



MARINE MAMMAL COMMISSION

23 March 2012

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. PRT058292A
(Mote Marine Laboratory)

Dear Mr. Van Norman:

The Marine Mammal 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. Mote Marine Laboratory is requesting authorization to collect, conduct analyses on, and archive manatee blood samples during a five-year period.

RECOMMENDATION

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

RATIONALE

Mote Marine Laboratory is requesting authorization to collect, conduct analyses on, and archive blood samples from manatees. The purpose of the research is to determine immune system effects from exposure to Florida red tides (i.e., brevetoxins).

The Laboratory would collect blood from no more than 59 individual manatees per year of any age class and both sexes. Those manatees may be captive-held, rescued, rehabilitating, or wild free-ranging. The Laboratory would sample up to four captive manatees held at the Laboratory and Living Seas no more than two times per year during routine health examinations. It also would sample up to 10 rescued and rehabilitating manatees at the Lowry Park Zoo on an opportunistic basis no more than four times per year during health and follow-up examinations. In addition, the Laboratory could collect blood samples from up to 35 manatees per year either at Crystal River or in Brevard County during ongoing health assessments of wild free-ranging manatees. Manatees would be captured and handled under the following permits: the Laboratory (MA100361), U.S. Geological Survey–Sirenia project permit (PRT791729), and Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (MA773494). The Laboratory would collect up to 30 mL of blood from each manatee under permit 058292A. The Laboratory then could analyze and archive whole blood, serum, plasma, RNA and protein from fresh and cultured cells, or cell culture supernatants. It does not plan to import or export the samples and has not requested authorization to do so.

Mr. Timothy J. Van Norman
23 March 2012
Page 2

The Laboratory's Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee has reviewed and approved the research protocols.

The Commission believes that the activities for which it has recommended approval are consistent with the purposes and policies of the Marine Mammal Protection Act.

Please contact me if you have any questions concerning the Commission's recommendation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Timothy J. Ragen". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal line extending from the start of the first name.

Timothy J. Ragen, Ph.D.
Executive Director