



# MARINE MAMMAL COMMISSION

13 June 2013

Mr. P. Michael Payne, 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. 17557  
(National Ocean Service  
Marine Forensics Laboratory)

Dear Mr. Payne:

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. The National Ocean Service Marine Forensic Laboratory proposes to acquire, possess, import, and export parts from cetaceans, pinnipeds, and other marine species. The Laboratory is seeking to renew permit 13599.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

The Marine Mammal Commission recommends that the National Marine Fisheries Service issue the permit, as requested.

## **RATIONALE**

The Laboratory proposes to acquire, possess, import, and export samples from all age classes and both sexes of an unlimited number of cetaceans and pinnipeds each year. 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. 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 Marine Mammal Commission supports the Laboratory's use of the samples. For that reason, the Marine Mammal Commission recommends that the Fish and Wildlife Service issue the permit amendment, as requested.

The Commission believes that the activities proposed under this permit application are consistent with the purposes and policies of the Marine Mammal Protection Act.

Mr. P. Michael Payne  
13 June 2013  
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