



# MARINE MAMMAL COMMISSION

14 December 2015

Ms. Jolie Harrison, Chief  
Permits and Conservation Division  
Office of Protected Resources  
National Marine Fisheries Service  
1315 East-West Highway  
Silver Spring, MD 20910-3225

Re: Permit Amendment Application No. 15510  
(Jennifer Burns, Ph.D.,  
University of Alaska Anchorage)

Dear Ms. Harrison:

The Marine Mammal Commission (the Commission), in consultation with its Committee of Scientific Advisors on Marine Mammals, has reviewed the above-referenced permit amendment application with regard to the goals, policies, and requirements of the Marine Mammal Protection Act (the MMPA). Dr. Burns is seeking to amend permit 15510 that authorizes her to collect, import, receive, possess, and export samples from 10 species of pinnipeds—the permit expires on 30 April 2016.

Dr. Burns is authorized to collect, import, receive, possess, and export an unlimited number of tissue samples<sup>1</sup> from up to 50 dead<sup>2</sup> harbor, harp, hooded, gray, bearded, ringed, spotted and ribbon seals and 6 captive<sup>3</sup> northern fur seals and Steller sea lions per year. All age classes and both sexes could be sampled. The objectives of the proposed research are to conduct physiology studies on development, thermoregulation, muscle performance, oxygen stores, and hormonal and other regulatory processes in pinnipeds.

In collaboration with the Alaska Native Harbor Seal Commission, Dr. Burns is proposing to increase the number of harbor seals that can be sampled from 50 to 100 per year and to extend the permit for one year to reinvigorate the harbor seal biosampling program. The Commission believes that the proposed amendment is consistent with the purposes and policies of the MMPA and therefore recommends that the National Marine Fisheries Service issue the permit amendment, provided that the current permit conditions remain in effect.

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<sup>1</sup> Both hard and soft parts, including muscle, blood, blubber, skin, and organs.

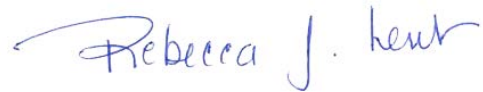
<sup>2</sup> From legal subsistence hunts in Alaska and other scientific and/or subsistence collections in Canada, Norway, and the United Kingdom.

<sup>3</sup> From facilities in Canada.

Ms. Jolie Harrison  
14 December 2015  
Page 2

Please contact me if you have any questions concerning the Commission's recommendation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Rebecca J. Lent". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "R" and a distinct "Lent" at the end.

Rebecca J. Lent, Ph.D.  
Executive Director