



MARINE MAMMAL COMMISSION

14 July 2014

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. 18523
(Heather Liwanag, Ph.D.,
Adelphi University)

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. Liwanag is requesting authorization to receive, possess, import, and export samples from any species under National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) jurisdiction for purposes of scientific research during a five-year period.

Dr. Liwanag proposes to receive and maintain samples (primarily pelts, blubber, and skin) from up to 1,500 individuals of each species under NMFS jurisdiction per year. All age classes and both sexes could be sampled. The objectives of the proposed research are to investigate physiology, morphology, evolutionary relationships, and other biological aspects of marine mammals. Dr. Liwanag would obtain the samples from (1) animals killed during legal subsistence hunts in the U.S. and foreign countries, (2) animals killed incidental to legal commercial fishing in the U.S. and foreign countries, (3) animals stranded alive or dead in foreign countries, (4) live animals and animals that die in captivity in the U.S. and foreign countries, (5) live and dead animals sampled by authorized researchers in the U.S. and foreign countries, and (6) collections in academic, federal, state, or other institutions involved in marine mammal research in the U.S. and foreign countries. Samples also would be collected and received from stranded animals in the U.S. under a separate authorization but could be exported and re-imported after analysis under the proposed authorization. Dr. Liwanag would obtain the necessary authorizations under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species prior to importing or exporting any sample.

The Commission believes that the activities for which it has recommended approval are consistent with the purposes and policies of the MMPA. Therefore, the Commission recommends that NMFS issue the permit, as requested.

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The Commission appreciates the opportunity to comment on this permit application.
Kindly 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