2027
RACE PACKET

WA360 is back, and WASHINGTON-er than ever.

This year we spun the start line dial and Bellingham came out on top. So point your bows to the City of Subdued Excitement, choose your favorite eclectic ice cream flavor, and get ready to see The Evergreen State from a new perspective.

Here in the 2027 Race Packet you will find every bit of logistical wisdom you'll need to get to the start line, and how to avoid the 37 ways you can disqualify yourself after you've begun. Still have unanswered questions after reading? Drop us a line. For Application/Registration questions, email our Registrar, Verity, at registrar@nwmaritime.org. For everything else, email the Race Boss at raceboss@nwmaritime.org.

See you out there.

WA360 HIGH COMMAND

WA360 is a project of Northwest Maritime

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LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

WA360 takes place on lands and waters that are loved, cared for, and reverently stewarded by the Indigenous people of the Salish Sea and have been since time immemorial.

Today, Indigenous people are our neighbors, colleagues, and partners in a shared love and respect for the sea and its teachings.

We are grateful to respectfully live and work in this place. This acknowledgment is one act in the ongoing process of working to deepen our relationship with the people of these lands and waters.

RESPONSIBILITY

Competitors in WA360 participate entirely at their own risk. The choice to launch, or to keep pushing when conditions turn sour, belongs exclusively to your team. By entering, you release event organizers and officials from any liability.

You will be operating a vessel in Navigable Waters of the United States. You are subject to COLREGS, environmental regulations, marine sanitation laws, right-of-way rules, and all state and federal statutes. We do not write rules for things that are already law - it is entirely your job to know the law, follow it, and keep our waters clean.

WA360 does not employ safety support vessels, and the GPS tracking system is provided primarily for spectator entertainment - it is not a safety device.

Sound good? Then read on.

RACE CALENDAR

All times are in Pacific Time and are subject to change due to: weather, whimsy, and bad omens.

Pre-Race		
November 16, 2026		**Application Period Opens**
March 15		**Slacker Tax Kicks In**
		Price goes up the longer you wait. Fun, right?
April 15		**Applications Close**
April 30		**Registration Deadline**
Race Time		
June 12	**1 PM**	**Racer Moorage Open**
		Overnight moorage in Bellingham will be an option when you register
June 12	**12-5 PM**	**Race Check In**
June 12	**5 PM**	**Skipper's Meeting**
		All team members are encouraged to attend!
June 13	**8:30 AM**	**BREAKFAST OF CHAMPIONS**
		Let's start this thing off with some waffles. All humans everywhere are invited.
June 13	**12 NOON**	**Race Start**
June 27	**12 NOON**	**Race End**
June 27	**3PM**	**Race AWARDS Celebration**

THE BASIC-EST OF RULES

No Using Your Engine. You may carry a working engine or motor aboard, but starting or operating it at any time during the race means disqualification. The sole exception is starting or operating it to provide emergency assistance to another vessel in distress, in which case we will think you are awesome - just call the Race Boss afterwards.

You may use only human effort or wind for propulsion. Propellers may be used only when powered by human effort.

You may charge batteries and devices using solar, wind, human power, or power from shore while stopped. You may not use combustion engines or fuel cells for charging.

We trust you to race with honor. For fun, though, we'll tag out your engine in some sneaky way that lets us know if you use it.

No Pre-Planned Support. No pre-arranged support during the race. You must rely on your wits. You can buy supplies along the way, but no pre-mailed drops, staged assistance, or chase boats. Even if they don't help, they're still an unfair safety net. The same applies to shore teams providing remote support like weather updates or repairs - don't do it. Your team must be independent and self-reliant. If the help is available to everyone (like weather radios, stores, or a stranger bearing a piping hot basket of stroopwafels), it's fair game. Any doubts? See Rule 8.

Rule 8. If we have to call our lawyers to determine whether you're disqualified, you are automatically disqualified. *Read: If you're considering doing something that is questionable to the spirit of this thing, don't do it. Finish the race with your honor intact.*

Time Limit. 14 Days. That's how much time you've got to complete this thing. Beat the clock and be there by Noon on June 27.

No Swapping Crew. No switching out or gaining crew. If you lose somebody due to injury, illness, or because you don't like them, the team will be revetted in *real time* for suitability to continue - you need to get approval from the Race Boss to keep racing.

Portaging. Totally permitted. (And has been done.) You can carry, drag, or roll your boat across land using equipment you brought from the start. Wheels, sleds, rollers, even a bicycle are fair game, but you can't ride anything.

SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS AND REQUIRED EQUIPMENT

Self-Reliance. WA360 is an unsupported race that challenges participants to depend on their own skills, preparation, and judgment. Racers are responsible for their safety and navigation, with no safety support vessels provided or allowed. This race demands a thorough understanding of a team's vessel, the equipment they carry, and the conditions they might face.

Required Equipment. We do not provide a detailed safety gear checklist. Understanding what federal, state, and local maritime laws require for your specific vessel is part of the test — if you need us to outline for you legal gear requirements, you might not be ready for this race. That said, the following additional race-specific items are mandatory for WA360:

VHF Radio - Essential for maritime communication and emergency contact. Racers must have a working VHF radio on board and be familiar with its operation. It doesn't work if it's not on, or if there isn't enough battery power available to operate it.

GPS Tracker - A GPS tracking device will be issued to each team and must be active and securely attached to a team's vessel for the duration of the event.

The tracker is primarily for entertainment, allowing friends, family, fans, and race officials to follow your progress. We absolutely don't guarantee its accuracy, functionality, or uninterrupted service.

The tracker is not an emergency communication device. Don't assume anyone is monitoring your position or that a stopped tracker will trigger a rescue. If you need help, it's your responsibility to call for it.

Remember: You are prepared for the hazards of this race, but your friends and family might not be. Make sure they understand the limitations of the tracker, and don't let a dot on a map become their entire plan for knowing you're okay.

Equipment Inspection. Teams are required to undergo a vessel safety equipment inspection. Teams will be contacted to schedule this.

Further Education. For those looking to enhance their skills, we encourage you to explore the maritime education programs at Northwest Maritime. These programs provide training in essential areas like navigation, communication, and Puget Sound tides and currents - offering a great way to prepare for the challenges of WA360.

EMERGENCIES, WITHDRAWALS, AND COMMUNICATIONS

Emergencies. If you need emergency assistance, contact the Coast Guard on VHF Channel 16 or call 911. WA360 does not provide safety or rescue vessels, and the Race Boss is not your emergency response service. Once the immediate situation is handled, let the Race Boss know what happened.

Withdrawing from the Race. If your team decides to call it quits, notify the Race Boss directly as soon as possible. You'll be congratulated for racing in the first place, and more than likely for making a really good decision to stop.

Losing a Crew Member. Teams can lose a crew member along the way without necessarily being disqualified. But **you must contact the Race Boss and receive approval before continuing to race.**

Here's why: Your team was accepted through vetting based on the combined experience and capabilities of its crew. If someone leaves, we'll evaluate whether the remaining crew would have been accepted in the first place. If the answer is yes, you can continue. If not, you're disqualified.

No swapping in replacements.

Race Communications. We'll provide direct Race Boss contact information before the race start. Use it to report withdrawals, incidents, and anything else that race officials need to know. Don't rely on social media posts to communicate with us.

RACE START, WAYPOINTS, FINISH

Race Start: Bellingham. The race begins (hopefully with a ton of joyful noise) at 12 NOON on June 13, 2027. The starting line will be defined at the Skipper's Meeting on June 12.

Waypoint 1: Goat Island. Pass within two miles of this little Isle, having taken one of two routes: through Deception Pass or the Swinomish Channel. We're dying to see which way you go.

Waypoint 2: Olympia Shoal. Next up is The Olympia Shoal in Budd Inlet. Go around it without losing a keel. Pro tip, don't assume you know where the rock is just by looking.

Waypoint 3: The Spiritual Home of WA360 - Port Townsend Having traversed the length of the Puget Sound and all of its tricky bits, round a mark placed just offshore of the Northwest Maritime campus. Specifics at Skipper's Meeting.

Waypoint 4: Point Roberts. Round the mark placed just offshore of Lighthouse Park. And we do mean **just** offshore. Specifics at Skipper's Meeting.

Race Finish: Squalicum Harbor entrance, Bellingham. We'll be there with bells on.

CLASSES, WINNING, WHAT WINNERS WIN WHEN THEY WIN

The Wind Division. This is the name of the class some might call “Sailing.” If at any point you propel yourself with sails, then this is your class. Kayak sails **are sails,** even if they’re lousy and don’t actually help you get anywhere.

The Muscle Group. This clever little double entendre is the name of the class of racers who are only using their muscles to move, breeze be damned.

Winning means being the first in your class to cross the finish line. You know, like a race.

The winning teams of WA360 will be forever immortalized upon the **WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP BELTS**, which shall be passed from winning team to winning team until the end of days.

In addition, **Official Sidebets** are in the works. Think of these as superlatives, or you might even go so far as to consider them awards for classes that in our stubbornness we have decided not to create. Keep an eye on the website and on our social media channels to learn about these.

PARTIES, LOGISTICS, AND OTHER FUN CONSIDERATIONS

We at Northwest Maritime are fond of shindigs, and so we will be throwing a few of them to celebrate WA360.

SATURDAY AT TRACKSIDE. We're working with the good folks at Kulshan Brewery to put together a gathering on the afternoon/evening of June 12.

THE WA360 BREAKFAST OF CHAMPIONS. Let's start this off with a bang. And some pancakes. The WA360 Breakfast of Champions will take place the morning of WA360 Race Start at the Fisherman's Pavillion at Zuanich Point Park. This is open to all - racers, friends, family, all the townsfolk, and however many seagulls find out about it. Think of a breakfast item, and there's a good chance it will be there. Extra points if you show up in your jammies.

The WA360 Awards Ceremony. This soiree will take place the afternoon of June 27 - mere hours after the finish line slams closed. Expect fizzy drinks, hot food, and a chance to heap praise upon all racers. This party will take place somewhere in Bellingham. We'll let you know.

BITS, PIECES, AND THINGS TO KNOW

Trailer Storage. The Port of Bellingham, in their awesomeness, will be providing an offsite lot for racers of WA360 to park their trailers and towing vehicles during the race. The specific site has yet to be confirmed, though it will likely require an Uber or a friend with a car to get back to the marina.

Race Check-In and Skipper's Meeting. Teams **must** show up in Bellingham on **June 12** (at the latest - you're encouraged to hang out longer) to check in with the Registrar, receive the GPS tracker, and attend the mandatory skipper's meeting. (Your whole crew is encouraged to attend!) Check-in will be from 12-5 PM, specific location to follow.

HELPING TO MAKE THIS RACE AWESOME

Tell your story. It's likely that you are considering (or have already applied to) this race because you were inspired by the story of a previous racer of WA360, SEVENTY48, or Race to Alaska. Now it's your turn to light a fire for the next generation of racers. We want to hear your stories, be there with your triumphs, and watch as you make it through the lows. Here, in 2027, the best way to tell your story is through social media—so have a plan for getting your story out. Perhaps you're a video guru - make a documentary! Maybe writing is your strong suit - start a blog. However you do it, get your story out, and make sure you let us know you're doing it so we can put it through the megaphone. Wherever you have the opportunity to use #wa360 on social media, go for it!

Involve Your Community. Are you part of a club? A community group? An after-school youth program? Find ways to connect the dots between this race and all the other good things you're doing in the world. Turn your race effort into a fundraiser, a beneficial program, or anything else you can dream of that uses this platform to connect people.

Youth Bonus. You might already know this, but for WA360, team members under 18 years old don't get charged additional crew fees, and teams entirely composed of youth even get a 20% discount off the base fee. *Use this event to engage the young people in your life with adventure, challenge, and community!*

TO SUMMARIZE

This race rules, and it rules because you're a part of it. So show up with spirit, show up with grit, and wherever your finish line may be - get there with your honor intact.

All the best with pedal drive designs, weekend training runs, and dehydrating all that food. See you in June.