



Pacific WildLife
Foundation

Objective Science for Conservation

PO Box 1-12, Reed Point Marina, 850 Barnett Highway, Port Moody, British Columbia V3H 1V6 Canada.
(Tofino: Box 384 V0R2Z0, Tel: 250-725-1225 Email:jimd367@gmail.com)

October 27, 2020.

To Whom It May Concern:

This letter is to affirm our support for the continued designation of the Clayoquot Sound UNESCO Biosphere Region, established in 2000.

Our region has worked together for the past decade to advance the objectives of the UNESCO Biosphere Reserve program. We are working together to achieve the objectives of sustainable development, biodiversity conservation and reconciliation, through education, research and collaboration such as:

Co-leading sustainable development and biodiversity conservation projects.

The CBT recognized the value of my long term gray whale research program in the reserve area and assisted in funding of both field work and, more critically, analysis. This included use of CBT office on the weekends where space was needed for matching 1000s of identification photographs. The result will be a four decade overview of composition and behavior of one of the region's key species, both ecologically and economically. Gray whales are the basis for a significant whale watching industry which brings millions of dollars a year into the community. CBT support also assisted in producing an online individual whale identification catalog for access by all.

Participating in programs and events that develop cross-cultural understanding and advance reconciliation.

The CBT supported my collaboration with the local Tla-O-Qui-Aht First Nation in an investigation into a huge collection of whale bones buried at a whaling site in use for 1000s of years before European colonization. Through genetic analysis we were able to determine species present before industrialized whaling and those most

important to First Nation culture and for food. This study has been published in a western science journal with the authorship including the First Nation hosts. Working on the project enhanced my understanding of indigenous whaling culture, and the potential of future collaborations.


Advancing climate change research, monitoring, mitigation and adaptation projects.

We are partnered on a CBT led, multi-year study of soundscapes, including biological, physical and human sound in the near pristine Sydney Inlet in the reserve. This involves three years of sound recording, both on land and underwater over the length of the inlet from entrance to estuary. This study will provide the baseline knowledge of natural species and events essential for the recognition and assessment of changes over time due to development and climate change.

One further point I would like to make is the CBT has done a remarkable job of inclusivity. Their programs have been developed such that the majority in this diverse west coast community feel the CBT is relevant to them; that they are welcomed and supported. It has added a significant depth to the process of community assessment of environmental, health, development and social issues. The direction the CBT has taken is quite unprecedented and its full contribution is yet to be realized.

We are proud to support the continued Clayoquot Sound UNESCO Biosphere designation, and look forward to participating in the next ten years of activities in our region.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jim Darling". The signature is written in a cursive style and is placed on a light-colored rectangular background.

Jim Darling, PhD

Director