"You don't need a peg leg or an eye patch. When you ram ships; hurl glass containers of acid; drag metal-reinforced ropes in the water to damage propellers and rudders; launch smoke bombs and flares with hooks; and point high-powered lasers at other ships, you are, without a doubt, a pirate, no matter how high-minded you believe your purpose to be," wrote Chief Judge Kozinski in the February 25 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals ruling overturning a lower court decision which dismissed the Institute of Cetacean Research 's piracy charge against Sea Shepherd
, the Friday Harbor-based conservation organization.

The February 25 decision: The district court's orders denying Cetacean's preliminary injunction and dismissing its piracy claims are REVERSED. The preliminary injunction we issued on December 17, 2012, Inst. of Cetacean Research v. Sea Shepherd Conservation Soc'y, 702 F.3d 573 (9th Cir. 2012), will remain in effect until further order of this court... The appearance of justice would be served if the case were transferred to another district judge, drawn at random,and we so order in accordance with the standing orders of the Western District of Washington. The panel retains jurisdiction over any further appeals or writs involving this case.

The entire RULING

The partially concurring and dissenting opinion by Circuit Judge M. Smith is posted here . He stated, "The Sea Shepherds are pirates. Period. No district judge could fail to grasp the clarity and firmness of our opinion. He thought the case could be remanded to the same district court.