

## **Email Language for Initial Contact**

Dear [Respondent Name]—

Hello, I am [Name of Team Member], a graduate student at the University of California, Santa Barbara's Bren School of Environmental Science & Management. The Bren School plays a leading role in researching environmental issues, identifying and solving environmental problems, and training research scientists and environmental-management professionals.

I am contacting you to invite your participation in a survey that we are conducting to better understand the value and importance of whales to local excursion and wildlife tour businesses. This survey is being conducted in a partnership between the Bren School of Environmental Science & Management (Bren School), University of California-Santa Barbara, and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA).

This information will ultimately be used to inform current and future discussions related to whale protection efforts in the Santa Barbara Channel. Specifically, we are inviting people who work as boat tour operators (Operators) in the Santa Barbara Channel to answer questions about their operation, as well as complete a mapping exercise to provide important spatial information on the areas in the Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary (CINMS), and other surroundings areas that they use.

We are contacting you because you were identified as an Operator that conducts whale watching, and other wildlife tours, in the CINMS. The survey is voluntary, but your participation would be greatly appreciated. We recognize that local operators who regularly use CINMS and surrounding areas have unique knowledge that is needed to understand the importance of whales to the local economy and the whale watching industry.

I will be contacting you by phone in late June to describe the project in more detail and to request your participation in the survey. I will only need a few minutes of your time. Please feel free to send me the best phone number for contacting you as well as the best day of the weekend and time of day to call. My email address is .... and phone number is ...

I look forward to talking with you about our research project. In the meantime, if you have any questions about the project, please do not hesitate to contact. [If you like, you may also contact the NOAA project lead, Dr. Theresa Goedeke by email at [theresa.goedeke@noaa.gov](mailto:theresa.goedeke@noaa.gov) or phone at 301-713-3028 x237].

Kind Regards, [Name of Team Member]

## **Telephone Contact Script**

### *Greeting and Introduction*

Good [Morning, Afternoon or Day]. I am [Name of Team Member], a graduate student at the University of California, Santa Barbara's Bren School of Environmental Science & Management. May I speak with [Name of Respondent]? [Repeat greeting and introduction for respondent.]

You may recall the email I sent you inviting you to participate in a survey that we are conducting to better understand the value and importance of whales to local excursion and wildlife tour businesses. We are inviting Operators to answer questions about whale watching, and other wildlife tours, they conduct while in the CINMS, and also to complete a mapping exercise that will provide important spatial information on the areas that they use within the CINMS. I wanted to follow up with you today to explain the project in more detail, answer any questions that you might have, and ask if you would be willing to participate in the research. Do you have a few minutes?

### *Project Detail*

Let me provide some additional background information on this research project. This survey is part of a larger project that aims to explore the feasibility of implementing a vessel speed reduction (VSR) program within the Santa Barbara Channel. To achieve this goal we will evaluate the social, ecological, and economic costs and benefits of reduced ship speeds for improved whale conservation and air quality in the Santa Barbara Channel.

Knowledge held by Operators like you is fundamental to our understanding of the areas within CINMS that are most important to your Operation and where whales are most abundant. Gaining access to this information will allow us to make more informed decisions regarding the development of a VSR program in the Santa Barbara Channel. We hope to collect spatial data on the areas where you take whale watching participants, as well as the areas in which you have observed whales in the past. We are contacting you because your operation offers whale watching and other wildlife tours in the Santa Barbara Channel.

The survey will be conducted in person and includes questions and a mapping exercise. The mapping exercise is very important because it will provide us with spatial information on the areas within CINMS, and surrounding areas, that you frequent most. During this exercise, you will be presented with a map and asked to indicate the areas visited by your Operation for whale watching and other wildlife tours. It will take about 30 minutes to complete the survey questions and mapping exercise, but you are welcome to take as much time as you need.

Once you agree to participate, we will set up a time and date to meet in-person to complete the survey.

### *Summary & Conclusion*

Now that I have explained the study, would you be interested in participating?

- No--Okay, no problem. Thank you for taking the time to talk with me today. If you change your mind and decide that you would like to participate, please just let me know. Before I let you go, are there other Operators that you can suggest that I should talk to for this research study?
- Yes---Great, what time works best for you to complete the survey, or would you prefer scheduling an appointment at a later time? Do you prefer us to contact you by phone or email? [Record best phone number or email address.] Before I let you go, are there other Operators that you can suggest that I should talk to for this research study? [If YES] Can I say that you referred me?

[Provide the Operator with your name and contact information].

Thank you again for talking with me today.