

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-4705

October 27, 2017

Benjamin Friedman, Acting Administrator
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
1401 Constitution Ave NW, Room 5128
Washington, DC 20230

Dear Acting Administrator Friedman,

I strongly support the application submitted by the Makah Tribe to NOAA's Marine Debris Removal Program. The Derelict Crab Gear Removal Project developed by the Makah Tribe would significantly decrease discarded fishing gear in the Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary, as well as prevent their re-accumulation in our coastal ecosystems.

The ocean and its resources are part of the foundation of the Makah economy, subsistence, and culture. Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife estimates that hundreds of tons of derelict gear has collected over time in the Northwest Straits region, especially in the Strait of Juan de Fuca where the Makah Tribe is located. Given that the Tribe is strongly connected to the ocean resources surrounding their land, they have a vested interest in preserving these abundant fisheries and the pristine nature of Washington's waters.

Derelict crab gear is not a problem unique to this tribe, its effects can be seen throughout the coast and the Puget Sound region. The Makah Tribe's program is part of a regional effort to combat the issue of derelict gear, and their program will complement similar efforts by other tribes such as the Quinault Indian Nation and the Quileute Tribe.

I therefore commend the Makah Tribe for the leadership and initiative in developing the application submitted to the NOAA Marine Debris Prevention Program, and I ask for your full and fair consideration of their proposal.

Sincerely,



Maria Cantwell
United States Senator

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