



MARINE MAMMAL COMMISSION

18 March 2014

Mr. Timothy J. Van Norman, Chief
Branch of Permits
Division of Management Authority
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
4401 North Fairfax Drive
Arlington, VA 22203

Re: Permit Application No. 10941B
(Northwest Fisheries Science Center
Forensics Laboratory)

Dear Mr. Van Norman:

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). The Northwest Fisheries Science Center Forensic Laboratory (the Laboratory; formerly the National Ocean Service Marine Forensics Laboratory) proposes to acquire, possess, import, and export parts from marine mammals under jurisdiction of the Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS). Similar activities were authorized under permit 676379.

RECOMMENDATION

The Marine Mammal Commission recommends that the Fish and Wildlife Service issue the permit, as requested.

RATIONALE

The Laboratory proposes to acquire, possess, import, and export samples from up to 100 individuals per year from each marine mammal species under FWS jurisdiction. The samples could be from any age class and either sex. The objectives of the proposed activities are to (1) provide forensic analytical support for federal wildlife law enforcement agencies and actions and (2) develop and validate new methods for sample identification to various taxonomic levels. Samples could include any soft or hard part or the entire carcass and could originate in the United States or any other country. However, those samples would be collected legally by other researchers or law enforcement officials. The Laboratory then would analyze and archive the samples or transfer the samples to other permitted researchers for analysis. Because the samples are to be used to improve enforcement of wildlife conservation laws, the Commission supports the Laboratory's use of the samples. For that reason, the Commission recommends that FWS issue the permit, as requested.

The Commission believes that the activities proposed under this permit application are consistent with the purposes and policies of the MMPA.

Mr. Timothy J. Van Norman

18 March 2014

Page 2

The Commission appreciates the opportunity to review this permit application. Please contact me if you have any questions concerning the Commission's recommendation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Rebecca J. Lent". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "R" and a distinct "Lent" at the end.

Rebecca J. Lent, Ph.D.
Executive Director