



# MARINE MAMMAL COMMISSION

5 November 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. 22183  
(Michelle Shero, Ph.D.,  
Woods Hole Oceanographic Institute)

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. Shero, in collaboration with the New Zealand Antarctic Program<sup>1</sup>, proposes to conduct research on Weddell seals in the Ross Sea during a five-year period.

The purpose of the research is to investigate (1) energy dynamics, (2) foraging ecology, and (3) reproductive parameters and reproductive success of female Weddell seals in the Ross Sea Marine Protected Area. Dr. Shero would harass, observe, handle, restrain, measure/weigh, conduct ultrasound and photogrammetry on, mark, and sample adult female seals throughout the year<sup>2</sup> (see the take table for specifics). She would use various measures to minimize impacts on Weddell seals and other pinnipeds and also would be required to abide by the National Marine Fisheries Service's (NMFS) standard permit conditions. Dr. Shero's Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee has reviewed and approved the proposed research protocols. 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.

Please contact me if you have any questions regarding 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 researchers from Japan and Australia as well.

<sup>2</sup> The New Zealand researchers and other collaborators would be authorized to capture, handle, restrain, sedate, weigh/measure, mark, and attach instruments to the same animals under a New Zealand marine mammal permit. Any mortality that may occur during any of the research activities would be authorized under the New Zealand permit..