) and water to docks. Toilets, with coin-op showers and laundry.
Daily rate: June-Aug \$2.10/ft, off-season \$1.68/ft
Daily power: metered
Call: 250-339-2930 VHF: 66A
E: manager@comoxvalleymarina.com
W: comoxvalleymarina.com
(last updated Jan. 2024)

④ Comox Fisherman's Wharf: Transient moorage if space available on the East Docks of this public facility operated by the Comox Valley Harbour Authority. About 1,800 feet of dock space is available for transients when the fishing fleet is out from mid-May to mid-Sept. Power (20-30-50A) and water to docks. Toilets, coin-op showers and laundry. WiFi. Pumpout. 1.5-tonne winch.
Daily rate: \$0.97/ft
Call: 250-339-6041 VHF: 66A
E: info@comoxharbour.com
W: comoxharbour.com
(last updated Oct. 2023)





C8: North Saanich & Westport marinas

Hidden in the deep recesses of Tsehum Harbour are two more marinas, each with its own attractions and an ambiance which boaters might find attractive.

There is the North Saanich Marina which is divided into two clusters of floats, the North Dock and Blue Heron Bay. The docks are all well-protected and rather sedate; they are not working floats. Provisioning is not so convenient, but Thrifty's supermarket in Sidney (1-800-667-8280) will deliver groceries to your dock.

As well, there is Westport Marina. It has limited moorage for transients, but its hardstand is a five-minute walk from the BC Ferry Terminal at Swartz Bay, making it a splendid option for anyone with convenient access to the BC Ferries system, but not such close proximity to another boatyard.

⑤ North Saanich Marina: Transient moorage for vessels up to 70'. Reservations encouraged. Power (15-30-50A) and water to docks. Free WiFi and parking. Fuel, Snacks, tackle and bait.

Home of the Sidney North Saanich Yacht Club, with reciprocal moorage for members of affiliated clubs.

~ 46°40.61'N 123°24.95'W

Daily rates: \$1.95/ft

Daily power: \$10/15A, \$15/30A, \$20/50A

Call: 250-656-5558 VHF 66A

E: nsm@co-bmg.com

W: northsaanichmarina.com

(last updated Jan 2022)

⑥ Westport Marina: No designated visitor slips, but often available. Call ahead. Well protected. Power (15-30-50A) and water to docks. Toilets and showers. WiFi to docks. Chandlery/fishing supplies. Full-service yard with 50-ton travel lift.

~ 46°40.657'N 123°24.693'W

Daily rates: vary by length, but about \$1.50/ft

Call: 250-656-2632

E: westport@thunderbirdmarine.com

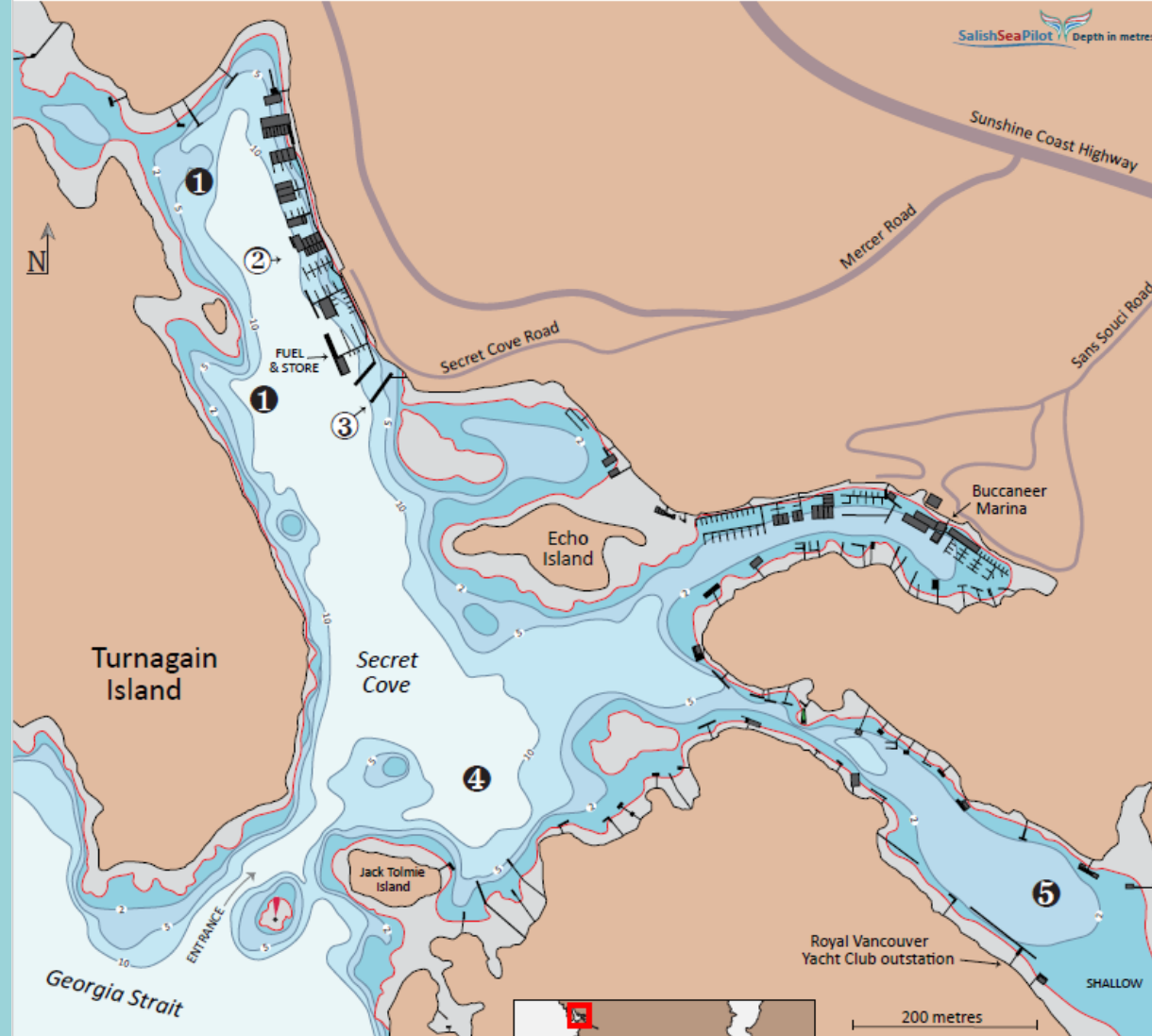
W: westportmarine.ca

(last updated Jan 2022)

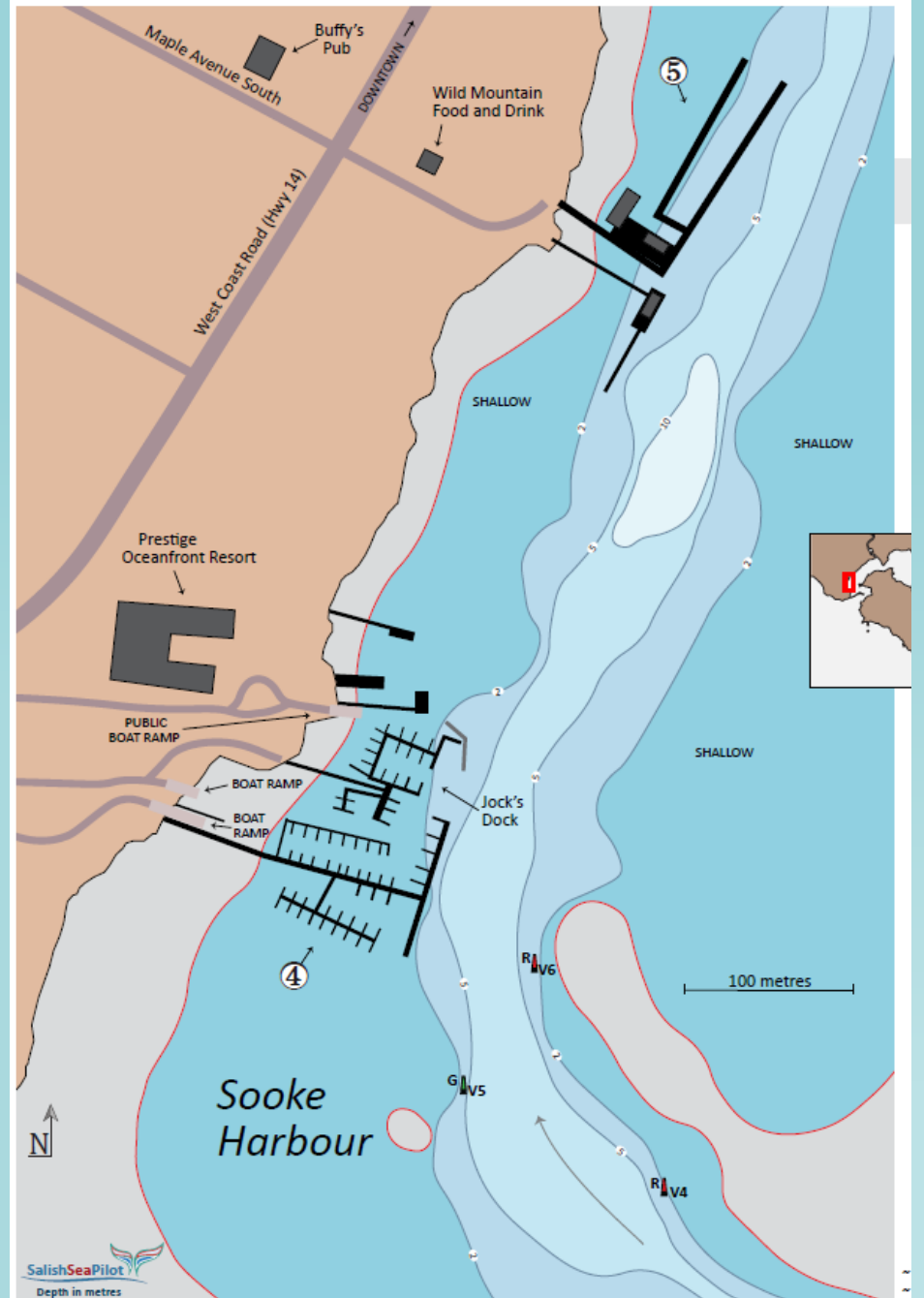
NOT FOR NAVIGATION

LINE CONTENTS APPROXIMATE

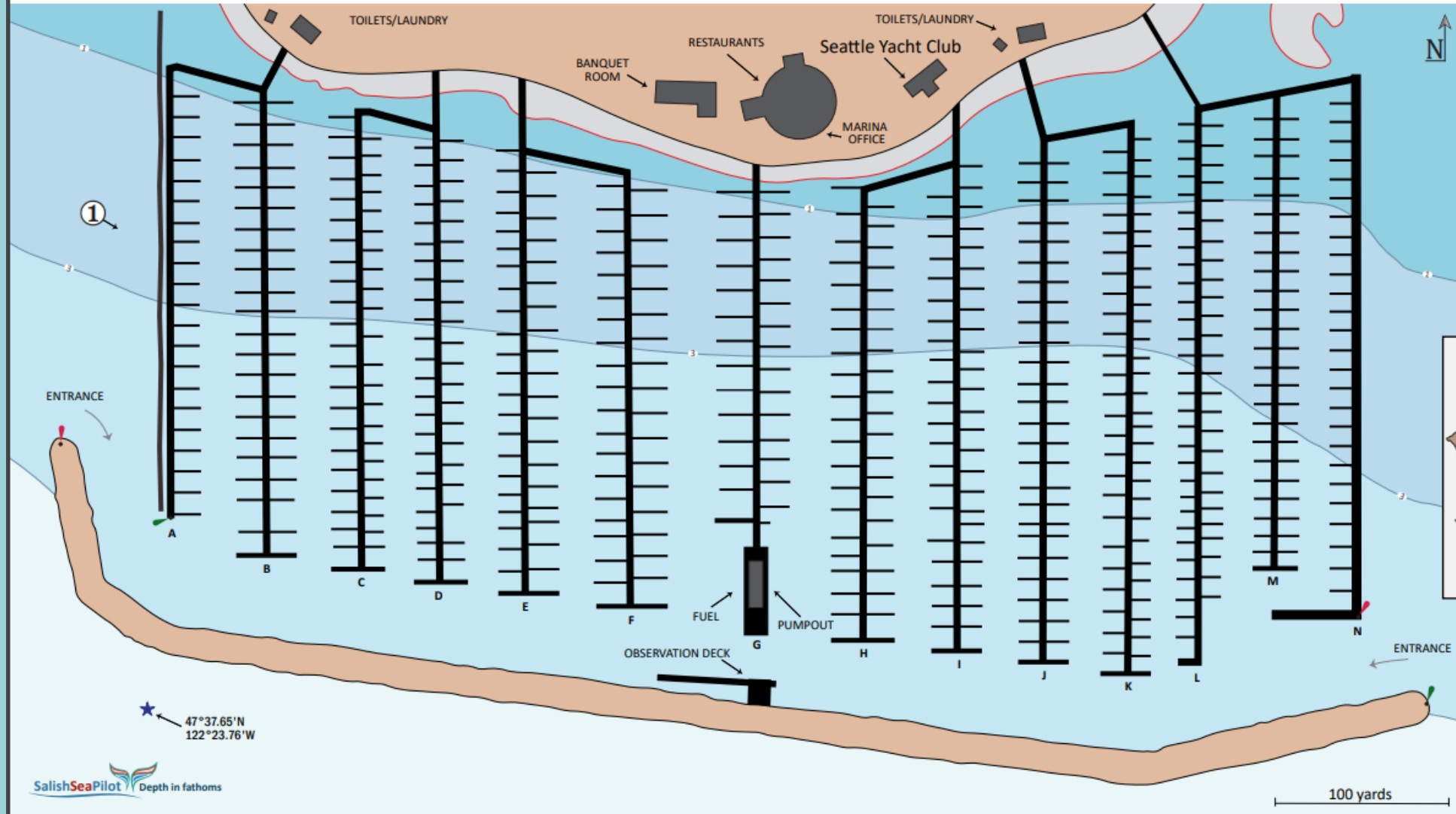
C9: Secret Cove



~ NOT FOR NAVIGATION
~ DEPTH CONTOURS APPROXIMATE



A14: Elliott Bay Marina



SalishSeaPilot Depth in fathoms

~ NOT FOR NAVIGATION
~ DEPTH CONTOURS APPROXIMATE

① Elliott Bay Marina: Transient moorage for vessels up to 300 feet in length.

TALES FROM THE SEA

...I'm glad that wasn't me this time...



It's Only Fiberglass



Have Fun Out There!



Educational Adventures
Training – Sail, Power & Catamaran
Concierge & Itinerary Services
Free Resources for Boaters

