From: greg thomas
To: MakahDEIS.nwr@noaa.gov;
Subject: the makah
Date: Sunday, May 11, 2008 9:18:39 AM

---

as consideration for extending the whaling opportunities for the makah is debated, i would respectfully ask that past behavior regarding the last whale be seriously considered.

what you will find is:

- the whale was cut apart and distributed to tribal members
- the majority of that whale was eventually disposed of in their garbage dump
- today's makah really don't have a 'taste' for whale meat
- this is not a question of subsistence fishing
- this is all about the makah seeing a golden opportunity to market that whale to japan

i would also ask you to consider the overall behavior of the makah fishermen. just one year ago this spring several reliable sources observed a makah troller, this is selective fishing at it's best, kill over 300 wild coho. as you are well aware, the mixed stock fishing of puget sound continues into the strait of juan de fuca as well as the areas fished by the makah. there was no reason whatsoever to kill what could be ESA listed fish.

an inquiry by myself led me to a conversation with the northwest indian fish commission where i was informed that:

- they could kill whatever they wished, whenever they choose, for whatever purpose, including commercial sale, and
- i just didn't understand.

the makah have CHOSEN to live in a prior century. many native american groups in washington state have stepped into this century and moved aggressively to invest in opportunities and start the important process of taking care of their tribal members. unfortunately, the makah are not among this group. instead they somehow believe that clinging to an outmoded believe in the killing of whales will heal their tribe.

it is incumbent on you to take the firm position that whales remain threatened and killing of these animals should continue to be banned by U.S. based fishermen, no matter their ethnic background. we all know that the returning north bound gray whales are in desperate physical condition and this is likely to worsen with over all climate change.

do your part for our environment and the creatures of the sea and once and for all ban whaling by everyone.

thank you for your time.

gt in sequim, wa