From: Eric Christiansen
To: MakahDEIS.nwr@noaa.gov;
Subject: 2008 Makah DEIS
Date: Friday, May 09, 2008 10:21:53 PM

Thank-you for this chance to comment on this very sensitive issue.

After looking up the definition of an Environmental Impact Statement I would have to be commenting on the social implications of the Makah being allowed to hunt grey whales.

Firstly, let me point out that this treaty was signed in 1855 before the end of slavery and well before much global awareness. What if southern plantation owners tried to assert a right to an economic and 'cultural' return to 1855. The very thought is repugnant. At one time cowboys shot buffalo from trains, women were denied the vote, blacks were segragated; just because a practice is part of our 'heritage' does not mean it has value by todays standards. We know that grey whales are not only intelligent but have been known to fight for their survival. With a modern understanding of these marine mammals I am repulsed that the Makah would claim a right to kill them, for any reason.

What social implications and legal rights will this impart on other tribes who assert similar claims to do things based on 'heritage' or sovereignty? How much social strife will be caused in a State where the environment and all of its life are held dear? The federal government needs to send the message now...that even sovereign native peoples must abide by US law, move forward into the 21st century, and sometimes only teach their children about things they once practiced.

Sincerely,

Erica Christiansen
Spanaway, WA

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