From: Paul Schenkenberger
To: MakahDEIS.nwr@noaa.gov;
Subject: 2008 Makah DEIS
Date: Friday, May 16, 2008 11:01:20 AM

Thank you for allowing comment:

1) Please do not allow any future whaling by the Makah until they follow through on their word to prosecute the law breakers who illegally took the whale.
Allowing the Makah to whale would be no less than rewarding a tribe that lies to protect it's members from lawful prosecution for a crime.

2) Also, it should be considered that the Makah abandoned whaling for more than 30 years, of their own will. Not to protect the whales, they still had the right to hunt whales, but because more money was to be made hunting seals.
Early, they hunted whales for food. Later they hunted to trade whale meat and blubber with other tribes. This was not a "spiritual" quest when hunting whales for the Makah.
Also, they must abandon modern conveniences and hunt them in the "traditional" way if they are to be considered sincere about needing to do this for "spiritual" purposes.
Are they willing to hunt them in the same manner as their ancestors???? I think not!

This is how the Makah's ancestors huntied whale and utilized them:

"Hunting whales was no easy task. It was made all the more difficult by the complicated rituals that the Makah hunters would observe in preparation for their hunts. Prior to the hunt, Makah tribesman would ritually bathe themselves in the icy waters of the Pacific. They would rub their skin raw on sharp mussels and barnacles. A few days before their hunt they would often dig up a fresh grave and dismember a corpse. During the hunt the they would secure the torso of the corpse on their backs-a gesture indicating their respect for their dead brethren.

On the hunt a Makah whaling crew would silently intercept a migrating whale, usually either a humpback or gray, and plunge a massive harpoon into its back. Attached to the harpoon would be a long line; attached to the line were several air bladders made of gutted seals. The hope was that the inflated seal skins would prevent the whale from diving. After the whale died, a diver would plunge into the icy water and sew the giant's mouth shut, preventing air from escaping during the tow back to the village. When the whale arrived on the beach, the whole village clamored towards the dead beast. The wives of the hunters were certainly relieved; during the entirety of the hunt they had been instructed to remain motionless in their beds, not eating, sleeping or talking.

The whale meat and blubber would be divided up among the villagers according to a strict tribal hierarchy. If it was a humpback, most of the whale would be eaten. If it was a less tasty gray whale, much of the carcass would be rendered for oil. The Makah would often potlatch much of their whale meat and oil with other Nootka tribes on the western side of Vancouver Island. This active trade of whale meat, as well as fish, seal, and other sea-derived products, naturally allowed the Makah to become savvy traders when the first Europeans began arriving in the 1700s. The Makah aggressively traded whale meat and oil through the mid 1800s. In 1855, the Makah signed a treaty with Washington

territorial governor Isaac Stevens. The Treaty of Neah Bay is the only Native American treaty that explicitly granted a tribe the right to hunt whales (though it also forbade them from trading whale meat internationally)."

Regards,
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