



# MARINE MAMMAL COMMISSION

30 March 2020

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. 23672  
(Environmental Investigation Agency)

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). Environmental Investigation Agency (EIA) is requesting authorization to conduct filming activities on beluga whales in Alaska for an educational documentary informing the public of the importance of protecting beluga whales and the threats that impact their populations.

EIA proposed to film beluga whales using unmanned aircraft vehicles in Bristol Bay, Alaska during a ten-day period. Individuals of any age class and either sex could be harassed. Helen Aderman of the Bristol Bay Native Association would serve as an off-site advisor. 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. 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