



535 4th St, Bremerton, WA 98337 · salish.systems

TRACKING NO.	SLS-101
PROGRAM	HERON
CATEGORY	Surface Vessels (USV)
FISCAL YEAR	FY2023
CONTRACT AWARD	14 MAR 2023

CAPABILITY BRIEF

SLACKWATER

SLS-PROPRIETARY

Long-Endurance ISR Surface Vehicle

Slackwater is Salish Littoral Systems' long-endurance intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance surface drone — the anchor of the surface line and the reference platform from which follow-on USVs are benchmarked. Engineered for persistent, low-signature presence in contested littorals, HERON holds station for weeks while conducting multi-INT collection and feeding tracks into the fleet C2 picture.

KEY CAPABILITIES

- Hybrid solar-assisted diesel-electric drivetrain; 60+ day nominal endurance.
- Retractable multi-INT ISR mast — EO/IR, surface-search radar, and SIGINT-ready payload bays.
- Level 4 mission autonomy (CEDAR / SLS-301): COLREGS-compliant avoidance and re-planning in GNSS-denied conditions.
- Sea-state 5 transit; sustained collection through sea-state 4.
- Low-probability-of-intercept SATCOM with line-of-sight mesh backhaul to ALDER (SLS-305) fleet C2.
- Operates under EMCON; cues higher-speed effectors such as Riptide (SLS-104).

NOTIONAL SPECIFICATIONS

LENGTH OVERALL	8.5 m	PROPULSION	Hybrid solar / diesel-electric
BEAM	2.4 m	ECONOMICAL SPEED	6 kt
DRAFT	1.1 m	MAXIMUM SPEED	14 kt
DISPLACEMENT	3,800 kg	ENDURANCE	60+ days
PAYLOAD CAPACITY	250 kg	RANGE	6,500 nm @ 6 kt
AUTONOMY	CEDAR (SLS-301), Level 4	NAVIGATION	INS + terrain/acoustic, GNSS-denied
PRIMARY SENSORS	EO/IR, surface radar, ESM-ready	COMMUNICATIONS	LPI SATCOM, LOS mesh
SEA-STATE RATING	SS5 transit / SS4 collect	LAUNCH & RECOVERY	Pier or well-deck cradle

CONCEPT OF EMPLOYMENT

HERON deploys forward to provide persistent ISR across contested approaches and chokepoints, holding station for weeks under passive sensing and emissions control. Detections are passed via LPI links to the ALDER (SLS-305) common maritime picture, where they cue interceptors (Riptide / SLS-104) and subsurface assets (Backeddy / SLS-207). The platform remains recoverable by pier or mother-ship cradle for rapid turnaround and re-tasking.

PLATFORM AT A GLANCE

60+ days
ENDURANCE

6,500 nm
RANGE

14 kt
MAX SPEED

250 kg
PAYLOAD