



MARINE MAMMAL COMMISSION

12 November 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. 23169
(Red Rock Films)

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). Red Rock Films is requesting authorization to conduct filming activities¹ on killer and humpback whales in Antarctica during a three-month period. Individuals of any age class and either sex could be harassed. The filmmakers would implement 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. Dr. Ari Friedlaender has also served as an off-site advisor to the filmmakers. The footage would be included in *Planet of the Whales*, an upcoming National Geographic documentary series.

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

¹ Including filming from a vessel, underwater, on ice, and with unmanned aircraft systems (UAS).