



# MARINE MAMMAL COMMISSION

19 June 2014

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: Permit Application No. 166346  
(Matson's Laboratory, LLC)

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). Matson's Laboratory, LLC, is requesting to renew permit 166346 that authorizes it to receive, possess, import, and export polar bear teeth for purposes of scientific research during a five-year period.

Matson's Laboratory is requesting authorization to import more than 650 teeth per year from Canada for age determination. Remaining teeth or histological slides of the teeth may be exported back to Canada for archiving purposes. The teeth were, and are continuing to be, collected from polar bears that were legally harvested or were taken during government-permitted research activities in Canada. The Commission concurs with the need to assess the age distribution of the polar bears. Therefore, the Marine Mammal Commission recommends that the Fish and Wildlife Service issue the permit, as requested.

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

The Commission appreciates the opportunity to comment on this permit application. 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