From: Grant Westenberg
To: MakahDEIS.nwr@noaa.gov;
Subject: Attn: 2008 Makah DEIS
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I have read the lengthy Makah Draft DEIS and feel I can summarize same in one word: nonsense!

Well-crafted arguments by the Makah using great prose and of course legal in form. But nonsense. Subsistence? Weak argument. We as a species have come a long way in 1,500 years and have available to us much more efficient ways of fulfilling our requirements for nourishment. Whale hunting made sense 1,500 years ago, but the usefulness of that activity today is non-existent. Ceremonial value? Slaughtering mammals for ceremony is primitive, pure and simple.

I acknowledge that Native Americans have needs. Are not those needs better met by providing proper education to the youth in fields that will allow them to earn a livelyhood in the modern world? Controlling addiction has to be high on the list of "things that need to be done". Leading a productive life and practicing good values will give these folks the sense of self-worth and value that they seek. I don't see the slaughter of mammals as having the same impact on individual lives.

I would support symbolic ceremonies that allow the proud past of a people to be recognized and remembered. Symbolism certainly has been used successfully in many cultures. So, the Makah don't have to forget their past. But they should recognize that some things done by our ancestors were done out of a necessity that does not exist today. And, given the choices available to us today, I doubt that their ancestors would choose to hunt whales.

For background, I am 60+ and have spent many enjoyable days and nights in our Olympic Mountains and on our salt water. I am not ultra conservative, but just don't agree with senseless killing. The Makah people would be better served by stepping out from behind their curtain of "tradition" and put their focus and energy into something more useful to their survival.

Regards,

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