

Initial Necropsy Results: Southern Resident Killer Whale J34



An approximately 18 year old male killer whale, identified as J34 was found dead near Sechelt, B.C. on December 20th, 2016. J34 was a Southern Resident killer whale, a population listed as endangered under the *Species at Risk Act* in Canada. A necropsy was performed to determine the cause of the animal's death.

Initial examination indicates that the animal appears to have blunt trauma to the dorsal side, and a hematoma indicating that J34 was alive at the time of injury. A CAT scan will be conducted on the skull to determine if there are any fractures. Additional information from tissue and blood analysis can take 2-8 weeks. DFO is investigating what may have caused the blunt trauma to the animal. Anyone with information please call our Observe Record Report line at 1-800-465-4336.

Fisheries and Oceans Canada would like to acknowledge the Sechelt First Nation, whose efforts and collaboration were central to locating the animal and facilitating a successful necropsy. We would also like to thank the BC Ministry of Agriculture (and in particular, Dr. Stephen Raverty, Veterinary Pathologist who performed the necropsy exam), Vancouver Aquarium staff, as well as numerous dedicated DFO staff and biologists.

The results of J34's necropsy will feed into a growing body of knowledge to assist in assessing the threats to Southern Resident killer whales from a population health perspective. This data allows us to look at trends, pathogens, or other indicators that may affect their survival.

This page will be updated as new information comes in.

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