



# MARINE MAMMAL COMMISSION

31 August 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 Amendment Application No. 21476  
(Lars Bejder, Ph.D.,  
University of Hawaii at Manoa)

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 amendment application with regard to the goals, policies, and requirements of the Marine Mammal Protection Act (the MMPA). Dr. Bejder is authorized to conduct research on numerous cetacean species in the North Pacific Ocean, including waters of Alaska and Hawaii, during a five-year period—permit 21476 expires on 31 August 2024. The purpose of the research is to investigate (1) abundance (2) habitat use, and (3) social behavior of cetaceans, as well as the impacts of human activities on them. Researchers are authorized to harass, observe, photograph/videotape, instrument, sample and/or conduct photogrammetry on numerous cetacean species of any age class and each sex.

Dr. Bejder is requesting two modifications to his permit. One is to increase the number of takes for suction-cup tagging of humpback whale calves<sup>1</sup> from 10 to 20. This would allow him to obtain a sufficient dataset to model the energetic requirements associated with reproduction and nursing for the species. Second, he has requested to increase the Level B harassment takes of spinner dolphins from 2,000 to 4,000 to allow for repeated surveys of the study areas in Hawaii (see the amendment application for details). The Commission believes that the proposed activities are consistent with the purposes and policies of the MMPA and recommends that the National Marine Fisheries Service issue the permit amendment, contingent on inclusion of the current permit conditions.

---

<sup>1</sup> From only the Hawaii Distinct Population Segment.

Ms. Jolie Harrison  
31 August 2020  
Page 2

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". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "P" and "T".

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