



MARINE MAMMAL COMMISSION

28 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 Amendment Application No. 17157
(Stephen Trumble, Ph.D.,
Baylor 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. Trumble is seeking to amend permit 17157 that authorizes him to receive, possess, import, and export samples from mysticetes. The current permit expires on 17 July 2017.

Dr. Trumble is authorized to receive, possess, import, and export earplugs from blue, sei, minke, humpback and gray whales of any age class and either sex. The samples would originate from various museums worldwide. The purpose of the research is to (1) investigate the chronological accumulation of contaminant and hormone concentrations in individual whales and (2) determine individual- and population-level exposure to those contaminants and resulting hormone concentrations.

Dr. Trumble is proposing to add earplugs from up to 25 bowhead, fin and sperm whales per year. Those samples would originate from natural history museums and collections from subsistence-hunted animals in Barrow, Alaska. The Commission believes that the activities for which Dr. Trumble has requested a permit amendment are consistent with the purposes and policies of the MMPA. Therefore, the Commission recommends that NMFS issue the permit amendment, provided that the current permit conditions remain in effect.

The Commission appreciates the opportunity to comment on this permit amendment 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".

Rebecca J. Lent, Ph.D.
Executive Director