



MARINE MAMMAL COMMISSION

5 July 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 Amendment Application No. 19425
(Melissa McKinney, Ph.D.,
University of Connecticut)

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. McKinney is requesting to amend her permit to import, receive, possess, and export samples from cetaceans and pinnipeds, which expires on 1 August 2020.

Dr. McKinney is authorized to import, receive, possess, and export tissue samples from ringed and bearded seals, narwhals, and unidentified pinnipeds¹ and cetaceans of either sex and any age class (see the take table). The objectives are to investigate diet and contaminant concentrations and the effects of climate change on the health of the animals and ecosystem. Dr. McKinney is requesting the number of samples be increased from 50 to 300 per year for both unidentified pinnipeds and cetaceans. 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 amendment, provided that the current permit conditions remain in effect.

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 Except walrus.