



# MARINE MAMMAL COMMISSION

20 October 2014

Mr. Timothy J. Van Norman, Chief  
Branch of Permits, MS: IA  
Division of Management Authority  
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
5275 Leesburg Pike  
Falls Church, Virginia 22041-3803

Re: Permit Application No. 38835B  
(Christopher Marshall, Ph.D.,  
Texas A & M University)

Dear Mr. Van Norman:

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). Dr. Marshall is requesting authorization to import, receive, and possess samples from dugongs for purposes of scientific research during a five-year period.

Dr. Marshall proposes to receive and maintain samples (primarily skeletal material, skulls, tusks, tympanic bullae, skin, blood, gonads, liver, lung, muscle, blubber, and stomach contents) from up to 25 dead stranded dugongs per year in Qatar. All age classes and both sexes could be sampled. The objectives of the proposed research are to investigate basic life history and demographic parameters and fishery interactions. Authorization has been obtained from the State of Qatar to collect such samples, and Dr. Marshall would obtain the necessary authorizations under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species prior to importing any sample.

The Commission believes that the activities for which it has recommended approval are consistent with the purposes and policies of the MMPA. Therefore, the Commission recommends that the Fish and Wildlife 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