

**MEDIA ADVISORY
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Contacts:

Orca Network

Cindy Hansen, cindy@orcانetwork.org, 360-223-5666

Washington Conservation Action:

Zachary Pullin, zachary@waconservationaction.org, 206-639-3760,

Orca Month Team:

Rosemary Connelli, Orca Month Communications, rconnelli@gmail.com, 802-369-4553

Orca Action Month Honors Southern Resident Orcas and the Endangered Species Act in “Lasting Legacies”

[DATE] – June is officially proclaimed Orca Action Month in the Pacific Northwest. This June marks the 17th annual celebration of Orca Month in Washington state and the eighth annual celebration in Oregon and British Columbia. Members of the Orca Salmon Alliance (OSA) are hosting events throughout the month to educate the public about the Southern Resident orca population and the challenges they face, including reduced Chinook salmon numbers, pollutants in the water, higher risk for oil spills, and noise and disturbance.

Orca Action Month’s 2023 theme “Lasting Legacies” highlights the 50th anniversary of the Endangered Species Act with some success stories from the past half century, and honors some legendary Southern Resident orcas who leave behind “Lasting Legacies”.

Through “Lasting Legacies” messaging, activities, and events, organizers hope to celebrate this iconic, world-famous population and bring together tribal members, researchers, orca lovers, and elected officials to inspire action and advocacy efforts to protect this highly endangered species. Everyone is welcome and encouraged to get involved and participate throughout this exciting month.

In-person events to kick off Orca Action Month will be held in Seattle from 1:00 to 4:00 PM, San Juan Island from 1:00 to 5:00 PM, Whidbey Island from 3:00 to 5:00 PM, and Sidney, British Columbia from 11:00 AM to 3:00 PM. A hybrid in-person/virtual event will be held from 3:00 to 5:00 PM, with keynote speakers Florian Graner of Sealife Productions joining from the Whidbey Island event and Jay Julius of Se’si’le and the Lummi Nation joining from the San Juan Island event!

What: Orca Action Month Kick-Off Events

When: Sunday, June 4th

Where:

- **Seattle:** 1 – 4 pm, El Centro de la Raza, 2534 16th Ave S., Seattle, WA

- **San Juan Island:** 1 – 5 pm, beginning at San Juan County Courthouse lawn at 350 Court St, and ending at San Juan Island Grange at 152 First St N., Friday Harbor, WA
- **Whidbey Island:** 3 – 5 pm, Langley Whale Center, 105 Anthes Ave., Langley, WA
- **Sidney, British Columbia:** 11 am – 3 pm, Beacon Park, 9801 Seaport Pl, Sidney, BC Canada
- **Virtual Event:** 3 – 5 pm, register at https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_xCB9NeZpSYyfZ5f3BpgnHg

Seattle

- Free community event with face painting, orca coloring, music, speakers, chalk artist, and educational booths.
- Music by Erika Lundahl and Right as Rain.
- Storytelling by Nora Nickum, author of *Superpod*, Jeff Hogan of Killer Whale Tales, Chris Morgan of *The Wild Podcast* (invited).
- Speakers: Ken Workman, Duwamish Tribal Councilmember, Jourdan Imani Keith, Seattle Civic Poet and Tammy J Morales, Seattle Councilmember (invited).

San Juan Island

- Free community event includes storytelling and refreshments.
- Meet at San Juan County Courthouse for a parade to celebrate the Southern Resident orcas with life size dorsal fins. Parade through town, ending at San Juan Island Grange. If you want to sign-up to carry an orca fin in the parade, or if you have any questions, email Lovel Pratt, lovel@sanjuans.org.
- Features keynote speaker Jay Julius of Se'Si'Le and the Lummi Nation at the San Juan Island Grange. This presentation will also be part of the virtual event.

Whidbey Island

- Event at Langley Whale Center, includes free admission and refreshments.
- Features keynote speaker Florian Graner of Sealife Productions. This presentation will also be part of the virtual event.

Sidney, British Columbia

- A free community event to celebrate Ocean Week Canada and Orca Action Month.
- Organized by the Shaw Centre for the Salish Sea.
- Activities about Southern Resident orcas led by Parks Canada.
- Family-friendly programs and educational booths from local organizations outside on the Sidney waterfront!

Virtual Event

- The virtual event will be held over Zoom with Florian Graner joining from the Whidbey Island event and Jay Julius joining from the San Juan Island event.
- **About our Keynote Speakers:**

Jay Julius, W'tot lhem, is the former Chairman of the Lummi Nation, a full-time fisherman and father, and the Founder and President of [Se'Si'Le](#). Read Jay's recent [Earth Day message on sanjuans.org](#).

Florian Graner started Sealife Productions, a family company that films and produces wildlife documentaries. Florian holds a Ph.D. in Marine Biology with specialization in marine mammals. He brings passion and extensive subject knowledge to his films. [Learn more](#).

Why: Orca Network, a non-profit organization dedicated to connecting whales and people in the Pacific Northwest, started Orca Month in 2007. The goal was to bring together researchers, advocates, and orca lovers everywhere to raise awareness of the threats facing the Southern Resident orcas while providing a community celebration of the orcas of the Salish Sea. Orca Month is now celebrated in Oregon, Washington, and British Columbia to engage communities throughout the range of the Southern Residents to learn more and take action for Southern Resident orcas.

Visit our website at [orcamonth.com](#) to learn more and to [find events](#) to participate in.

###

[Orca Salmon Alliance](#) works to highlight the connection between two endangered species that need help: Southern Resident orcas and Chinook Salmon. Our primary objective is to prevent the extinction of the SRKWs by recovering the wild Chinook populations upon which the whales depend for survival. Member organizations of OSA include: Center for Biological Diversity, Defenders of Wildlife, Earthjustice, Endangered Species Coalition, Friends of the San Juans, Natural Resources Defense Council, Oceana, Orca Network, Puget Soundkeeper Alliance, Save our Wild Salmon, Seattle Aquarium, Sound Action, Toxic Free Future, Washington Environmental Council, Whale and Dolphin Conservation, Whale Scout, Wild Orca.