

NEWSLETTER OF THE PUGET SOUND CHAPTER
OF THE AMERICAN CETACEAN SOCIETY

VOLUME 6, ISSUE 4

FALL 2005

Next Meeting:

Wednesday Dec 21st—7:30 pm

Michael Ford, Director, Conservation Biology Division NOAA-NWFSC
Conservation biology: how science is used to inform conservation decisions.
See acspugetsound.org for more info.

SRKW DECLARED ENDANGERED !

It is with both deep sadness and great joy that we report that the Southern Resident Killer Whales (SRKW) — the orcas we share Puget Sound with

— have officially been designated an endangered species by the U.S. government.

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Event Information

All speaker series events meet on the 3rd Wednesday of the month at the Phinney Neighborhood Center, Room 6, 6532 Phinney Ave. N., Seattle, (just north of the Woodland Park Zoo).

Doors open at 7pm and the program starts at 7:30pm. Plenty of free parking is available in the upper and lower parking lots. Admission is free—donations to offset the room rental costs are gratefully appreciated of course as we operate on a shoestring like almost all nonprofits.

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Chapter Currents

by Uko Gorter, ACS/PS President

Looking outside my office window, I see golden hues mixed with rusty reds. The dappled sunlight between the swaying trees caught in the autumn breeze. But all too soon, it is a distant whine of an annoying leaf blower that interrupts this beautiful picture. Fall has arrived in the Puget Sound.

And with the fall, our Puget Sound Chapter has resumed its general meetings and Speaker Series. We encourage all of you to take a break from raking your leaves, and come to our wonderful meetings. It is the best way to getting to know our board and to find out what we're up to. The speakers are first rate, the presentation insightful, fun, and unique. Check our website for the most up to date information::
www.acspugetsound.org/speakers/

After spending summer in the San Juan Islands and other points north, Southern Residents have finally ventured into lower Puget Sound to pursue Coho and Chum salmon. The Vashon Hydrophone Project eagerly

anticipates the dulcet tones of killer whale calls resonating in Colvos Pass. Read more starting on page 3.

Also this fall, we are yet again faced with the prospect of a Makah gray whale hunt. In one of the recent public scoping meetings it was made clear that the Makah are renewing efforts to continue whaling. While the Makah were recently stopped in their tracks due to intensive litigation, they have sought to continue whaling by asking for an exemption under the Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA).

ACS is, and has always been, opposed to the Makah whale hunt. Our chapter was reestablished as a direct result of the Makah whaling protests. While we recognize the Makah's treaty right, we are not convinced that this constitutes a true "subsistence" hunt. We are worried about the precedent it sets, and its implications at future IWC meetings. Starting on page 3 you can read more about our position on this issue written by our past president and founder, Joe Olson.



Board Member Profile

Stephanie Norman

by her pod'ners

Stephanie has been a long-time member of ACS, joining the society in 1988 when she was attending veterinary school at Texas A&M University. After graduation in 1991, she moved to California where she became involved with marine mammal rehabilitation, combining her love of the oceans with her chosen career in veterinary medicine.

Stephanie took part in a marine mammal survey of the U.S. west coast in 1996 where she met her future husband (who was captain of their NOAA survey vessel). How fortunate to meet someone with a similar passion for the marine environment!

After moving to Seattle in 1998, Stephanie began to work for NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service office in Seattle, where she continues to work today. She takes part in marine mammal disease investigations, stranding response, and public education.

She joined the ACS/Puget Sound Chapter when it reformed in 1999, served as the chapter delegate to national for a couple years, and is currently Grants Chair, a position she has held for several years.

In 2004, she decided she had not had enough education and decided to return to graduate school. This autumn she began a Masters of Science program in epidemiology (marine mammals of course!) combined with environmental (ocean) health at the University of Washington. She would eventually like to collaborate with other scientists in planning, conducting and analyzing marine mammal disease research projects.

Along with her vast knowledge of cetacean biology, Stephanie's critical thinking and level-headed approach to conservation issues make her an invaluable asset to the American Cetacean Society. In addition, she takes very good care of the board – whether it's due to her Italian heritage, we're not sure, but Stephanie always provides plenty of good food for us to eat when meetings are hosted at her house!

To round off her many skills, Stephanie is also a pilot! In her free time, Stephanie likes to spend time with her family (husband Tim, 3 year old son Patrick and year old daughter Jennifer), travel and garden.

Whulj
"the saltwater we know"

The Newsletter of
the Puget Sound Chapter
of the American Cetacean Society



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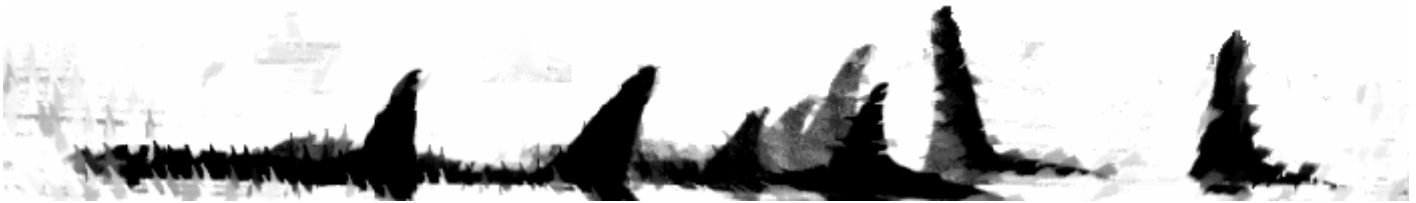
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ACS and the Makah Gray Whale Hunt

By Joe Olson

The Makah have recently been getting public attention again because of their request for a waiver from the Marine Mammal Protection Act so that they can resume killing gray whales. Therefore, it seems like an appropriate time to bring new members up to speed and refresh the memories of long-time members about ACS's position regarding the hunt.

On 17 May 1999, Makah whalers killed their first gray whale in more than 70 years. This was the same day that the American Cetacean Society formalized our opposition to the hunt. At the time, some argued that our formal opposition came too late, but ACS has a reputation for looking long and hard at issues involving the well-being of cetaceans and we don't typically make statements until we have enough facts to back them up. In our official statement regarding the Makah gray whale hunt, ACS listed several reasons for being against it.

The following summary is taken from the action alert first published in the 1999, no. 1 issue of *Spyhopper* (see www.acsonline.org/publications/spyhopper/spy9901.html for an online version)

1. The Makah tribe's gray whale hunt does not meet the IWC definition of a subsistence hunt and the majority of IWC member nations have refused to accept it as a subsistence hunt. In fact, the organization twice formally denied the Makah a quota.
2. The Makah hunt is occurring without official permission of the IWC. This undermines the ability of the IWC to oversee whaling.
3. The U.S. circumvented IWC regulations and granted a permit to the Makah to hunt whales. This undermines the U.S. position as an opposition leader to the resumption of commercial whaling.

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VASHON HYDROPHONE PROJECT UPDATE:

The Southern Residents Make Contact

By Ann Stateler, VHP Coordinator

On October 9, with help from our splendid diver Todd Gateman, we did Vashon Hydrophone Project (VHP) maintenance and set up a new float (the old float vanished one night in June). A curious harbor seal watched intently as VHP volunteer Odin Lonning worked from a skiff.

The new float was deployed just in time. Commercial fishing boats began lining up in Colvos Pass that afternoon. Around 6:00 PM, VHP associate Mark Sears called from Shilshole with the exciting news that he saw the blows of orcas traveling south. The whales were too far away for positive identification (ID) of the pod.

We spent a restless night by the hydrophone listening for Southern Residents. Alas, they did not venture into Colvos Pass. One of the VHP's goals is to install another hydrophone on the east side of Vashon-Maury Island, which in this case might have told us if the orcas traveled there after dark.

We had better luck on October 17. With the help of calls from alert Islanders, the VHP documented the first orca visit to Vashon-Maury waters this fall. At twilight, we observed at least 20 killer whales foraging and traveling south in East Passage. They turned north again before

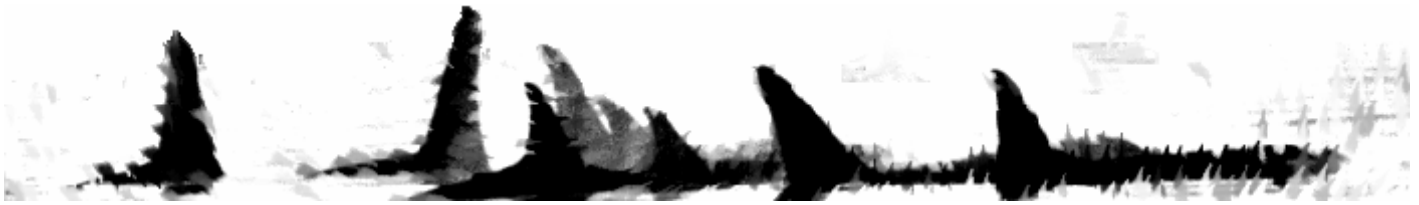
reaching Point Robinson on Maury Island, disappearing into the night.

Distance and darkness precluded definitive ID. Center for Whale Research staff told Mark that J Pod and some L Pod members were at Shilshole on October 15. These are likely the same orcas we saw on the 17th. Too bad the elusive visitors did not swing by our Colvos Pass hydrophone. Calls could have clinched the ID.

Thankfully, L Pod emerged during daylight on October 26. We found the orcas traveling north in East Passage early in the morning, under superb viewing conditions and undisturbed by boats. At 45 members, including numerous mature males and sprouters with tall dorsal fins, L Pod is always a glorious sight.

Mark Sears photo-documented the stately procession as the killer whales cruised by Lincoln Park. This is remarkable because we had no encounters with L Pod in our area last fall/winter season. We are grateful for reports from reliable Vashon observers, who helped us confirm this valuable sighting.

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Re-connecting with The Whale Center: an interview with Ken Balcomb

by Bonnie Gretz

In early September, I had the distinct pleasure of returning to the source of my passion, which is my involvement with whales, in particular the Southern Resident Community of Orcas and The Center for Whale Research on San Juan Island.

I first discovered my passion for whales in 1994 when I joined an Earthwatch expedition at The Center. Earthwatch is an organization that connects interested volunteers with scientific research projects around the globe, thereby giving greatly needed financial support to the research and gives volunteers the opportunity to assist in the field. During this expedition, I had my very first “up-close and personal” orca encounter with K-1 (Taku), and his mom, K-7 (Lummi). At that time, K-1 was sort of the “public face” of this orca community, since he was one of the first individuals identified (by the notches on his dorsal fin), and also was among the oldest males of the SRKW (Southern Resident Killer Whale) community. By virtue of his longevity, he was an example that orcas can and do live longer in the wild than in captivity, contrary to the public display industry’s claims. The entire 10 days was full of wondrous discoveries and intense learning, with Ken Balcomb as the principal investigator. Hearing his stories about whale encounters, and his pioneering work with orcas, as well as being out with the orcas and learning from them, sent me on a path of life-long commitment of working to protect these magnificent masters of the Salish Sea.

On this most recent return trip to San Juan Island, I got to spend a week re-connecting with J, K, and L pods. I was also able to visit Ken and The Center to catch up on everything that’s going on there, and to see how things have changed in 11 years.

Earthwatch is still the primary source of support for The Center’s research, and as Ken said, “the work couldn’t be done without the teams.” Earthwatch has been supporting the Center since 1987—typically 5-8 groups of about 10 people come to San Juan Island from May to October. They take notes and photos from the boat every day, enter data into the computers, and match ID (identification) photos of the individual whales. Each whale should be photographed from both sides every year, and all this information is entered into the databases including all of the behaviors observed.



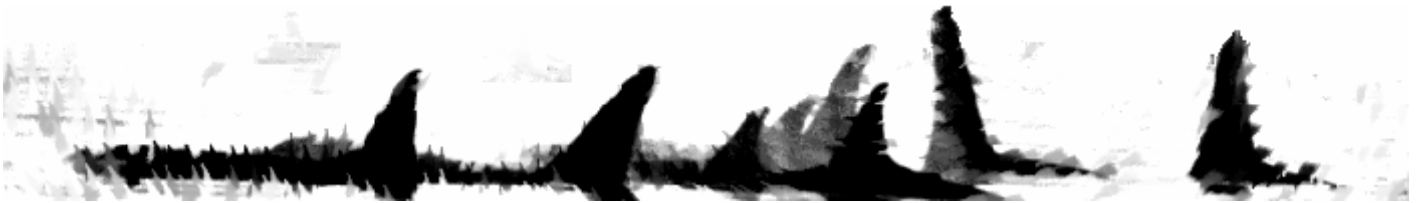
Ken Balcomb at
The Center for Whale Research on San Juan Island
photo courtesy Bonnie Gretz

Back in 1994, we had to learn how to develop and print black and white photos, and try to identify each whale from a tiny little contact print. Now the wonders of digital photography make the boat photography and photo-ID work vastly more efficient and accurate. With no film, they take hundreds of photos, and delete the poor ones. In addition, they can view the color photos on a large monitor, making the process of checking those sometimes subtle differences so much easier! Of course, with up-to-date computers and databases, the data entry is also much easier, faster and more accurate.

Threatened Listing

Ken said The Center’s main goals are to continue to do this vital identification work, and update the catalogs, as having this information is critical now and for the long term future of these animals. He said he is confident that this population will be listed as either Threatened or Endangered under the Endangered Species Act [ed: see update on ESA listing on page 1](as long as it is not severely weak-

(Continued on page 8)



ACS and the Makah Gray Whale Hunt — *continued*

(Continued from page 3)

4. Makah representatives have been quoted in the press as saying the Makah are interested in commercial hunting of gray whales. In its original petition to the U.S. government to reestablish whaling, the Makah Tribal Council (MTC) states, "It should be emphasized, however, that we continue to strongly believe that we have a right under the [1855] Treaty of Neah Bay to harvest whales not only for ceremonial and subsistence purposes but also for commercial purposes."
5. The hunt has been allowed to take place within the boundaries of the Olympic Coast Marine Sanctuary, a refuge for marine life. The gray whale killed in May 2001 was within the sanctuary boundaries. Allowing this use defies the purpose and mission of marine sanctuaries throughout the country.

In addition, an internal NMFS memo from 1995 states that the Makah had plans to open a processing plant for whales, seals and other marine mammals (*Whalewatcher*,

July-September 2000, Vol. 33, No. 2 – goto acsonline.org/publications/whalewatcher/ww-catalog2000.html for an online version). In the same issue of *Whalewatcher*, you can also read ACS's opening statement to the 52nd IWC meeting, in which we request the commission to issue a citation to the US for breaking IWC rules and to encourage the US to respect and enforce not only the International Convention for the Regulation of Whaling, but also its own national laws. The ACS conservation committee also sent several letters of opposition to officials from NOAA-Fisheries, the IWC, congress, and the state of Washington.

The Puget Sound Chapter of ACS has an even deeper involvement with the Makah hunt than does our national organization. In 1998, I was loosely involved with several organizations who were opposed to the whale hunt. Some of those organizations used direct intervention to try to stop the hunt. While such a strategy can be effective at times, I felt that a more diplomatic approach was needed. Having been a member of ACS since 1988 and knowing the reputation that ACS has for measured, fact-

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VHP UPDATE: the Southern Residents Make Contact — *continued*

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Later that day, Mark learned from Brad Hanson of NOAA Fisheries that J Pod joined L Pod north of Seattle. Judging by how far south the L's were when we found them, it seems likely the orcas traversed East Passage during the night.

J Pod brought belated Halloween treats on November 3. We toiled to keep our binoculars dry and our ears warm as the orcas did the East Passage shuffle. They meandered south in the morning, extremely spread out and actively foraging. We observed a few spyhops, breaches, and tail slaps.

After a few hours, the whales turned around. To our delight, they regrouped and were much closer to shore as they traveled north in the afternoon. Elders Granny (J2) and Ruffles (J1) were in the lead. We heard Spieden's (J8's) distinctive wheezy blow. Then we saw J41, the new baby discovered by the Center for Whale Research on July 4th. 26-year-old Shachi (J19) is J41's mother. Her last known calf died in 1993, and we have been rooting for her to have another. The sprouters Mike (J26) and Blackberry (J27) followed shortly.

whales did, too. Ruffles rolled over and raised his enormous pec flipper toward the sun, holding it aloft for several seconds. Another orca did a cartwheel. Two more were porpoising. Some were still casually foraging and fiddling with their food.

Mark's permit allows him to approach orcas to take ID photos and collect scale samples or prey remains with a dip net. He saw a youngster head-butting a chum salmon and went to investigate after the whale appeared finished with it.

Never mind a few measly fish scales, Mark retrieved a male chum torso, minus the head and tail, with orca teeth marks on it! We admired the mangled yet awesome prize (awesome to whale geeks, anyway). Despite jokes about barbecue potential, the headless chum went to NOAA Fisheries for further study.

The excitement did not end with the catch of the day. J Pod returned to Colvos Pass after dark. Beginning about 7:50 p.m., the VHP recorded intense echolocation click trains, along with a few calls and whistles. We surmise that the orcas were foraging, and we could hear them on the hydrophone for nearly an hour. Thank you, J Pod!

We savored the late afternoon sun break, and perhaps the



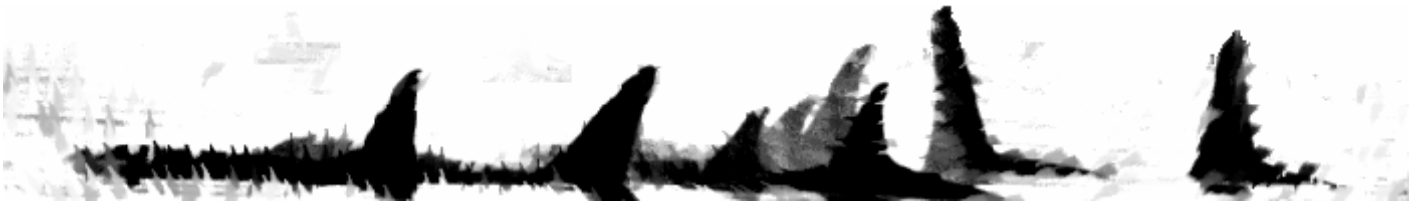
How Donations to the American Cetacean Society, Puget Sound Chapter (ACS/PS) Help Whales, Dolphins, and Porpoises, and What Makes ACS/PS Unique

By Ann Stateler, ACS/PS Vice President

- **ACS/PS is the only local whale conservation group that awards research grants to college students.** ACS/PS has funded studies on harbor porpoise distribution, river dolphins in Bangladesh, and the effects of anthropogenic (manmade) noise on Southern Resident killer whales. Visit our web site at www.acspugetsound.org to learn more. *Your donations to our Grant Fund support significant work by promising students.*
- ACS/PS sponsors the Vashon Hydrophone Project (VHP) for Puget Sound whale research. **The VHP's underwater microphone off the west side of Vashon Island is currently the only one in lower Puget Sound dedicated to Southern Resident orca research and conservation. To date, every dollar donated to the VHP has been matched with in-kind contributions. Your donations to the VHP will help us achieve our goal of installing another hydrophone off the east side of Vashon.**
- **ACS/PS Board members volunteer hundreds of hours annually to share their expertise** about whales, dolphins, porpoises and marine ecosystems with students, teachers, researchers, naturalists, and the general public at schools, conferences, and other community events. *Your donations go toward program needs, not salaries.*
- **ACS/PS offers a free monthly Speaker Series** featuring eminent whale scientists, conservationists, educators, authors, and artists. *Your donations help with rental fees and travel expenses for speakers.*
- **ACS/PS was a charter member of the Orphan Orca Fund**, a coalition of whale conservation groups that collaborated with NOAA Fisheries, Canada's Department of Fisheries and Oceans, and the Vancouver Aquarium on an unprecedented plan to rehabilitate and reintroduce **Springer (A73)** to her Northern Resident orca community. From acoustic and behavioral monitoring to fundraising and public education, many ACS/PS Board members and scientific advisors contributed to Springer's rescue and relocation. *Your donations helped Springer go home.*
- **ACS/PS values diversity.** Several active chapter members are Native American. ACS/PS has featured First Nations speakers at our conferences and in our Speaker Series. Makah Elder Alberta Thompson spoke about her opposition to her tribe's gray whale hunt in 1999.
- Through ACS National, ACS/PS is the only local whale conservation group with representation at the annual International Whaling Commission (IWC) meeting.
- ACS Cetacean Fact Sheets and cetacean curriculum are widely used by teachers and environmental educators. For more information, visit ACS National's web site at www.acsonline.org.

So we may better help the whales, please consider making a year end tax-deductible donation to ACS/PS. Make checks payable to ACS/PS, specify a program like Grant Fund or VHP if you wish, and mail to:

ACS/PS
P.O. Box 17136
Seattle, WA 98127



ACS and the Makah Gray Whale Hunt —continued

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based action, I realized that such a voice was needed in response to the Makah hunt. That is what led to the founding of this chapter in August 1999. Many of you, our loyal members, were working along with me in those pre-ACS/PS days to try to prevent the first gray whale from being killed and I am still grateful for your help in starting this chapter.

Besides the official reasons that our national organization emphasized for opposing the hunt, there are other factors to consider. One of them is the effect the hunt will have on the “seasonal resident” gray whales that frequent the Northern Puget Sound waters. These animals are now referred to as a feeding aggregate, but that doesn’t diminish their importance to the thousands of people every year who venture out to see them from whale watching boats. The number of “seasonal residents” is thought to number only in the hundreds and those in the Northern Puget Sound show very strong site fidelity (Calambokidis and Quan, “Photographic Identification Research on Seasonal Resident Whales in Washington State” – go to <http://nmml.afsc.noaa.gov/CetaceanAssessment/GrayWhale/GrayWhales.pdf> for an online version). While the killing of five whales may not have a statistically significant effect on the entire gray whale population, it could severely hurt a local population that numbers in the hundreds. Some of these “seasonal residents” have been seen nearly every year for more than 20 years.

Another important point is that use of the terms “ceremonial harvest” or “cultural whaling” sets a very dangerous precedent. Both Japan and Norway can make the same claims as the Makah regarding their cultural ties to the whales. In fact, based on that argument, Japan and Norway could have an even stronger argument to exploit such a whaling loophole because they have never stopped whaling, as the Makah did for over 70 years. If the Makah are given an exemption from the MMPA and the US allows them to start killing whales again, it is my concern that other cultures, from first peoples bands such as the Nuu-Chah-Nulth on Vancouver Island to large nations such as Norway and Japan, will use the same argument to start or expand their whaling operations.

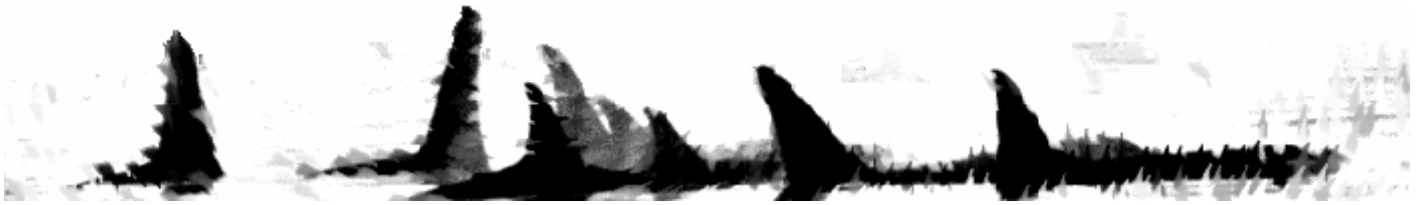
It is very important to respect the treaty rights and cultural beliefs of the Makah people. I have had the privilege to meet with members of the Makah nation and even spent two days in long discussions with now tribal councilman, Micah McCarty. (Micah was a guest speaker at the 8th

ACS International Conference in 2002; see www.acsonline.org/conference/culture2002/speakers/mccarty.html for the abstract of Micah’s talk). He and many of the tribal members believe that their success in killing the whale in May of 1999 greatly boosted the cultural pride of their community. I believe them – but I do not agree with them.

In fact, there are Makah members who strongly believe that they do not need to kill whales in order to recover their cultural heritage. One of those people is Makah Elder, Alberta Thompson. Alberta was the guest speaker at our very first chapter meeting on 19 October 1999. Alberta met the gray whales for the first time in the Baja lagoons and said that she immediately felt a spiritual connection with them. It was this connection that motivated her to become a very outspoken opponent of the whale hunt, even though she suffered rejection and hostility from some members of her tribe. She even traveled the world to tell her story and ask for our help to stop the hunt. You can read about her chapter meeting talk in our first Volume 1, Issue 1 of *Whulj* (online version at www.acspugetsound.org/whulj/newsletters/Whulj-v1-1.pdf) and you can also watch her entire talk by clicking on the link there or in the right column of our speaker series web page (www.acspugetsound.org/speakers/index.html).

So where are we now? The Makah are asking for an exemption from the Marine Mammal Protection Act. They want to resume hunting gray whales. The NOAA-Fisheries comment period has passed, but we can still write to our congressional representatives and tell them not to allow the exemption. We can write letters to the Makah tribal council and tell them that we will support them in non-lethal ways to honor the whale and their culture (see address below). There has been much talk about whale watching and ecotourism. This may or may not be feasible given the remote location of Neah Bay. Nonetheless, the Makah have been contacted by other native groups who have successfully used ecotourism to revitalize their cultures. One offer of assistance came from New Zealand, but my understanding is that the tribal council never publicized that offer to the rest of the community. Ultimately, we cannot tell the Makah how to celebrate their heritage, but we can still take a stand for the protection of whales, dolphins and porpoises.

**Makah Tribal Council
PO Box 160
Neah Bay, WA 98357**



Re-connecting with the Whale Center, Ken Balcomb — continued

(Continued from page 4)

ened by the current Congress). However, Ken stated that the listing may curtail commercial whale watching because some federal agencies include commercial whale watching as a “threat” to the orcas, often because the agencies cannot or will not address the habitat and ecosystem issues, such as pollution and fishery practices. He felt they could use the whale watch industry as a scapegoat for the problems the orcas have been experiencing. This attitude is despite the fact that commercial whale watching is an economic boon for the area. Ken mentioned that back in 1976 there were way more fishing boats than there are whale watching boats in 2005, yet there were also way more fish! The current Federal Administration is actively backing away from environmental protection regulations and legislation. So while the ESA listing will probably bring more Federal money into the area, Ken is not confident it will go toward helping the whales and their habitat.

Salmon Issues

The lack of salmon is of course, a critical issue to the SRKW community. Ken maintains that the whales are not the cause of the depleted numbers of salmon. The Columbia River used to supply huge numbers and very large fish all up and down the Oregon and Washington coast. The watersheds of the Columbia River and the Fraser River in Canada are the main sources of salmon for the orcas, but because of the dams, pollution, fishing practices, and habitat destruction, the numbers are vastly reduced. The Federal Government’s plans for saving the endangered salmon species are highly controversial and many fishery scientists say they are totally inadequate to maintain and increase the wild salmon populations.

The Community and Their Cousins

Typically, J pod stays around the Puget Sound area throughout the year, but they have to range far and wide to find food. K and L pods head out to parts unknown, though they’ve been spotted down in Monterey Bay, California, during the winter months. Even though the Northern Resident orca’s habitat is relatively close, in the Johnston Strait area of British Columbia, Ken said there seems to be a social restriction against inter-mingling in any way. He continues with saying, “you could anthropomorphize and compare them to tribal humans, who tend to mate within their clans.” Limited genetic information indicates that the SRKWs have not mated with the NRKWs for thousands of years. Ken did say that all the SRKW are



inside the Whale Center
photo courtesy Bonnie Gretz

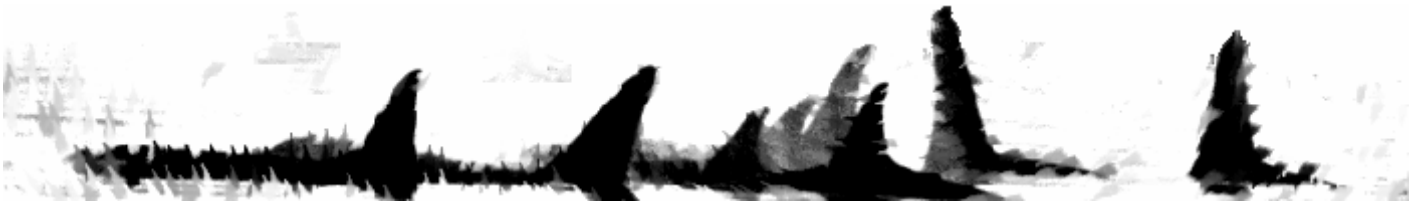
“kissin’ cousins” and it has been noted that a male from one pod and a female from another pod will spend the entire season together. There is no good way to tell if the baby born to this female the next year is that guy’s offspring, however. The method of getting DNA through biopsy darting is controversial, due to the stress placed on the animals in the process, so Ken said The Center is concentrating on the more benign method of photo ID and cataloging, which has become the standard for marine mammal research.

Sometimes sharing the Puget Sound area are the transient orcas and the offshore orcas. Even if they are in proximity to each other, the typical reaction is avoidance. Of course, they are aware of each other, but there have been very few documented sightings of any interaction.

Ken said the Center has cataloged four generations since their research started, and possibly five. Both J2 (Granny) and K7 (Lummi) are estimated to be in their mid-90’s, and J1 (Ruffles) is estimated to be about 55, the oldest male in the community (and still going strong!).

Ken keeps in touch with whale researchers all over the

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Balcomb — continued

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world, sharing the information and techniques he, the Center staff, and the Earthwatch volunteers collect each season about the orcas who share the Salish Sea with us. ACS Puget Sound is honored to have Ken as a scientific advisor and good friend to our organization, and all the other organizations who are working so hard to protect these amazing creatures, and to the whales themselves.

Grant Awards Set ACS/PS Apart from Other Local NGOs

Since the year 2000, the Puget Sound Chapter of the American Cetacean Society has awarded seven grants to students studying cetaceans. These grants provide much needed funding for critical research.

Marine mammal scientists and their students are finding it more and more difficult to secure funding, especially under current federal environmental and science policies. That's why the grant money that the Puget Sound chapter awards is so important. We are the only local marine environmental organization that awards such research grants.

Unfortunately, the same financial drought that is hurting the students is also drying up our funding sources. Our chapter relies on generous donations from individuals and small businesses to fund our research grants program. We will continue to look for other larger funding sources, but it's also time to call on our members to help us help the whales!

No other organization is positioned to fill the void that would be left if ACS/PS were to stop awarding grant money.

Please help us to continue this vital contribution to the research and conservation of cetaceans! Rather than watching our grants program dry up, help the Puget Sound chapter to build the fund to its highest level ever. Our goal is to have \$2000 available for grants every year. We would then be able to help two to four students annually to continue their work to help the whales. If every member donated just \$20 to this fund, we'd meet our goal. Of course, any amount would be greatly appreciated and your donations are 100% tax deductible. If you wish to help out, please make your check payable to *ACS/PS Grant Fund* and mail it to ACS/PS Grant Fund, PO Box 17136, Seattle, WA 98127.

Southern Resident orcas listed as “Endangered”

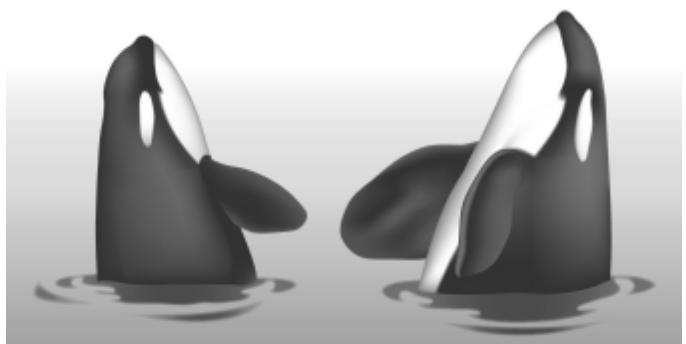
(Continued from page 1)

Just before going to print with this issue of “Whulj”, we received the press release from the NOAA Fisheries Service (a.k.a. NMFS) on the final listing of the Southern Resident Killer Whale population. While all of us anticipated this important announcement, it was a complete surprise to learn that our beloved J,K, and L pods are now listed as “endangered” under the Endangered Species Act, instead of the proposed “threatened” status.

“Recent information and further analysis leads our agency to conclude that the Southern Resident killer whale population is at risk of extinction, and should be listed as endangered” said Bob Lohn, regional administrator of NOAA Fisheries.

It is too early to say what exact impacts this listing will have on all of us. Needless to say, ACS/PS will keep you up to date in our upcoming newsletters. Also our December speaker, Mike Ford, participated on the review panels for both the SRKW and the Cherry Point herring population, and has helped developed a research plan for Puget Sound killer whales.

All of us at ACS/PS are greatly encouraged by this news, and applaud NOAA Fisheries with this crucial decision. We have and continue to enjoy a great relationship with NOAA Fisheries, and as such we look forward to help in any way we can. For more information on this listing, go to: www.nwr.noaa.gov



orcas spyhopping
illustration courtesy Uko Gorter

AMERICAN CETACEAN SOCIETY



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Seattle, WA 98127-0836

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(206) 781-4860

address label

address correction requested

SAVE THESE DATES

Phinney Neighborhood Center, Room 6, 6532 Phinney Ave. N., Seattle, 7-9 pm, (just north of the Woodland Park Zoo)

- **Wed. December 21st** **Michael Ford, NOAA: Conservation Biology: how science is used to inform conservation decisions.**
- **Wed. January 18th** **ShannonMcCluskey: Killer whales & salmon: correlations through space and time in the Inland Waters of BC, WA.**
- **Wed. February 15th** **Gina Ylitalo: Pacific Northwest resident killer whales and chemical contaminants in their prey.**

***PLEASE JOIN US — SAY “YES!” — ENROLL ME AS A MEMBER OF THE
PUGET SOUND CHAPTER OF THE AMERICAN CETACEAN SOCIETY!”***

Name: _____	<input type="checkbox"/> \$500	Patron
Address: _____	<input type="checkbox"/> \$250	Contributing
City: _____	<input type="checkbox"/> \$75	Supporting
State: _____ Zip: _____ Phone: (____) _____	<input type="checkbox"/> \$45	Family
E-mail: _____	<input type="checkbox"/> \$35	Active
	<input type="checkbox"/> \$25	Student/Teacher/Senior

Please make check payable to ACS and mail to: ACS/Puget Sound Chapter, P.O. Box 17136, Seattle, WA 98127-0836