From: Gillian Burlingham
To: MakahDEIS.nwr@noaa.gov;
cc: delilaleber@gmail.com; delila@riseup.net; floresgordon30@msn.com; gausauce@yahoo.com; jbetzzall@earthlink.net; JSmith@afsc.org; merlin@speakeasy.net; sofia_lillian@yahoo.com; schullasavok@gmail.com; gillygb@yahoo.com; Kathryn Flores;
Subject: 2008 Makah DEIS
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I'm fully in support of the Makah to maintain their treaty rights to whaling. I believe the environmental impact would be much less significant than the harm to the Makah themselves, as a people and as a nation.

We (the US) agreed to the Makah's right to whale when negotiating with the tribe many years ago. We need to stand by our word. I know the US government didn't always (ever?) negotiate tribal treaties in good faith, but if we see and think more clearly now and have the integrity that our ancestors lacked, we need to make good on their words and agreements.

Though I'm a Seattle resident, I grew up in a small town in New York state on a dairy farm. Many of my schoolmates or neighbors relied on hunted food for their meals. In my family, we relied on food grown in our large garden to supplement many of our meals. It wasn't a rich area. I'm comfortable with the need of some to keep food on the table and maintain a cultural heritage by taking the lives of animals. On the first day of deer hunting season, my town's school hallways were cleared out because so many kids went hunting with their families that day. That, too, is the sign of a cultural practice that receives very little notice or attention despite a similar focus on killing animals.

I trust the Makah tribe to hunt in a respectful and harmonious way, notwithstanding the actions of some of their members in recent months. Every community has those who act outside community expectation and the law. The tribe as a whole has condemned the actions of a few. I believe the tribe's method of hunting would be law-abiding--tribal, US federal, and international law--and in keeping with cultural practice and maintaining environmental balance. The tribe has waited years for the results of this environmental impact statement and as a group has not hunted during that time. They have followed procedure, waiting for permission to continue a practice that is already their right. It's time for us, the US, to honor our commitment to our neighbors and "allow" what isn't truly ours to give, but what we have chosen to make ours to take

away--the right to maintain and transmit to one's children the cultural practices and values of one's people.

Thank you for making the opportunity to comment on this process. I look forward to the day when the Makah are given the go-ahead to choose to hunt or not to hunt as they see fit. It should be the tribe's decision, not ours as US citizens.

Sincerely,
Gillian Burlingham