



MARINE MAMMAL COMMISSION

15 June 2017

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. 20311
(Pacific Island Fisheries Science Center)

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). Pacific Islands Fisheries Science Center (PIFSC) is seeking to renew its permit to conduct research on cetaceans in the Pacific Ocean during a five-year period—permit 15240 authorized similar activities.

PIFSC proposes to conduct research on numerous species of cetaceans in the Pacific Ocean year-round. The purpose of the research is to investigate (1) abundance, (2) stock structure and demographic parameters, (3) distribution, (4) movement patterns, and (5) foraging ecology. Researchers would harass, observe/track, photograph/videotape, record acoustically, sample, and/or instrument, numerous cetaceans of both sexes and various age classes (see the application and take table). PIFSC would implement various measures to minimize impacts on cetaceans and also would be required to abide by the National Marine Fisheries Service's (NMFS) standard permit conditions. PIFSC's Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee reviewed and approved the research protocols. The Commission believes that the proposed activities are consistent with the purposes and policies of the MMPA and recommends that NMFS 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