

The Wild Dolphin Foundation

is a grassroots, nonprofit organization protecting and restoring the natural habitats of dolphins through research, advocacy, and public education; and dedicated to indigenous culture and peoples of Hawaii. Our goal is to create support and consensus for change in human behaviors that may threaten the well-being of dolphin environments worldwide.

Projects

Dolphin Photo ID - WDF uses identifications opportunistically obtained from the field to study the population parameters of the coastal dolphins. Our photo ID web page will be used as a tool for publishing and sharing photo-identification data among researchers, students, teachers and the interested public. Field studies are a valuable tool that can be applied to worldwide conservation efforts.

Documentation of the Dolphin's Habitat - For a multitude of reasons, conservation for a federally protected marine mammal species is not as cut and dry as it would seem. Given this, the WDF film crew is documenting the intact resources of the Wai'anae Coast to include its culture and people as well as natural history and environmental degradation. For example, as fresh water dwindles on the island, underwater springs that once fed nutrients to the ocean are no longer running, adversely affecting the balance of the marine ecosystem.

Hawaiian tradition has long recognized the interconnection between the land and the ocean, and the universal value of "Aloha `Aina" and "Malama ke Kai" - loving and caring for the land and the ocean. Pacific cultures are based on a high level of environmental awareness. The relationship of people to land and of people to sea is spiritual and religious. When tourism takes away the land, the fishing grounds or the right to gather food or medicine the Hawaiian loses a primary means of livelihood and - more important - meaning in life.

Interviews with elders, community groups, and ocean users; footage of intact and archival photos of "lost" resources, as well as exposure of environmental polluters - numerous on the coast- carefully pieced together to tell the story will help to build community bridges and identify changes to be made. The coast's strongest assets are its people and their support in reclaiming the land and ocean. The documentary project will act as a national demonstration project for local environmental protection.

VIDEO WITNESS Future uses of video documentation will employ the internet to stream video of the marvels and the horrors taking place in our oceans in our "VIDEO WITNESS" project. If you capture important video, please contact us.

REEF Survey and Reef Check - The spinner dolphins' daytime habitat is located in sandy areas surrounded by coral reefs. WDF heads the Leeward Oahu Reef Check, a community-based monitoring protocol designed to measure the health of coral reefs (and thus their surrounding habitat) on a global scale. REEF Survey monitors the fish sharing the dolphins'

habitat. What affects the reef and its inhabitants will also affect the dolphins. WDF will be hosting a *Great Annual Fish Count* on Oahu in July of 2005.

Our most recent Reef Checks of 2004 were at Poka'i Bay, July, and Lanikuhonua, August.