

MARINE MAMMAL COMMISSION
4340 East-West Highway, Room 700
Bethesda, MD 20814-4447

28 May 2009

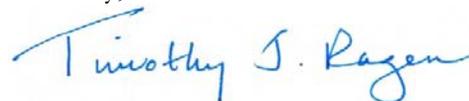
Ms. Diana Hynek
Departmental Paperwork Clearance Officer
Department of Commerce, Room 7845
14th and Constitution Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20230

Dear Ms. Hynek:

The Marine Mammal Commission has reviewed the notice regarding information collection requirements under the Marine Mammal Protection Act, the Fur Seal Act, and the Endangered Species Act (74 Fed. Reg. 15458). Under these laws, certain actions affecting marine mammals and endangered and threatened species are prohibited unless an authorization is obtained from the responsible federal agency. Researchers, photographers, public display facilities, and members of the public seeking authorization to take or import marine mammals or listed species are required to apply for a permit or general authorization to carry out their proposed activities. In addition to providing information in the permit application sufficient to enable to agency to make the findings required under the applicable statutes and regulations, permit-holders must subsequently report on activities they conduct to track compliance with permit conditions and to promote the protection of the animals. Holders of captive marine mammals also are required to report changes to their animal inventory.

The collection of this information is critical to ensuring the protection and conservation of marine mammal populations, to preventing illegal trade in marine mammals, to allowing the National Marine Fisheries Service to make the required findings for issuing permits, and to ensuring that the goals of the Marine Mammal Protection Act and other statutes are met. Therefore, the Commission believes that the data collection program should be continued without change.

Sincerely,



Timothy J. Ragen, Ph.D.
Executive Director