



# MARINE MAMMAL COMMISSION

23 August 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. 22222  
(Tamara McGuire, Ph.D.,  
Cook Inlet Beluga Whale Photo-ID Project)

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. McGuire is seeking to renew her permit to conduct research on beluga whales in Alaska during a five-year period—permit 18016 authorized the same activities.

Dr. McGuire proposes to conduct vessel surveys for beluga whales in Cook Inlet, Alaska. The purpose of the research is to investigate (1) abundance and distribution, (2) movement patterns and habitat use, and (3) survivorship and reproduction of Cook Inlet beluga whales. Dr. McGuire would harass, observe, and photograph/videotape beluga whales of any age class and each sex (see the take table and application for specifics). She would use various measures to minimize impacts on marine mammals 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 "Peter O. Thomas".

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