



MARINE MAMMAL COMMISSION

24 February 2021

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. 24395
(Lorrie Rea, Ph.D.,
University of Alaska Fairbanks)

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. Rea is requesting authorization to import, receive, possess, and/or export samples from pinnipeds during a five-year period.

Dr. Rea proposes to import, receive, possess, and export samples from up to 1,500 individuals of each pinniped species per year. The purpose of the research is to investigate the (1) diet, (2) reproduction, (3) genetics, (4) fatty acid composition, and (5) contaminant concentrations of pinnipeds found worldwide. The samples could originate from individuals of either sex and any age class from pinnipeds (1) killed during legal U.S. or foreign subsistence hunts, (2) stranded alive or dead or that died during rehabilitation in foreign countries, (3) that died incidental to commercial fishing operations in the United States and foreign countries, (4) in captivity where samples were taken as a result of routine husbandry procedures or under separate permits, and (5) that were sampled by other authorized researchers involved in marine mammal research in the United States or abroad. Samples also could be exported to researchers for analysis. 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, 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