From: debsorensen@comcast.net
To: MakahDEIS.nwr@noaa.gov;
Subject: Makah whale hunt proposal
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I'm just an ordinary citizen with no special expertise in treaty rights or marine life or endangered species. So, if you're interested in the opinion of someone like me in your review, here goes.

I do understand the need to honor treaty rights to native Americans, especially in view of our horrendous history. However, I am extremely disappointed that the Makah feel the need to exercise their rights in the matter of killing these whales. The following are my reasons:

1. It makes no sense from the perspective of their tribal customs, since the whale hunt was a long forgotten practice and custom, and had ceased during several decades, by the tribe's own volition, and not by the U. S. government's forcing. How can they still claim it as a cultural tradition? What makes them want to revive it at this time? It is not a proud or honorable pursuit.

2. The hunt has become anachronistic, both as an historical custom, and by the ultra-high-tech manner in which the hunt is now conducted. It brings no honor to the tribe who now takes superior weaponry and speedy transportation to the hunt, rather than the highly trained skill, time and effort by which the hunt was conducted by their ancestors.

3. In view of worldwide depletion of natural resources and protection of all species (including human), it is increasingly obnoxious to contemplate someone wanting to go out a kill these peacful, magnificent creatures who cause no harm to anyone. The whales have come to trust humans within the context of whale watching citizens who seek them out only to appreciate their beauty. Then to have these Makahs approach them and suddenly want to kill them in this brutal manner is such a betrayal of the trust we have tried to establish with them.

4. It is a public relations disaster for the Makah, to have themselves be recognized as the people who want to do these terrible things to beautiful creatures of nature. How do they think they can sell this as an acceptable native custom? They have no use for the whale meat or any other part of it. Is selling the carcass to the Japanese going to be viewed as an

honorable native tradition? The world is watching, and it will be difficult to interpret their motives as an honorable cultural one. It will also be difficult to rehabilitate their image after they realize how they are viewed.

5. If the tribe wants to honor their past tradition as a whaling tribe, perhaps they can think of more constructive ways to be involved with the gray whale: encourage artistic pursuits involving the whale theme, hosting whale watching expeditions, etc. I recall that a few years ago these thoughts were advocated by one of the tribe's female elders who has since passed away. Why was she not listened to? Is blood sport really necessary in this critical time, which already more destructive to nature than we can even imagine?

Thanks for considering these thoughts.

Deborah Sorensen