



MARINE MAMMAL COMMISSION

30 October 2019

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. 23043
(Devon Massyn,
Natural History Unit)

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). Mr. Massyn is requesting authorization to conduct filming activities on pinnipeds off the coasts of Oregon and California for a National Geographic documentary that highlights predator-prey relationships in the Pacific Ocean.

Mr. Massyn is requesting authorization to film¹ adult and juvenile northern elephant seals and California sea lions of either sex during a two-year period. Harbor seals also could be harassed incidental to the filming activities. Mr. Massyn would implement various measures to minimize impacts on pinnipeds and also would be required to abide by the National Marine Fisheries Service's (NMFS) standard permit conditions. After Mr. Massyn's application published in the *Federal Register*, he requested to film Steller sea lions as well. The Commission understands that NMFS plans to process that request as an amendment to the permit shortly after the permit is issued. The Commission believes that the proposed activities are consistent with the purposes and policies of the MMPA and recommends that NMFS issue the permit and the associated amendment, 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 Including on land and underwater.