ORCAS TREATED LIKE LAB ANIMALS

Now that orcas on the West Coast of BC and WA have been declared an endangered species there are numerous researchers who are on the water harassing the orcas. To date, whale protection groups are not speaking out. Lifeforce was alone in the 90s when we opposed darting orcas for skin biopsies and seismic testing with air guns - noise that could harm orcas. So far, we have been alone in our battle to stop those who treat marine wildlife as if they were laboratory animals. Instead of providing funds for immediate, practical solutions (such as boat traffic monitoring/education, land-based "Orca Trails" whale watching and oil spill prevention) funds are being spent on frivolous, unnecessary experiments. In one study to collect fish scales the orcas are continuously followed and even pursued when they are not foraging. We already know that orcas eat fish and that dwindling fish stocks must be protected for all. These "Focal follows" can be fatal. Boat traffic is recognized as a major threat to orcas. As recent as August 2003, orca A60 was wounded by a propeller. Presently, there are far too many boats pursuing orcas all day long so we don't want new research boat traffic. Boats can interrupt the lifestyles of orcas, cause psychological stress, affect immune systems making them more susceptible to illnesses and cause physical injuries.

While on the water documenting the experiments Lifeforce was told that all the experiments are authorized with scientific permits. Well, the unjust atrocities sanctioned in vivisection laboratories are also approved in a peer review system that provides little, if any, protection for the animal victims. We must not allow the oceans to be turned into vivisection laboratories and marine wildlife treated as laboratory animals.

Ed Note: Sounds produced by navies are dangerous to marine mammals (the U.S. Navy has admitted its own sonar was most likely responsible for the death of several whales in the Bahamas). The U.S. Navy funds a major part of marine mammal science (sponsoring 70% of all marine mammal research in the U.S., and 50% of marine mammal research worldwide). The research is for military purposes and does not protect animal rights.

Lifeforce Work in 2005 ...

Protecting Orcas

There are many great initiatives that we participated in to help protect orcas and other marine wildlife. Lifeforce was very busy responding to the American and Canadian governments' efforts to protect endangered orcas. The US is proposing the Federal listing of orcas as endangered and an Orca Recovery Plan. Canada has the proposed improved Marine Mammal Regulations and an Orca Recovery Plan.

Boat Traffic Interference and Noise

Commercial whale watching businesses must change their ways. Adding to this very serious problem are the pleasure boaters who think the companies are following the rules and they copy the irresponsible actions/violations of guidelines. Lifeforce has drafted a discussion paper entitled "Boat Traffic Threats to Southern Resident Killer Whales (Orcinus orca): A Model Whale Watching Plan for Endangered Orcas". This plan would implement major changes in eco tourism operations. It would help stop the present chaotic, continual presence of boats by designating Whale Watch Zones, No Whale Watch Zones and land-based "Orca Trails" whale watching.

Delta Port Expansion

Lifeforce is trying to mitigate the noise and contamination issues that would result from a proposed major waterfront construction near Vancouver. On June 14, 2005, we sent a letter to the Federal Minister requesting that he not allow the Deltaport Expansion project. The lives of orcas and a diversity of wildlife are endangered by the proposed expansion plans by the Vancouver Port Authority. The area should be declared a Marine Protected Area in order to protect this fragile ecosystem.

Raw Sewage

The City of Victoria continues to dump their raw sewage into sensitive marine habitats. Lifeforce has contacted politicians to advise them of possible violations to the Species at Risk Act (threatening endangered orcas and other marine life) and other federal regulations.

West Edmonton Mall

In spite of protests by Lifeforce to free him, Howard, the last of the performing dolphins from the West Edmonton Mall, was sent to an aquarium in the Florida Keys. He has died, about a year after being moved.

Continued on Page 2
Lifeforce Work in 2005 (continued) ...

Luna the Lonely Orca
Published Vancouver Province, July 7
Dear Editor: It is cruel to leave lonely Luna in Nootka Sound and it threatens the future of the endangered Southern Orca Community. He needs help to leave a world of humans and to return to a world of whales. Luna is lonely and needs the companionship of his family. He was separated and is now like a lost child. If given the choice he would reunite with his family. Since he cannot find his mom he utilizes inanimate objects and people in an attempt to fulfill some of his behavioural and psychological needs. The lone orca in Puget Sound was captured and successfully reunited with her A pod family. In order to protect Luna and people who could be accidentally injured he should be immediately returned to his family.

Vancouver Aquarium Issues
In July 2005 Tuvaq, a 3-year-old beluga, suddenly stopped breathing in front of a crowd of onlookers at the Vancouver Aquarium. At least 25 cetaceans have died there. In our Press Release we stated: “The Vancouver based ecology organization, Lifeforce, is calling for an end to all dolphin imprisonment at the Vancouver Aquarium following the horrible death of a baby beluga in front of tearful children. Lifeforce was instrumental in convincing the Vancouver Park Board to implement a partial ban on the import of cetaceans and hopes that this recent death will be a deathblow to the dolphin slave trade”. 

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DFO Still Not Prepared
On April 26, 2005 a 3-year-old female Grey Whale was stranded in Boundary Bay, Canada. Fire fighters supplied equipment and started the rescue while the Vancouver Aquarium arrived later. And where was the Department of Fisheries and Oceans who told me years ago that they were setting up a response team? The fire fighter who first saw the whale called the Vancouver Aquarium and he was told to leave it alone. He told them that the whale should be saved. He had to “scramble” for equipment. He got a water pump, tent etc. and started to save the whale with the aid of other fire fighters and the public. The aquarium reported that the whale only had 5% - 10% chance of survival. They said that the whale was emaciated and sick. However, blood tests revealed no such health problems. They said that the whale was too large to move to the aquarium. Lucky for her. The whale left when the tide came in. The aquarium spin doctors took most of the credit when it was actually private people who organized it.

ARE WE PREPARED FOR EMERGENCIES? NO!
Presently pets, wildlife and even people would not be guaranteed protection in the event of a major emergency. The protection of pets and wildlife must be included in emergency plans. We are not prepared for major earthquakes, hurricanes, fires, floods, environmental hazards and other life threatening situations. Every pet owner must be prepared with transport cages and food to take their animal companions with them - the animals must not be abandoned. Government plans must not force owners to leave them behind. Evacuating both people and animals would eliminate problems in attempting to reunite them afterwards. In some cases governments must provide on site temporary shelters so stranded or lost animals are not transported to other states, provinces and countries.

For the past eight years, Lifeforce has been collecting equipment to help wild and domestic animals. Lifeforce is on standby with our Wildlife Rescue Unit and boat. We were ready to set up an animal rescue post at the recent fire in Burns Bog, Vancouver, BC. Lifeforce has been urging government agencies to set up a permanent, paid Wildlife Emergency Response Team. This team will address various emergency situations. Lifeforce must be supported to be able to implement our methods in emergency situations and to train others to use the species-specific methods.

Marine Wildlife Rescue
Lifeforce has developed methods to keep orcas and other marine wildlife away from oil/chemical spills because nothing is presently planned to stop such exposures. Orcas have been subjected to oil spills in Southern Georgia Strait. We submitted our paper “Oil and Chemical Resistant Whales, Otters and Birds?” to the Puget Sound Georgia Basin Research Conference March 29 - 31.

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More Lifeforce Work in 2005 ...

Seal Hunt
The infamous seal hunt continues in Eastern Canada. Some organizations have proposed combing seal pups as a way for sealers to make money without killing them. Lifeforce opposed this ill-conceived plan because it's a seal nursery not a fur factory!

Ed Note: ST. JOHN'S, Nfld. (CP) - Newfoundland researchers have signed a multimillion-dollar deal with a Chinese pharmaceutical company to develop and market a seal oil nutritional product for distribution to hospitals in the Asian country. Four researchers from Memorial University in St. John's have started animal testing of the product in Newfoundland and hope to begin human trials next spring in China. More excuses to kill seals.

Group Transient Orca Behaviour Similar to Group Resident Behaviour
On September 5, 2005 Lifeforce's Peter Hamilton observed several transient orcas for several hours in Active Pass and Southern Georgia Strait near Vancouver, BC. They exhibited similar behavioural and travel patterns as the residents of the Southern Community.

Most of our time was spent on boater education since there was heavy boat traffic on this Labour Day holiday. Some identification work was conducted after the boats left. The Lifeforce boat was positioned in predictable points of the orcas' pathway based on my earlier behavior/travel observations. This method was employed in order to not make any unauthorized close approaches.

Graeme Ellis, Department of Fisheries and Oceans, viewed our ID photos and identified T020, T021, T100, T101, T102, and T100C. More information will be published and available on www.lifeforcefoundation.org

Grey Whales Unique "L" Path Travel Pattern in Gray Whale
On three observation days over an eight day period Lifeforce's Peter Hamilton observed a unique travel pattern of a young gray whale in the waters of Boundary Bay, BC. This behaviour had not been previously reported. The "L" path travel pattern was repeated several times except for when there were interactions with another gray. However, when the socializing stopped the visitor went into deeper waters and the young grey went back to the "L" pattern. The benefits of such distinct travel patterns are not known. They may be related to a rich food source. More information will be published and available on www.lifeforcefoundation.org

Lone Dolphins
Lifeforce sent information about our studies of a lone False killer whale from 1993 to 2003 for a conference to be held this December in California. Lone dolphin behaviour and management will be discussed. If donations are received Lifeforce would love to attend to provide some fascinating information. Our information is vital in developing plans to reunite Luna and other lone dolphins.

Nature and History Walk Program - End of the Children's Zoo?
There were discussions of closing the petting zoo in Stanley Zoo and turning it into a Ecology Center. Lifeforce offered our assistance with our displays, photos and Nature/History brochures. Although we were successful in stopping the expansion of a new zoo in Stanley Park some animals continue to be kept in this petting zoo.

Petting Wildlife
Recent publicity over "Kissing Bears" at Discovery Wildlife Park, Innisfahll, Alberta, raises the issue of the zoo and aquarium industry treating their captives as pets and sending the dangerous "get close with wildlife" message. It is as idiotic as the porcupine in the Calgary Petting Zoo. The following was part of a paper written by Peter Hamilton: "Are the captive dolphin programs instilling speciesist attitudes towards dolphins in the wild?"

"Pleasure boaters can also pose other threats to species at risk. Public perception has been influenced by the Aquarium Industry who treats their captives like pets whom they ride, swim with and hand feed. If the public is going to aquariums and getting up close with cetaceans it is highly likely that they will try to get too close to dolphins in the wild. Lifewatch has had to stop boaters from attempting to swim with the wild orcas. Captive dolphin programs should advise people that these creatures are wild animals and regulations in some countries, such as the US, stipulate that it is illegal to swim, touch and feed marine wildlife." Aquaria continue to be the problem not the solution. Lifeforce investigations were instrumental in creating the first bans on wild animal acts in circuses. We must ban all aquatic circuses.

Ed Note: The Municipality of Tel-Aviv banned animal circus acts. The Mayor of Tel-Aviv, Ron Huldai, instructed the municipality to avoid any future contracts with circuses that use animals of any sort in their shows. Let's hope for worldwide ban.

Canada Geese
Letter to Mayor and Council (Kelowna, BC) in response to egg shaking plan:
Shake the hunters who created a "domesticated" Canada goose for their year round hunting plans. That's why the geese do not migrate.

The so-called wildlife expert, Mike Mackintosh, was at the Stanley Park Zoo during all their cruel animal deals (such as sending monkeys to a Northern BC roadside zoo where they were froze to death). Later he was manager and tried to expand the zoo. Fortunately Lifeforce was instrumental in stopping the plans and the barbaric zoo in Stanley Park.

I find it interesting that humans buy cow manure to dump on their lawns but complain about natural goose droppings. I suggest that Kelowna bag and sell goose manure. Health Chief John Blatherwick told me that no one gets sick - they would have to eat it. Also, Mackintosh tried to blame the geese for water pollution in Vancouver but I proved it was the boaters dumping their sewage - the human "manure".

Ed Note: A provincial-federal study aimed at protecting two aquifers used for drinking water in the Fraser Valley has found that as few as nine percent of farmers are adhering to regulations related to the proper disposal of livestock manure. Pollution from illegal manure operations poses a threat to people and fish. Manure spreading is typically banned in winter to prevent heavy rains from exacerbating the problem of pollutants leaching into ground water. Factory farming is a threat - Wildlife droppings are not.
More Lifeforce Work in 2005 (continued) ...

Bear Protection

Throughout the 80s Lifeforce intervened to stop bear killings as "management". We distributed "Bear Facts" to educate the public about the Dos and Don'ts. When several groups formed to focus on the bear/human conflicts Lifeforce went on to other projects. However, the "conflicts" continue. This year the plentiful berry season helped keep the bears out of Whistler Village. So in poor berry season put berries in back woods. Lifeforce recommended food drops years ago. Finally, Conservation officers on the North Shore will begin stepping up enforcement to ensure residents are not leaving out garbage and ripe fruit that attract bears. People could face a fine of $575. Garbage, compost, rotting fruit, bird feeders and other human foods all attract black bears, and feeding bears, whether intentionally or not, is a violation of the Wildlife Act. While neighbourhood audits will begin next week, government officials are still encouraging anyone who sees potential conflicts to call the Ministry of Environment's 24-hour call centre at 1-800-663-9453.

Grouse Mountain Zoo

OPEN LETTER to North Vancouver Mayor and Council
Re: Moratorium on Exhibition and Performances

"In view of the ongoing concerns about animal welfare and public safety on Grouse Mountain, I hope that council will implement a moratorium on all further acquisitions of animals for exhibit and performances.

"Ken Macquisten, former owner of the appalling Vancouver Game Farm, has stated that he plans to acquire numerous species including eagles, elk, mammals, caribou and wolverines. Shortly after leaving the Greater Vancouver Zoo (aka Vancouver Game Farm) he said that he wants to open a "captive breeding centre" with 40 - 50 animals including pandas, tigers, elephants, whooping cranes and burrowing owls. Is he planning this zoo for Grouse Mountain? Is he planning to spend the $400,000 from the BC government on these types of animal exhibits? "There are numerous wildlife rehabilitation and release organizations that have been caring for many species over the years. They should be supported and receive funds from the BC government. These Ski Resort Zoos must be stopped!"

STOP THE SKI RESORT ZOOS

Licensed rehabilitators in B.C. are usually volunteers. Their primary goal in rehabilitation is to care for injured or orphaned to give them a second chance in the wild. Two B.C. facilities alone, over the last 30 years, have successfully rehabbed 200 black bears and two female grizzly cubs plus many other animals.

This year, two commercial for-profit zoos in B.C., housed on the ski slopes of Kicking Horse and Grouse Mountain have made proposals to obtain more bears. They have done so under the guise of rehabilitation.

"As far as KHGBR is concerned, the people that run it have never rehabilitated anything," says Leona Green, Hillspring Wildlife Rehabilitation Society, "There is a vast difference between rehabilitation and plopping something into a pen." "Rehabilitation of a grizzly bear has been done, so it's definitely feasible," says Anjelika Langen, co-founder of Smithers' Northern Lights Wildlife Society. "But human contact has to be limited. As long as people have access to it, the bear's not in a rehabilitation centre."

Please Help Stop The Ski Resort Zoos - email the Minister of the Environment at env.minister@gov.bc.ca

Ed Note:Eating wildlife is also not healthy. In September 2005 ten French hunters who ate meat from a black bear they killed during a trip to Canada were treated for the parasitic disease trichinosis, and several of them remain in a Paris hospital. Four other people who ate bear meat after the hunters transported it home to France have also contracted the potentially fatal infection, stated Dr. Jean Dupouy-Camet of University Hospital in Paris. In other news stories, Hunters blame the increase of bear attacks in Ontario on the ban on hunting bears in the Spring when they are nursing young.

Movie Bears Unbearable

In January 2005 Lifeforce wrote to Simon Jackson who campaigns to protect the "Spirit Bear" (an albino kermode). The CTV movie about his work used a live captive bear during the filming. The "animal actors" are often inhumanely isolated, caged and beaten to perform tricks on demand.

Mountain View "Conservation" Society

While some organizations are supporting zoo standards, Lifeforce continues to oppose all imprisonment of animals in zoos. A zoo is a zoo. The Aquarium and Zoo Industry promote that they have "standards". It’s more like standards for animal abuses and staff stupidity.

Zoos will report births for publicity and financial profit but the public seldom hears about the deaths behind the scenes. Apparently, last December the staff at Mountain View "Conservation" Society in Langley, BC did not know that the pygmy hippopotamus was pregnant. She was confined with the male and when she gave birth to twins the male killed them. These horrible deaths could have been prevented. In addition, births of gazelles are reported on Mountain View’s web site but an unknown number have died.

Violations of Whale Watching Regulations

Lifeforce has reported numerous cases of harassment of orcas by whale watch companies to Canadian and US authorities. Our video and photographs depicts a blatant disregard of guidelines and regulations. During discussions with Canadian enforcement officers it was apparent that they should be trained to gather evidence. The behaviour of orcas must be fully understood. Lifeforce will assist in providing documented cases and orca information for a training course.
Lifeforce looking for some first aid

by Meg Ryan, All Point Bulletin, June 2005

Lifeforce founder Peter Hamilton is looking at his 13th summer as the Point Roberts orca-guy, and wondering if it’s the hapless number that’s ushering in tough times.

Hamilton is a fixture at Lighthouse Marine Park; peering out at the water from his white Lifeforce van, updating the park’s Orca Center with educational material on resident and transient orca populations, or answering the perennial question, “when are the whales coming by?” It’s a question he usually knows the answer to, after decades of studying and monitoring marine mammals in local waters.

The Lifeforce boat is also well-known out on the water, where Hamilton hands out whale watching guidelines he developed, studies the interaction of marine mammals and boats, and responds 24-hours-a-day to marine wildlife emergencies.

The catch is Hamilton tends to spend all his time doing those things, and very little fundraising. Lifeforce has become something of a one-man show over the years, with only the occasional volunteer to help Hamilton gather data, raise funds or recruit other to help with the non-profit foundation’s long menu of programs. “I have been looking for someone to help with fundraising and bookkeeping,” he said ruefully.

While those activities have lapsed, Hamilton has dug through personal savings, and this year, he said, the well is dry. The Lifeforce boat has been put up for sale, so the organization can avoid defaulting on a $28,000 loan. “No boat, no program,” Hamilton said.

Even if the boat is sold and he can obtain a less expensive one to get him out on the water, it will limit his wildlife rescue, study and public education efforts. Furthermore, without at least $10,000 to pay for operating expenses Hamilton, who works winters to volunteer for Lifeforce in the summers, says he can no longer afford to take up the slack.

The Lifeforce Orca Trails program, which alerts members to the orcas passing their location, and the Lifewatch whale and marine mammal monitoring programs will not run this summer, Hamilton said, unless he can secure funding for them through donations. He will continue his wildlife rescue efforts and will update the Lighthouse Marine Park orca center display, but “the guy in the white van can’t provide info about when the whales will pass by, whale cards or other marine biology info.”

Lighthouse park manager Ben VanBuskirk said Lifeforce has been a valuable resource for the park. “For the past 10 years, Peter Hamilton has made himself available to help our community with a wide range of services,” he said in a letter supporting Lifeforce fundraising efforts.

“Whenever we have sick or injured wildlife including injured seals and birds, Peter provides the care the animals need, even if it involves Peter taking the injured animal across the Strait of Georgia to a wildlife rehabilitation center. Peter also does a great job letting people know what not to do when you see baby seals or other animals that people come in contact with.”

If this year proves Lifeforce can’t survive as a publicly supported non-profit ecological organization, Hamilton said he will start charging for what he’s always given for free, starting up small-scale ecotours and taking out groups of less than half a dozen to learn about the local marine ecosystem. “They pay and the Lifeforce programs can continue,” he said.

To learn more about Lifeforce, contribute or volunteer, visit them on the internet at http://www.lifeforcefoundation.org/ or call 604/669-4673.

Other News

Vivisection
- In September, the University of California at San Francisco (UCSF) agreed to pay $92,500 to settle a complaint filed last year by the US Department of Agriculture alleging 75 violations of the Animal Welfare Act in labs between 2001 and 2003. Among the USDA’s complaints were gross loss of weight in primates subjected to "water restriction" so they would perform tasks, not administering adequate pain relief and performing a craniotomy on a monkey without post-surgical analgesia. Lifeforce investigations in the 80s included UCSF and other UC facilities. It’s been over twenty years and the abuses continue. The peer review system has failed to protect animals.

- DRAW THE LINE AT HUMAN-ANIMAL EXPERIMENTS. At Stanford University scientists injected human brain cells into mouse fetuses, creating a strain of mice that was approximately one per cent human. They are considering a follow-up experiment that would produce mice whose brains are made up of 100 percent human cells. At the University of British Columbia human genes are implanted into mice to replace the one accidentally removed in a mice strain and which made them abnormally fierce.

Food and Pollution
- Whaling for Food, a publication of the Canadian based World Council of Whalers responds to the question "Why do some people continue to eat whales (when most of us do not)?". Ed Note: Who wants to eat polluted sentient beings?
- The U.S. Senate passed an amendment that prohibits the use of any federal taxpayer funds to slaughter horses for food exports. Together, these measures will effectively stop America's horses from being killed in three slaughterhouses in the U.S. The amendment also stops horses from being shipped to slaughterhouses in Canada or Mexico so that their meat can be exported to foreign countries.
Lifeforce News On Line
Send us your email address so we can send you the newsletter on line.
If you ask for a VIP listing we will send you News Updates throughout the year.
You can also read the Lifeforce News and other information on line at www.lifeforcefoundation.org
Also send your phone# if you would like to be on our contact list for special activities.

Can You Help?
Lifeforce needs a storage space approx. 10' x 20' that can be used as an office. We are also looking for a donated Lifeforce Boat to continue our Marine Life Programs next Spring.

Lifeforce has been very busy responding to numerous calls to help seals, birds and other animals. We have offered our assistance to Rehab/release organization to capture and release wildlife.

The Lifeforce photograph on the right is in the Parks Canada education program to establish Marine Protected Areas. The management needs for Gulf Islands National Park Reserve are complex. This small park includes a mix of lands spread over 15 islands, many islets and several marine areas (submerged lands). The ecosystems, both land-based and marine, are both significant and sensitive.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED
* To conduct fund-raising activities for projects to stop vivisection, factory farming and the exploitation of animals for so-called "entertainment". We need volunteers for special event displays and for writing grant applications.*
* We will also do consulting services and rent our equipment, such as the Marine Wildlife Rescue Trailer and Lifewatch Boat, to other organizations.*
* To distribute Lifeforce Orca Field Guides and Whale Watch Guidelines to marinas, boating organizations, schools and libraries.*
* To help with our Marine Life Programs. For example, we need whale spotters.

Please Sign Me Up for a 2006 Lifeforce Membership/Donation
* Here is my Ocean Friends Membership to help conduct the Marine Life Programs:
  $85.00 Adult □  $45.00 Children under 13 □

I WANT TO HELP BY JOINING/RENEWING □ AND/OR VOLUNTEERING □

Membership is only:
$15 Senior/Student □  $25 Individual □  $50 Family □  $250 Business □

Here is my Gift Membership of $________ for ______________________________________

Here is my membership/donation of $________
Name ___________________________ Address __________________________________________
City ___________________________ Prov/State __________________ Postal/Zip Code ________

YOUR BEQUESTS
If you want to help the Lifeforce Foundation continue our important work in the future you can leave us a gift in your will. You may wish to bequeath funds for a program of your choice or for the general work and perpetuity of Lifeforce. Program(s) could be given your name for your lasting legacy. Funds will be gratefully acknowledged. A general form of bequest is suggested:
I give, devise and bequeath to the Lifeforce Foundation, located in Vancouver, BC, the sum of $________ and/or (specifically described property).

Lifeforce hopes that you will act now to make sure that your wishes will be carried out.

Lifeforce, Box 3117, Vancouver, BC V6B 3X6 - Lifeforce, Box 121, Pt. Roberts, WA 98281-0121
Phone: (604) 669-4673 - Email: lifeforcociety@hotmail.com - Web Site: www.lifeforcefoundation.org
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