MARINE MAMMAL COMMISSION
4340 EAST-WEST HIGHWAY, ROOM 700
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1 July 2009

Neal Desai
Senior Program Manager, Pacific Region
National Parks Conservation Association
1300 19th Street NW, Suite 300
Washington, DC 20036

Gordon Bennett
Parks and Wildlife Chair
Sierra Club Marin Group
40 Sunnyside Drive
Inverness, CA 94937

Dear Messrs. Desai and Bennett:

For some time the Marine Mammal Commission has been aware of the controversy regarding potential effects of oyster farming in Drake's Estero on harbor seals, as described in your 9 June 2009 letter to the Commission. I have discussed this matter with our Commissioners, including your request that the Commission review these circumstances and their implications for harbor seal conservation. Within the context of its duties as set forth in the Marine Mammal Protection Act, the Commission believes that it may have a useful role to play in this situation. Therefore, we have decided to conduct an independent review. I will update you in the near future regarding the timing and nature of the review.

Please feel free to contact me in the interim if you have questions.

Sincerely,

Timothy J. Ragen

Timothy J. Ragen, Ph.D.
Executive Director

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