



MARINE MAMMAL COMMISSION

16 June 2011

Mr. P. Michael Payne, Chief
Permits, Conservation, and Education Division
Office of Protected Resources
National Marine Fisheries Service
1315 East-West Highway
Silver Spring, MD 20910-3225

Dear Mr. Payne:

The Marine Mammal Commission has reviewed the 2 June 2011 request from the Navy seeking concurrence from the National Marine Fisheries Service with a proposed authorization under 10 U.S.C. § 7524 to obtain up to six stranded, non-releasable, neonate, male or female sea lion pups from The Marine Mammal Center in Sausalito, California. The Navy explains that these animals might otherwise be euthanized due to their young age. The referenced statutory provision allows the Secretary of Defense to authorize the taking of not more than 25 marine mammals per year for national defense purposes. Such authorization can be made only with the concurrence of the Secretary of Commerce (this responsibility has been delegated to the National Marine Fisheries Service), after consulting with the Marine Mammal Commission.

The Marine Mammal Commission believes that the sea lions sought by the Navy are appropriate animals for inclusion in the Navy's marine mammal program and that the arrangements for their selection and transfer are appropriate. The Commission therefore believes that the Service should provide the Navy with the required concurrence.

Please contact me if you have questions regarding this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Timothy J. Ragen".

Timothy J. Ragen, Ph.D.
Executive Director