



MARINE MAMMAL COMMISSION

22 December 2009

Mr. Timothy J. Van Norman
Chief, Branch of Permits
Division of Management Authority
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
4401 North Fairfax Drive
Arlington, Virginia 22203

Re: Permit Application No. PRT-227386
(David E. Clapham, M.D., Ph.D.)

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. We offer the following recommendation.

RECOMMENDATION

The Marine Mammal Commission recommends that the Fish and Wildlife Service issue the requested permit, provided that—

- the Service determines that all samples to be imported were taken in accordance with the laws of the country of origin, and
- the applicant be required to obtain all necessary permits under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora before importing the samples.

BACKGROUND

The applicant is requesting authorization to obtain and import from Germany a total of 22 biological samples (RNA, DNA, skin, and spinal cord) taken from two adult male polar bears. The samples were collected from polar bears taken in Canada by Inuit hunters during 2008 as part of traditional community harvests and exported to Germany in 2009 for RNA/DNA isolation. The applicant intends to use these samples for scientific research; that is, to clone temperature-sensitive proteins to investigate how proteins sense temperature. The applicant would like to be able to import the samples by the end of January 2010.

The Marine Mammal Commission recommends that the requested permit be issued, provided that the Service determines that all samples to be imported were taken in accordance with the laws of the country of origin and provided that the applicant is required to obtain the necessary

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permits under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora before importing samples.

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 and other applicable laws.

Please contact me if you have any questions concerning this recommendation.

Sincerely,



Timothy J. Ragen, Ph.D.
Executive Director