



CALIFORNIA GRAY WHALE COALITION

PROTECTING THE MOST ANCIENT BALEEN WHALE ALIVE TODAY

FACT SHEET

The Gray Whale is in *TROUBLE*

For the fourth consecutive season, the numbers of Gray whale cows and calves is very low. Up and down the migration route, people are asking the same question. Where have all the whales gone ?

Here's a few critical facts:-

- Increasing seawater temperatures and rapidly disappearing sea ice in their primary habitat – the Bering and Chukchi Seas – is forcing the whales to migrate much further north seeking alternative prey. As specialist feeders, there's no research to demonstrate there are adequate alternatives.
- Nutrients rain down from the melting sea ice to feed the benthos which is the primary habitat of the whales. Pacific walrus and benthic diving sea ducks share the same benthos as the Gray whales, these animals are showing signs of food stress.
- Whale watching captains are seeing fewer whales, smaller animals, emaciated whales and very few cows and calves.
- National Marine & Fisheries Service has a long record of mismanagement of the Gray Whales. This year will see the first proper population estimate in 8 years but no count will be released to the public any time soon.
- A meeting of the International Whaling Commission at Morocco in June will likely see a quota of 140 Gray whales annually is given to the Russian Federation for the people of Chukotka for the next 10 years
- Gray Whales cannot sustain any exploitation at this time. Without current information on the population; the impacts of climate change; changes in migration routes and the impact on reproduction; status of primary prey, etc. a moratorium is the only reasonable request which the US IWC delegation should be pushing.
- Counts during the peak whale week at Baja Lagunas Guerrero Negro and San Ignacio were down by 50%.



Photos courtesy of James Dorsey

HOW YOU CAN HELP.

BECOME INFORMED

Visit our website at: www.californiagraywhalecoalition.org for current information and latest **ACTION ALERTS**.

BECOME INVOLVED

Join our **FACEBOOK** page at: **California Gray Whale Coalition Group.**

MAKE IT COUNT

Become a California Gray Whale Coalition member. **The Coalition represents economic AND environmental concerns!** www.californiagraywhalecoalition.org/cqwcmembership.shtml

"For the Gray Whales"

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