



MARINE MAMMAL COMMISSION

14 November 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. 17030
(C. Scott Baker, Ph.D.,
Oregon State University)

Dear Mr. Payne:

The Marine Mammal Commission (the MMC), 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. Baker is requesting authorization to receive, possess, import, and export samples from any species of cetacean or pinniped (except walrus) for purposes of scientific research during a five-year period.

RECOMMENDATION

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

BACKGROUND

Dr. Baker proposes to receive, possess, import, and export samples opportunistically from any species of cetacean or pinniped (except walrus) including all age classes and both sexes (see take table). The objectives of the proposed research are to support ongoing research that improves the understanding of (1) taxonomy, (2) genetic diversity, (3) population structure, (4) abundance, and (5) distribution of marine mammals. Dr. Baker proposes to obtain samples from museum collections, beachcast or dead-stranded animals, non-invasive sampling and biopsy sampling of wild animals, and individuals taken incidentally by human activities (i.e., bycatch and ship strikes). Collection of samples from animals that strand in the United States and wild animals taken during permitted research activities in the United States and abroad are covered under separate authorizations. In addition, samples from incidental bycatch could be obtained from wildlife and fish markets where the sale or trade of products from bycatch is legal (e.g., the Republic of South Korea). Finally, Dr. Baker would continue to possess and archive samples obtained previously under permits to the National Marine Mammal Laboratory and Glacier Bay National Park and Preserve.

Dr. Baker would receive, possess, import, and/or export any hard or soft tissue sample (e.g., bone, teeth, baleen, DNA, blubber, muscle, skin, and other tissue samples). He would conduct PCR

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amplification, conventional sequencing, and next-generation sequencing on those samples. Dr. Baker collaborates with, and analyzes samples for, researchers at the Southwest Fisheries Science Center and New Zealand University of Auckland. He would archive all remaining samples at the Oregon State University.

RATIONALE

Dr. Baker would import and export samples only from countries with the appropriate management authorities under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES). A CITES permit would be obtained prior to importing or exporting any sample.

The MMC believes the research would provide relevant information regarding conservation genetics and molecular ecology and therefore recommends that the National Marine Fisheries Service issue the permit, as requested.

The MMC believes that the activities for which it has recommended approval are consistent with the purposes and policies of the MMPA.

The MMC appreciates the opportunity to comment on this permit application. Kindly contact me if you have any questions concerning the MMC's recommendation.

Sincerely,



Rebecca J. Lent, Ph.D.
Executive Director