



MARINE MAMMAL COMMISSION

23 March 2010

Ms. Diana Hynek
Departmental Paperwork Clearance Officer
Department of Commerce
14th and Constitution Ave., NW, Room 6625
Washington, DC 20230

Dear Ms. Hynek:

The Marine Mammal Commission has reviewed the *Federal Register* notice on continuation of reporting requirements regarding interactions between sea otters and the Pacific sardine fishery (75 Fed. Reg. 11115). As noted in the agency's *Federal Register* notice, these reporting requirements were put in place in 2007 to ensure the continued protection of the threatened southern sea otter following amendment of the Coastal Pelagic Species Fishery Management Plan.

Despite these and other protection measures, the southern sea otter population has not recovered at the rate that was expected. Fisheries are a known source of human-otter interactions and may well have impeded the population's recovery. Information on such interactions is essential to guide management efforts. Thus, the Marine Mammal Commission believes that continued collection of this information is critical for sea otter recovery and effective fishery management.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Suzanne Montgomery for".

Timothy J. Ragen, Ph.D.
Executive Director