From: Steve
To: MakahDEIS.nwr@noaa.gov;
cc: water4fish@comcast.net;
Subject: Makah Whaling
Date: Saturday, May 10, 2008 10:55:08 AM

Of course I support the Makah whaling. I would, in fact, hold that the Makahs have every right to whale without any special consent by the federal government.

The Makah are a whaling people. It is a connection of spirit and sustenance with roots thousands of years old. When they signed the Treaty of Olympia a century and a half ago, they specifically reserved the right to whale. To deny them this sacred right of their heritage would clearly be a violation of that treaty. Treaties are binding contracts between nations which, according to our own federal Constitution, are the supreme law of the land. By what right would we therefore deny the Makah this right, which goes to the very heart of their identity? It is no secret that the United States has violated every Indian treaty it ever made, and that is a shameful scar on our history. If we are to evolve as a just and righteous nation, we must keep our word.

Being a subject of God's royal kingdom, I avidly support the respect, protection and restoration of habitat needed to sustain our fellow creatures on this planet. I stand up to be counted on the side of the animals whenever their survival is at stake.

What people so often forget is that the Makah have always done the same. When they, the Whaling People, chose to suspend their whaling more than seven decades ago, it was like cutting their own hearts out. But they did so because they knew their brother whales were in trouble. The whales faced possible extinction--not because of anything the Makah did. It was the non-Indian highly commercialized whaling that brought the Grey Whale to that brink. Yet the Makah did it because they knew it was the right thing to do for the sake of the whale and for future generations. They stood tall and straight in the effort to restore the whale population. And even though the Makah have the clear right to whale on the strength of their heritage and their treaty, they chose to jump through the hoops of federal and international approval. Why? Because they know it's a complex world in which examples must be set. A world in which government-to-government relations are critical to the effort to respect and protect the various species of life.

Through these and so many other measures, the Makah have continually distinguished themselves as good managers and good people. What people so often forget is that the Makahs are the best friend the whales have.

We all know that the allocation afforded to the Tribe is very small, and that it's the result of reallocation--that the proposed harvest by the Tribe has little if any impact on the now recovered Grey Whale population. While I can understand the perspective of the protesters--at least to a degree--I believe their actions are ill-advised and shameful.

So, yes of course, I support the Makah whaling, and as a citizen of the United States I demand that

the federal government (including the judicial system) no longer presume to have authority over the Makah right to reconnect with the deep and abiding spirit of their ancestry.