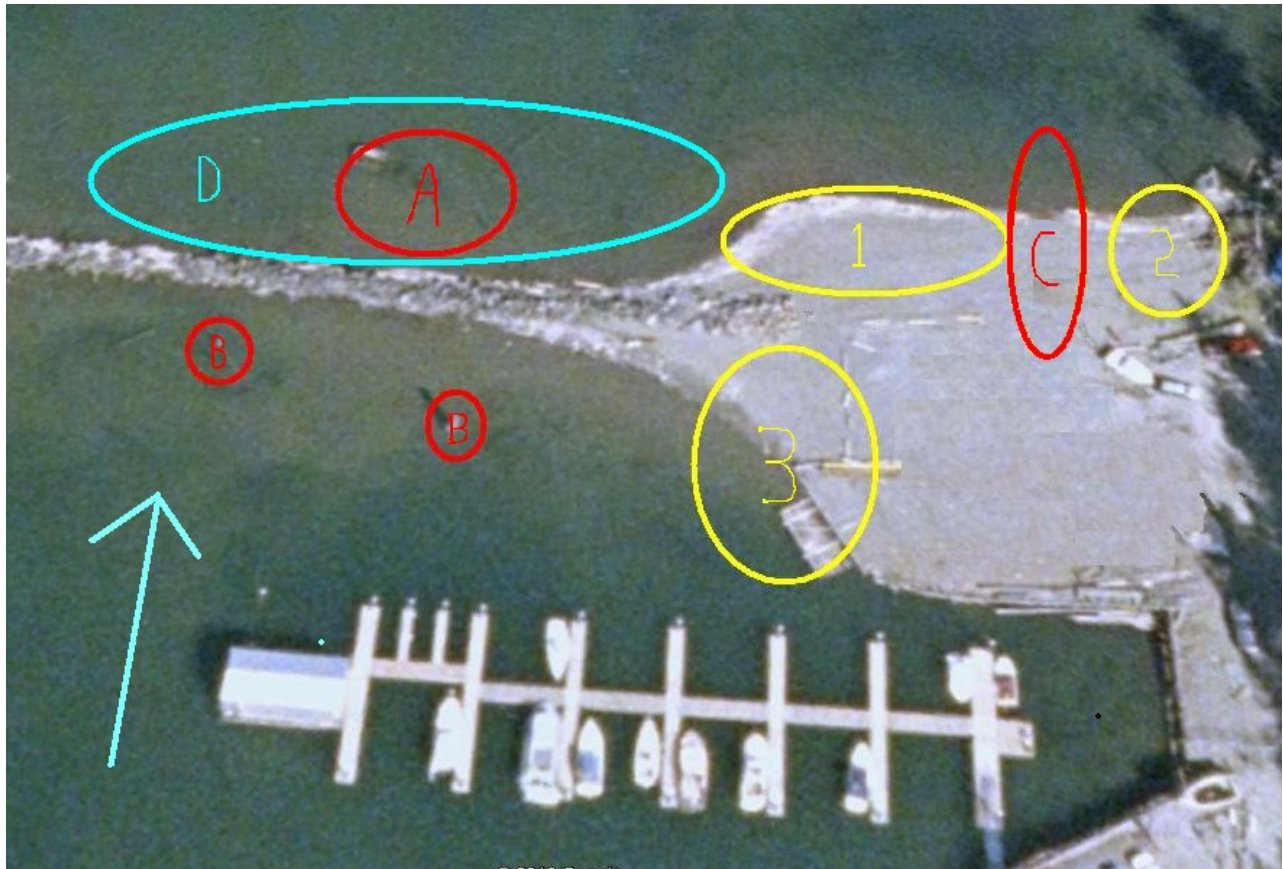


Harrison Windsports - Kiteboarding and Windsurfing

Breakwater Beach Information



SITE INFO:

Location: We Kite and Windsurf off of Breakwater Beach located on the East side of Harrison Lake. To get here come to the town of Harrison Hot Springs, turn right at the stop sign on to Lillooette Avenue. Follow this through the town of Harrison Hot Springs and follow it left as it turns into Rockwell drive just past the Marinas. As you pass the last Marina you will see a large Breakwater on the left, with parking. Park here and set up based on the map above.

Wind: The prevailing winds on Harrison Lake blow from the South on most sunny summer days, the blue arrow on the above map. The wind speed usually averages 15-25mph. The best winds occur during May through August when the weather is sunny and clear. The hotter it is in the BC interior, compared to the BC coast, the windier it tends to be. One of the easiest ways to check the wind is to look at the Harrison Windsport website which has a live wind meter, however the meter does read a significantly lower than the actual wind speed on the lake (ie. 7-10mph on the meter often means a good 15-20mph on the lake). You can also watch the forecast for Vancouver and Merritt/Lytton, if it looks to be more than 5 degrees Celsius warmer in Merritt/Lytton than Vancouver there is a good chance of wind on Harrison Lake that day. It is often calm on the lake in the morning, with the wind beginning to blow in the early afternoon and lasting to early evening.

Gear: Most windsurfers use sails from 6m to 8.5m, the most common size sails being 6.5m and 7.5m. Kiteboarders usually use kites ranging in size from 8m to 17m when kiting out of Breakwater beach, with the most common size being 12m.

Launching Areas: (Numbers identified on Map above)

1 - Kiteboarding setup, launch and landing area:

It is strongly recommended that you inflate your kites on the East side of this area, right next to the boat launch, and then run your lines west, towards the breakwater, this way when you launch your kite it you will be as far as possible from the power lines along the road, and your kite will not be in the rotor of the Breakwater.

Please give right-of-way to kites coming in and landing as this is a difficult upwind beach to return to. The breakwater can cause some gusts and rotors which make it difficult to land a kite, so please be cautious of Kites landing. Again it is recommended that you stand by the breakwater and lower your kite towards the boat launch when landing.

2 - Windsurfing setup/beginner area:

This area has some open beach and is good for setting up windsurfing gear. It also gives windsurfers the opportunity to launch, and return to the beach, as far from the breakwater as possible. This allows windsurfers to get downwind from the breakwater on the way out, hopefully avoiding the significant wind shadow behind the breakwater. It also gives them the best option of returning to the downwind side of the breakwater as you can head up wind as you pass the breakwater wind shadow on your return. This is the best area for beginner windsurfers as the wind will not push you into the breakwater as you leave the beach. HOWEVER, Harrison lake is NOT an easy place to learn wind sports, and NOT recommended for beginners, as it is an off shore wind and you will be pushed towards the middle of the lake as you go downwind. Thus you MUST have SUPPORT if you are learning here. Talk to any of the local windsport society members if you are new to the site and at all unsure of your ability to return to the beach.

3 - Advanced Windsurf set up and launch area:

This area is good for launching windsurfers as you can avoid the large wind shadow caused by the breakwater. However you **MUST** be able to confidently windsurf upwind immediately. If you launch from this location and encounter any problems you will be blown downwind into the breakwater. There are also several pilings sticking you of the water in this area (labelled **B** on the map). These are obstacles to watch for as you sail in and out of this area. Boaters have also mentioned concerns that they cannot see windsurfers coming out from behind the breakwater, particularly if they are on plane and going very quickly. Remember this is a slow speed area until you are past the breakwater and boats returning to the marina cannot see you. Even if you have right-of-way in a collision with a boat... you will lose!

Close to the breakwater the beach in this area drops off gradually as you enter the water, however as you move towards the marina there is a sudden drop off under water that you need to watch for. Where this drop off lies varies considerably with the level of the lake at the time, if you are unsure ask a local wind sport member for information about where the water level is compared to the drop off.

OBSTACLES: (Identified by Letters on the map above)

A - Partially Sunken Boat:

There is a large wooden boat sunk just north of the breakwater (located at **A** on the map). Depending on the water level it can be **JUST** below the surface, or have beams just sticking out. It generally won't be a problem for windsurfers as they cannot sail in this area do to the wind shadow from the breakwater, however Kites need to be cautious as they are

approaching the beach as the boat, and it's beams, can be very difficult to see.

B - Old dock pilings:

These old pilings are very visible as they stick high out of the water, but they are an obstacle for windsurfers as they are very close to the best route in and out of this area. Be cautious of them as you can get blown towards them if you are attempting to sail in or out upwind of the pilings. They are not nice to gear!

C - Boat Launch:

Boats regularly launch and land using this boat launch. This can cause frustration as space is limited in both the beach and parking areas. Remember boaters have as much right to this beach as kites and windsurfers, so try and be courteous and friendly as they use this area. This can help the relationship between boaters and windsport members. REMEMBER it might be a BOATER that you need to rely on for help if you get into trouble. Be very cautious of boats leaving and returning to the beach as they are often unaware of the edict regarding beach use by windsurfers and kites. They also might not fully realize the limitations and dangers of being under kites and lines, or being around windsurfers. Also be aware that the boat launch is often of poor repair causing vehicles difficulty when they are entering and exiting the launch with their boats. Thus give boats, trucks, and trailers space so no further problems are created as they try and launch and land their boats. If you have concerns with a boaters behaviour please deal with it in a courteous manner as

many of them are simply unaware of the issues we are dealing with in the wind sport community.

D - THE WIND SHADOW!

The newish breakwater has caused many in the windsurfing and kiting community frustration. It has led to a very large wind shadow on the downwind side of the greatly expanded breakwater. Although this has changed the way windsports are enjoyed at the Harrison lake's breakwater beach, it has not ended the wind sport activities at this location. Here are some tips to help you deal with the large breakwater, and it's wind shadow, and still have a GREAT day on the water.

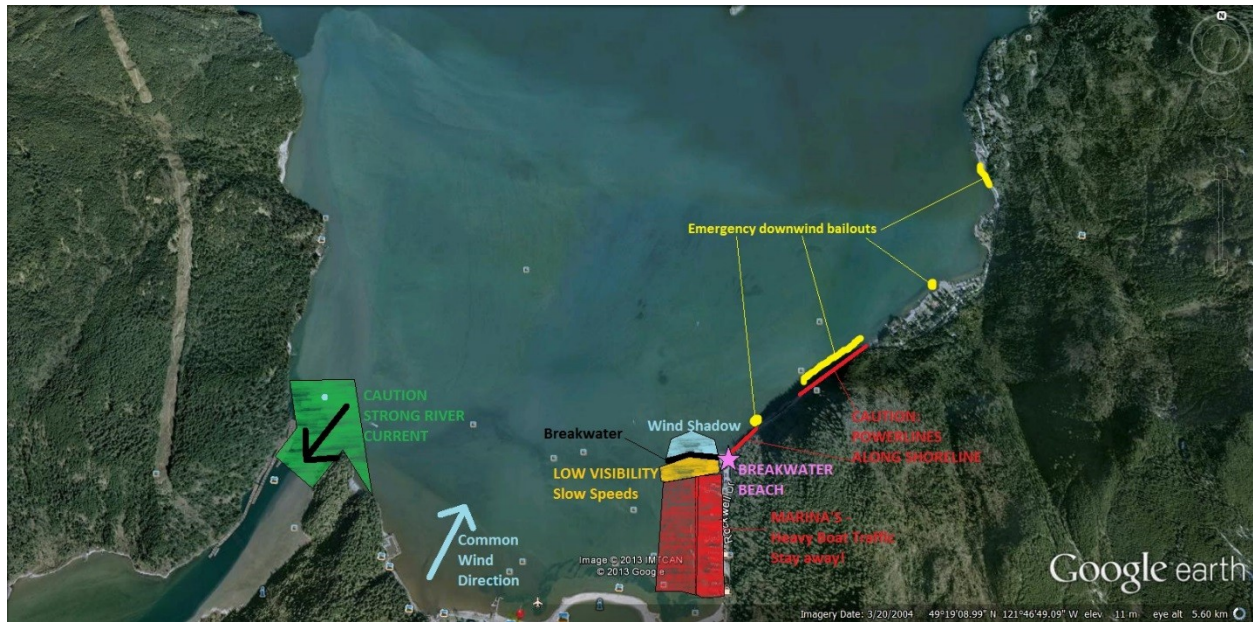
1. Advanced windsurfers often find it beneficial to launch and return on the upwind, South, side of the breakwater. This allows you to avoid the wind shadow entirely. Just make sure you have rigged big enough gear to slog in and out as the wind can be a lighter here and then pick up once you are past the break water.
2. Windsurfer wanting to come back to the beach downwind of the break water often find it beneficial to stay quite far downwind to avoid the wind shadow. Then when they are closer to the parking lot area they cut up wind hard as the wind often picks up as you get closer to the road. It is still very difficult to make it back to the beach this way, but you can often get close and might have to walk you gear in the water beside the road.
3. Kilters have not been affected as significantly by the new breakwater as they can often keep their kites high enough

to avoid the wind shadow. However, the wind behind the break water is often rotory, gusty and difficult to predict. It is recommended that you get out from behind the breakwater quickly in order to get the cleaner wind of Harrison lake. Remember if you dive your kite to low it can hit the wind shadow and fall out of the air making it very difficult to relaunch. You can even be blown back into the breakwater from rotors coming off the top, thus be cautious as you come and go through this area.

4. Kites should also give right-of-way to those coming back into the beach. This means staying downwind on your way out. The best way to get back is to come in as close to the breakwater as you can on the downwind side. It is important to keep your speed up as you kite along close to the breakwater and head for the beach. Remember to keep your kite high and your speed up as you approach the beach, but watch out for the sunken boat (A).

5. Some people enjoy kiting behind the breakwater as it provides flat water, and can be a good area to have fun and practice doing some tricks, but please be respectful of those struggling to get back in as it can be very frustrating for newer kiterboarders to not be able to make it back to the beach because someone decided they wanted to show off and is blocking their return.

LARGER MAP SHOWING SITE HAZARDS AND BAILOUT OPTIONS:



ABOUT US:

Harrison Windsport Society is made up of people who kiteboard and windsurf on Harrison lake. We attempt to provide services such as keeping the beach clean and organized, having a porta-potty available for those who need it, having a website with a wind line, and maintaining a face book page. Everyone who is involved with maintaining these services are volunteers, and any money collected through membership dues simply goes to maintaining these services. Joining the Harrison Windsport society is inexpensive, and it helps us maintain these services and keep wind sports alive on Harrison Lake, a place we believe is a spectacular place to sail and kite. If you are interested in becoming a member please talk to any member on the beach or check out the webpage - "harrisonwindports.com" which has info on becoming a member or donating. You can also like us on facebook at "Harrison Windsports Society". THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!