



MARINE MAMMAL COMMISSION

6 April 2016

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 Application No. 19706
(California State University, Bakersfield)

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 application with regard to the goals, policies, and requirements of the Marine Mammal Protection Act (the MMPA). California State University, Bakersfield (CSUB) is requesting authorization to conduct research on pinnipeds during a five-year period.

CSUB proposes to receive and possess blood serum from up to 500 California sea lions, 25 Guadalupe fur seals, and 25 northern fur seals per year. Researchers also would conduct a Spherusol[®] skin test on up to 500 California sea lions per year. The objective is to investigate an animal's exposure to *Coccidioides* spp. and compare the sensitivity of the serology and skin tests. The samples would originate from pinnipeds of either sex and any age class¹ held at rehabilitation facilities in California. A preliminary trial of the skin test would be conducted on up to 20 California sea lions to determine the reliability of the test and any negative impact including allergic reactions. Animals would be observed for 7 days after the administration of the skin test for pain, itching, acute hypersensitivity reaction, and severe allergic reactions (e.g., anaphylaxis). If the skin test results do not correlate with results obtained from immunodiffusion assays or if negative side effects arise that could delay the recuperation and release of the stranded pinniped, administration of the skin test would be discontinued. CSUB's Institutional Care and Use Committee has reviewed and approved the proposed research procedures.

Therefore, the Commission believes that the proposed activities are consistent with the purposes and policies of the MMPA and therefore recommends that the National Marine Fisheries Service issue the permit, as requested. Kindly contact me if you have any questions concerning the Commission's recommendation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Rebecca J. Lent".

Rebecca J. Lent, Ph.D.
Executive Director

¹ The skin test would be conducted on pups at least 3 months of age.