



MARINE MAMMAL COMMISSION

14 July 2015

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 Application No. 18722
(Cornell 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). Cornell University is requesting authorization to import, receive, and possess DNA samples from cetaceans and pinnipeds during a five-year period.

Cornell University proposes to import, receive, and possess DNA samples from up to 2,000 unidentified cetaceans and 2,000 unidentified pinnipeds¹ per year of either sex and any age class. The objectives are to investigate population structure, demographic history, migration patterns, and local adaptation of marine mammals via genotyping by sequencing. The DNA samples would originate from (1) marine mammals stranded alive or dead in foreign countries, (2) sloughed, excreted, or discharged marine mammal parts, and (3) specimens sampled by other authorized researchers or in collections at academic, federal, state or other institutions involved in marine mammal research in the United States or abroad.

The Commission believes that the proposed activities are consistent with the purposes and policies of the MMPA and therefore recommends that the National Marine Fisheries Service issue the permit, as requested. 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

¹ Except walrus.