



# MARINE MAMMAL COMMISSION

22 December 2009

Mr. P. Michael Payne, Chief  
Permits, Conservation, and Education Division  
Office of Protected Resources  
National Marine Fisheries Service  
1315 East-West Highway  
Silver Spring, Maryland 20910

Re: Permit Application No. 15128  
(Robert Pilley)

Dear Mr. Payne:

The Marine Mammal 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 applicant is requesting authorization to take by Level B harassment up 112 Atlantic bottlenose dolphins annually over a two-year period. The purpose of the proposed project is to acquire film footage of bottlenose dolphin strand feeding events in the estuaries and creeks of Bull Creek and Hilton Head, South Carolina. The footage would be used in a six-part television series, Earthflight, produced by the British Broadcasting Corporation and the Discovery Channel. The applicant states that the goal of the filming is to capture the animals' natural behavior and indicates that every attempt will be made to avoid disturbing the animals.

## RECOMMENDATION

The Marine Mammal Commission recommends that the National Marine Fisheries Service approve the requested permit.

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

Please contact me if you have any questions concerning this recommendation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Timothy J. Ragen".

Timothy J. Ragen, Ph.D.  
Executive Director