From: Tag
To: MakahDEIS.nwr@noaa.gov;
Subject: Attn: 2008 Makah DEIS MakahDEIS.nwr@noaa.govWhale article population
Date: Monday, June 09, 2008 8:28:23 AM

Hello: The article I have included below written several years ago talks about the stress on current Whale populations & at that time estimated to be about 22,000 individual Whales.

Summary

Attn: 2008 Makah DEIS MakahDEIS.nwr@noaa.govWhale article population

Hello: The article I have included below written several years ago talks about the stress on current Whale populations & at that time estimated to be about 22,000 individual Whales.

Other articles refer to Whale populations in the last century being about 100-200,000 Whales.

Recently Japan wants to capture & kill at least 50 Whales.

June 8, 2009

Attn: 2008 Makah DEIS MakahDEIS.nwr@noaa.govWhale article population

A. Tagland
Kirkland, WA 98033
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Hello: The article I have included below written several years ago talks about the stress on current Whale populations & at that time estimated to be about 22,000 individual Whales.

A recent comment by a Seattle fisheries service spokesman

refers to the fact that the population "It seems to be stable. When a population starts to reach its natural peak, it will fluctuate a few percentage points," said Brian Gorman, a fisheries service spokesman in Seattle. "It is considered a healthy population." I question that the population only "seems" to be stable.

Other articles refer to Whale populations in the last century being about 100-200,000 Whales.

The United Nations currently lists the number of countries in the world at about 190. Therefore, if each country took 20 whales a year, for example, 3,800 whales would be taken in a year & in 10 years, 38,000.

Recently Japan wants to capture & kill at least 50 Whales. Today, a news item reports 100 whales beached on Madagascar and it is suggested that some kind of testing explosion by industry in the area is the cause.

As much as I think it is good for all people to express their cultural values, we must not do so at the expense of the world's fauna in the light of current knowledge.

I would hope that the Makah will accept, a "CEREMONIOUS" Expression of this ritual…which will not result in stress or harm to Whales.

All Americans need to adjust to the present. None of us live a lifestyle as in the last century. Indeed the world is not at all the same as in the last century. The extinction of many animals, plants & the exploding population levels are facts of our present time which cannot be denied.

Please consider these thoughts in making a decision which I hope will not permit the Killing of Whales. Respectfully submitted. Ann Tagland

Please see article below.

Public release date: 10-Sep-2007
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Contact: Steve Palumbi
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SeaWeb

Gray whales a fraction of historic levels, genetic research says

Starving whales a warning sign of problems in the food chain

Gray whales in the Pacific Ocean, long thought to have fully recovered from whaling, were once three to five times as plentiful as they are now, according to a report to be published September 10 in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences.

Today's population of more than 22,000 gray whales has successfully been brought back from the threat of extinction and is now the most abundant whale on the North American west coast. But the new findings from researchers at Stanford University and the University of Washington suggest that the current population is actually far below the original number—estimated by genetic methods at 96,000 animals—that once roved the Pacific Ocean.

Gray whales (*Eschrichtius robustus*) return from Arctic feeding grounds to lagoons in Mexico each winter to give birth. New genetic results indicate that in the past, the number of whales...
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The report also weighs in about why large numbers of gray whales have recently been discovered suffering from starvation. Previously it was assumed that the thin and starving animals are a consequence of the gray whale population exceeding its historical ecological limits. But if the Pacific normally housed 96,000 gray whales, then starving whales may be suffering reduced food supply from changing climate conditions in their Arctic feeding grounds. This possibility parallels reports last year of major climate shifts in the Arctic ecosystems in which gray whales feed. The study also suggests that lowered numbers of gray whales no longer play their normal role in ocean ecology.

Gray whales were hunted extensively in the late 19th century. "The lagoons of Baja California were the primary killing fields for gray whales," recounted lead author S. Elizabeth Alter, a Stanford researcher. "But we don't know exactly how many there were before whaling took its toll." The new research measures the amount of genetic variation in current gray whales across ten different sections of their genome, and back calculates the long-term population size based on new measurement of the mutation rate of these gene segments.

Steve Palumbi, the Harold A. Miller Professor in Marine Sciences at Stanford's Hopkins Marine Station, explained, "Our survey uncovers too much variation for a population of 22,000. The overabundance of genetic variation suggests a much larger population in past centuries." The study uses computer-based genetic simulations to show that the level of genetic variation is instead more likely to be from a past population of 76,000 to 118,000 animals (with an average of 96,000).

Such a vastly reduced population of gray whales has likely exerted large changes in Pacific ocean ecosystems. Unique among whales, the gray bulldozes the oceans, digging troughs through the sea floor for food. In the process, they resuspend ocean sediments bring food to the surface. "A population of 96,000 gray whales would have resuspended 12 times more sediment each year than the biggest river in the Arctic, the Yukon," said Alter, "and would have played a critical role in the ecology of the <st1:place