



MARINE MAMMAL COMMISSION

5 February 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. 21386
(North Slope Borough)

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). North Slope Borough (NSB) is requesting authorization to collect, import, receive, possess, and/or export samples from nine species of marine mammals during a five-year period.

NSB proposes to collect¹, import, receive, possess, and/or export various samples from numerous cetaceans and pinnipeds each year (see the take table for specifics). Samples could be obtained from marine mammals killed during legal subsistence hunts in the United States and in foreign countries, marine mammals sampled during permitted research in foreign countries, or marine mammals stranded dead in foreign countries. The purpose is to assess (1) demographics and reproductive parameters, (2) endocrine factors and sensory biology, (3) foraging ecology, (4) disease and health, and (5) basic anatomy. 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 "Peter O. Thomas".

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

¹ Samples would be collected directly by NSB only from subsistence-hunted animals and dead-stranded animals listed under the Endangered Species Act in the United States.