



MARINE MAMMAL COMMISSION

9 October 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. 83724A
(SeaWorld Parks & Entertainment, Inc.)

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. SeaWorld Parks & Entertainment, Inc., is requesting authorization to import one walrus from Japan.

RECOMMENDATION

The Marine Mammal Commission recommends that the Fish and Wildlife Service issue the permit provided that the Service, in consultation with the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, is satisfied that the applicant's plans and facilities for transporting and maintaining the walrus meet the requirements established under the Animal Welfare Act and are adequate to provide for its health and well-being.

RATIONALE

SeaWorld is requesting authorization to import one female captive-born walrus from Kamogawa SeaWorld in Kamogawa, Japan, in March 2013 for public display purposes. It could import one of two female walruses (either a 5- or 2-year old) that were born in captivity in Japan and have been maintained in compliance with Japanese laws. The walrus would be transported via truck and aircraft from Kamogawa to San Diego, California, within a 24-hour timeframe. SeaWorld San Diego can accommodate the additional walrus without exceeding the U.S. Department of Agriculture's standards regarding space limitations. SeaWorld (1) is open to the public on a regularly scheduled basis with access that is not limited or restricted other than by charging an admission fee, (2) offers an educational program based on professionally recognized standards, and (3) holds Exhibitor's License 93-C-0069, issued by the Department of Agriculture under the Animal Welfare Act. All requirements under the Marine Mammal Protection Act, Animal Welfare Act, Lacey Act, and the International Air Transport Association live animal regulations also would be met during the transport of the walrus. The attending veterinarian would examine the walrus and issue a health certificate within 10 days of transport. For all these reasons, the Marine Mammal Commission

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recommends that the Fish and Wildlife Service issue the permit provided that the Service, in consultation with the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, is satisfied that the applicant's plans and facilities for transporting and maintaining the walrus meet the requirements established under the Animal Welfare Act and are adequate to provide for its health and well-being.

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 this recommendation.

Sincerely,



Timothy J. Ragen, Ph.D.
Executive Director

cc: Barbara Kohn, D.V.M.