



# MARINE MAMMAL COMMISSION

31 January 2018

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. 21371  
(Northeast 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). Northeast Fisheries Science Center (NEFSC) is seeking to renew its permit to conduct research primarily on cetaceans in the Atlantic Ocean during a five-year period—permit 17355 authorized similar activities. The purpose of the research is to investigate (1) population structure and life history parameters, (2) abundance and distribution, (3) trends in recruitment, (4) movement patterns and habitat use, and (5) foraging ecology of cetaceans. Opportunistic data could be collected on pinnipeds as well. Researchers would harass, observe/track, photograph/videotape, record acoustically, sample, and/or instrument numerous marine mammals of both sexes and various age classes (see the take tables and application for specifics).

NEFSC would use various measures to minimize impacts to marine mammals and also would be required to abide by the National Marine Fisheries Service's (NMFS) standard permit conditions. NEFSC's Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee has reviewed and approved the majority of the research protocols. A few modifications<sup>1</sup> to the protocols are being reviewed. 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 "Peter O. Thomas".

Peter O. Thomas, Ph.D.,  
Executive Director

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<sup>1</sup> Including biopsy sampling North Atlantic right whale calves younger than 1 month of age and applying cyanoacrylates on the suction cups used for tagging (see the application for further details).