



MARINE MAMMAL COMMISSION

12 March 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. 21419
(Shannon Atkinson, Ph.D.,
University of Alaska Fairbanks)

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. Atkinson is requesting authorization to import, receive, possess, and/or export samples from cetaceans and pinnipeds during a five-year period—permit 16580 authorized the same activities.

Dr. Atkinson proposes to import, receive, possess, and/or export various samples from up to 1,000 pinnipeds and 1,000 cetaceans per year. Samples could be obtained from marine mammals (1) killed during legal subsistence hunts in the United States, (2) maintained in captive facilities in the United States and in foreign countries, (3) captured or collected during permitted research activities in the United States and in foreign countries, (4) stranded dead or alive in foreign countries. Samples that are sloughed, excreted, or discharged naturally by marine mammals or that are housed in museum collections also could be obtained in either the United States or foreign countries. The purpose is to assess various physiological, reproductive, and endocrine parameters in marine mammals. The Commission recommends that the National Marine Fisheries Service issue the permit but notes that under 50 C.F.R. §216.26 a permit may not be necessary to obtain and conduct research on some of the samples proposed for use.

The Commission believes that the proposed activities are consistent with the purposes and policies of the MMPA. 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