

On 12/16/2010 7:31 PM, Diane McNally wrote:

As a long time follower of non-invasive research on Northern Residents, Southern Residents and Transient orcas, I am not in favour of this proposal. Tagging will not provide additional data to assist in addressing the major threats of toxins in their environment and subsequent toxin load in their bodies, decimation of and major variations in food availability, and the ever-increasing acoustic pollution from boat traffic and sonar.

The North Island Marine Mammal Stewardship Association and other observers in the field have observed Northern Residents and Transients in Johnstone Strait and Queen Charlotte Strait to have scars and open wounds from air gun deployed satellite tags placed in previous air gun tagging operations. Injury while deploying is possible, and post-deployment wounds are evident. Any time there is an open wound there is stress and a risk of infection.

Shed tags are very likely to have negative consequences for other marine life who contact the tags. Are you certain photo id and acoustic monitoring will not provide the information you are seeking? Have you contacted Canadian scientists for information sharing and opinions on your proposal? As these orcas live in Canadian waters a good deal of the time you may be able to get information in less invasive ways.

To what end are you seeking this information? Even in orcas' known ranges, human "management" is not providing them with optimal living conditions.

How will increased knowledge of their range lead to substantive assistance to orcas in maintaining and enhancing the current populations of orcas in the area proposed for your study?

The real benefit to orcas is not apparent.

Along with many others who have written, I find this study proposal to be of no real benefit to the orcas and am not in support. Please let me know that you will move to take this proposal to a public hearing.