



MARINE MAMMAL COMMISSION

10 June 2010

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. 14514
(University of Florida)

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 acquire, import and re-export, and maintain samples (both hard and soft parts) from all cetacean and pinniped species (except walrus) of both sexes (of any reproductive condition) and all age classes worldwide. The requested samples would be catalogued and archived at the University of Florida to study diseases afflicting marine mammals, including viral pathogens and brevetoxins; develop a marine mammal histology database and atlas and marine mammal cell lines; and study comparative morphology. Marine mammal parts used in the proposed research would be collected (1) as part of routine husbandry procedures from animals maintained in captivity, (2) in collaboration with other permitted academic, federal, and state institutions involved in marine mammal research, (3) in conjunction with legal subsistence harvests, (4) from marine mammals caught incidental to fisheries, and (5) from animals in foreign countries in accordance with the legal requirements of the country of origin.

RECOMMENDATION

The Marine Mammal Commission recommends that the National Marine Fisheries Service issue the requested permit provided that—

- the applicant be required to obtain all necessary permits under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora before importing or exporting any marine mammal parts;
- the permit holder be required to collect and report information sufficient to document that each specimen was taken in accordance with the laws of the country of origin, that such taking was consistent with the requirements of the Marine Mammal Protection Act, and that specimens are being used only for bona fide scientific purposes; and

Mr. P. Michael Payne
10 June 2010
Page 2

- researchers not authorized to conduct research under this permit or who do not hold other valid research permits who wish to use specimens collected under this permit be required to obtain a permit or other appropriate authorization from the Service before obtaining such materials from the permit holder.

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

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Timothy J. Ragen". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial 'T'.

Timothy J. Ragen, Ph.D.
Executive Director