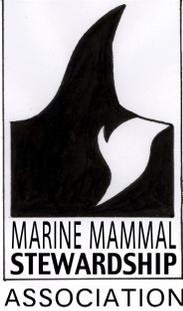


**NORTH ISLAND**



**North Island  
Marine Mammal  
Stewardship Association**  
P.O. Box 554  
Alert Bay, BC  
V0N 1A0

December 7, 2010

Dr. Brad Hanson

The North Island Marine Mammal Stewardship Association (NIMMSA) is a society whose members include the owners and operators of marine based eco-tourism companies that conduct tours in the waters off north-eastern Vancouver Island. Our industry has had a long history of co-operation with killer whale conservation researchers, as the nature of our business makes us reliant on a healthy marine environment, particularly it's killer whale inhabitants that routinely visit Johnstone and Queen Charlotte Straits.

Regarding those killer whales, we have been disturbed to see that some of the animals that regularly visit our area from both the Transient and Northern Resident populations have been physically scarred with open wounds from where satellite tags have been placed by your scientists. It is our understanding that such technology only provides data on the temporary distribution of the tagged animal yet comes with the risk of potentially injuring an animal in the tagging process or from subsequent infection thereafter. In addition to this we are concerned about how the tags may adversely affect other animals in close proximity who are likely to come into contact with the hardware as it is being shed from the tagged individual's body. We therefore pose the following questions as to the necessity of such a potentially invasive method.

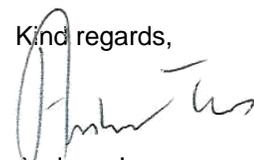
How many more tags (or tag induced wounds) can we expect to see on both Northern Residents and Transients before you have enough data to answer your question regarding their distribution?

Will the data provided from these tags be able to answer questions about distribution that less invasive methods such as photo ID and acoustic monitoring can (or have) not?

Have the negative and positive effects of this technology been accurately measured and given consideration before their application to SARA listed cetacean species?

As these killer whale populations share both American and Canadian waters, have collaborations with Canadian scientists been proposed to look at less invasive ways of answering the same questions?

Kind regards,



Andrew Jones  
President