

MARINE MAMMAL COMMISSION  
4340 East-West Highway, Room 700  
Bethesda, MD 20814-4447

13 February 2009

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

Re: Request for Renewal of Permit No. MA049136  
(Charles Grossman, Ph.D., Xavier University)

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 renewal request with regard to the goals, policies, and requirements of the Marine Mammal Protection Act.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The Marine Mammal Commission recommends that the Fish and Wildlife Service—

- approve the requested activities, provided that the renewed permit specifies the number of animals being maintained at the Cincinnati Zoo and Columbus Zoo that may be used in the authorized research and the ways in which the animals may be taken;
- seek clarification from the applicant as to whether authorization is being sought to conduct passive listening and manatee vocalization playback studies on a to-be-determined number of manatees maintained at additional facilities; and
- if so, permit expansion of the research to include manatees maintained at facilities other than the Cincinnati Zoo and the Columbus Zoo only after the Service has received (1) specific information on the number and identities of the animals to be studied and the facilities at which they are being maintained, and (2) written approval of each facility's Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee.

## RATIONALE

Permit No. MA049136, as amended, authorized the taking of manatees being maintained in captivity for rehabilitation, enhancement, and/or research purposes during passive listening and sound playback research. Under that permit, the permit-holder performed studies on two manatees at the Cincinnati Zoo and three manatees at the Columbus Zoo. The permit expired on 18 June 2005. Dr. Grossman is now requesting authorization to continue passive listening and sound playback studies (using simple tones and manatee vocalizations at sound levels  $\leq 110$  dB) on the animals at the Cincinnati Zoo and Columbus Zoo. The proposed studies have been approved by the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committees at both facilities.

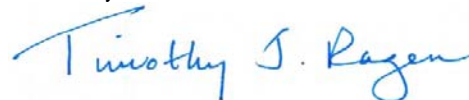
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The permit renewal request does not specify the number of animals at the two zoos that would be involved in the proposed studies. Rather, it refers only to two manatees at the Cincinnati Zoo and two animals at the Columbus Zoo from which vocalization recordings previously were obtained. The Marine Mammal Commission recommends that the Fish and Wildlife Service approve the requested activities, provided that the renewed permit specifies the number of animals being maintained at the Cincinnati Zoo and Columbus Zoo that may be used in the authorized research and the ways in which the animals may be taken.

Permit No. MA049136, as amended, also authorized Dr. Grossman to conduct passive listening and manatee vocalization playback studies on a to-be-determined number of manatees maintained at additional facilities. However, it is unclear whether Dr. Grossman is requesting authorization for this activity. The Marine Mammal Commission recommends that the Fish and Wildlife Service seek clarification from the applicant as to whether authorization is being sought to conduct passive listening and manatee vocalization playback studies on a to-be-determined number of manatees maintained at additional facilities. If so, the Marine Mammal Commission recommends that the Service permit expansion of the research to include manatees maintained at facilities other than the Cincinnati Zoo and the Columbus Zoo only after the Service has received (1) specific information on the number and identities of the animals to be studied and the facilities at which they are being maintained, and (2) written approval of each facility's Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee.

Please contact me if you have any questions concerning these recommendations and comments.

Sincerely,



Timothy J. Ragen, Ph.D.  
Executive Director