

May 20, 2019



Lummi Nation calls on US government to act now for qwe 'lhol mechen (orcas)

As we learn of the dire condition of Princess Angeline (J17) and now, too, her daughter Kiki (J53), who are starving to death, Lummi Nation calls upon the United States government to act immediately.

We call upon Senator Murray, Senator Cantwell, Governor Inslee, and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) to recognize this state of emergency, and to issue an emergency intervention.

The resident Salish Sea orcas are *qwe 'lhol mechen*, which means *our relations below the waves*. The Lummi people have a *Xa Xalh Xechnging* (sacred obligation) to take care of them and feed them in the same way we take care of and feed our own families. We are now ceremonially feeding *qwe 'lhol mechen*, and we will do whatever it takes to fulfill our sacred obligation.

NOAA and other agencies have an obligation to fulfill their trustee duties to Lummi Nation. While we understand NOAA's desire to gather additional information, we also know that the *qwe 'lhol mechen* need food right now. We call upon NOAA to work with Lummi Nation and other partners to provide emergency relief, and to come up with a sustainable, long-term plan for *qwe 'lhol mechen* survival.

"NOAA Fisheries does not plan to intervene with J17 or J53 at this time but will continue to work with partners to gather additional information, evaluate options and consult with experts."
<https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/feature-story/aerial-images-document-southern-resident-killer-whale-j17s-continued-decline>

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