



MARINE MAMMAL COMMISSION

7 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. 19425
(Melissa McKinney, Ph.D.,
University of Connecticut)

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). Dr. McKinney is requesting authorization to import, receive, possess, and export samples from cetaceans and pinnipeds during a five-year period.

Dr. McKinney proposes to import, receive, possess, and export tissue samples¹ from ringed and bearded seals, narwhals, and unidentified pinnipeds² and cetaceans of either sex and any age class (see the Take Table). The objectives are to investigate diet and contaminant concentrations and the effects of climate change on the health of the animals and ecosystem. Samples have been, and would continue to be, collected from subsistence hunted animals and during permitted scientific research activities in the United States, Canada, and Greenland/Denmark. Any unused samples could be exported to the researchers or entities that provided the samples.

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 Blubber, liver, kidney, muscle, skin, blood, and hair.

² Except walrus.