



MARINE MAMMAL COMMISSION

18 December 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. 20626
(James H.W. Hain, Ph.D.)

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). Dr. Hain is seeking to renew his permit to conduct research on North Atlantic right whales (NARWs) during a five-year period—permit 13927 authorized the same activities.

Dr. Hain proposes to conduct research on NARWs off South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida from December through April of each year. Humpback whales would be studied opportunistically as well. The purpose of the research is to investigate (1) abundance and distribution, (2) habitat use, (3) life history parameters and reproductive success, (4) tag healing and retention, and (5) effects of human activities on the whales. Dr. Hain would harass, observe/track, photograph/videotape, and record acoustically numerous NARWs and humpback whales (see the take tables and application for specifics). Two other cetacean species could be harassed incidental to the proposed activities. Dr. Hain would use various measures to minimize impacts to cetaceans and also would be required to abide by the National Marine Fisheries Service's (NMFS) standard permit conditions. 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