From: Samantha Everett
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Subject: citizen letter -- 2008 Makah DEIS
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July 7, 2008

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Attn: 2008 Makah DEIS

Dear NOAA Officials:

I am writing this letter to express my views about the Makah Indian Tribe's request to hunt gray whales off the coast of Washington State. I attended the public hearing held in Seattle on June 2, 2008 and have reviewed a copy of the *Draft Environmental Impact Statement for Proposed Authorization of the Makah Whale Hunt.*

I came away from the public meeting feeling torn. On one hand, I respect the Makah's history and tradition of whaling. On the other hand, I am deeply concerned about the plight of whales and want to do everything I can to protect them.

I grew up in Washington State, but did not see my first whale until this summer. It was an amazing and breathtaking experience. I know that the Makah revere whales, but this is at odds with the desire to kill them. There is **no** truly humane way to hunt a whale (DEIS, Chapter 3).

While I respect the Makah's request for a traditional whale hunting ceremony, I strongly feel that it does not fit in with the modern day's concern for protecting marine mammals. Simply put, the only reason that the Makah want to hunt whale is to take back some of their cultural heritage. There are a lot of traditions in my family's past that are no longer legal or relevant in modern day society. The Makah do not need to hunt whale for food like they would if they lived in

the Arctic.

The Makah Tribe is looking for a way to get a sense of strength and pride back, but killing a whale is not going to be the magic solution that cures the modern day problems the tribe experiences. How about leading traditional whale watching tours that promote the history and culture of the Makah? Or having a whale hunting ceremony that is symbolic rather than real? Or finding other creative ways to get in touch with their culture that does not involve the killing of a whale? Maybe the money that would be spent on the whale hunt could be spent on human services?

I urge you to go with Alternative 1, the no-action alternative.

Sincerely,

Samantha Everett

P.S. I NOAA has presented a very well-rounded *Draft Environmental Impact Statement for Proposed Authorization of the Makah Whale Hunt.*