



# MARINE MAMMAL COMMISSION

19 February 2013

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: Request to Amend and Renew Permit No. MA053639  
(Clark R. Bavin National Fish and Wildlife Forensic  
Laboratory)

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 amendment and renewal application with regard to the goals, policies, and requirements of the Marine Mammal Protection Act. Permit MA053639 currently authorizes the Clark R. Bavin National Fish and Wildlife Forensic Laboratory to acquire, possess, import, and export parts from all species listed under the Endangered Species Act and/or the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora, except marine mammals. The permit expires on 4 November 2013. The Laboratory requests to amend its permit for a five-year period to include 10 marine mammal species.

## RECOMMENDATION

The Marine Mammal Commission recommends that the Fish and Wildlife Service issue the permit amendment, as requested.

## RATIONALE

The Laboratory proposes to acquire, possess, import, and export samples from all age classes and both sexes of up to 10 individuals per year of northern sea otters, southern sea otters, western sea otters, West Indian manatees, Amazonian manatees, West African manatees, dugongs, polar bears, walruses, and marine otters. The purposes of the proposed activities are to (1) use the samples in legal proceedings or court cases, (2) return the samples to foreign governments at their request for forensic or training purposes, and (3) enhance the Laboratory's forensic capabilities, which contribute to the enhancement and survival of the species. Samples could include any soft or hard part and the entire carcass and could be obtained year-round. Because the samples are to be used to enforce wildlife conservation laws, the Marine Mammal Commission supports the Laboratory's use of them. For that reason, the Marine Mammal Commission recommends that the Fish and Wildlife Service issue the permit amendment, as requested.

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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 the Commission's recommendation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Timothy J. Ragen". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal stroke at the beginning.

Timothy J. Ragen, Ph.D.  
Executive Director