

Hawaii 96720, have been issued minor amendments to Scientific Research Permit Nos. 14122 and 14585, respectively.

**ADDRESSES:** The amendments and related documents are available for review upon written request or by appointment in the Permits and Conservation Division, Office of Protected Resources, NMFS, 1315 East-West Highway, Room 13705, Silver Spring, MD 20910; phone (301) 427-8401; fax (301) 713-0376.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Carrie Hubard or Amy Sloan, (301) 427-8401.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The requested amendments have been granted under the authority of the Marine Mammal Protection Act of 1972, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1361 *et seq.*) and the regulations governing the taking and importing of marine mammals (50 CFR part 216), the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (ESA; 16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*), and the regulations governing the taking, importing, and exporting of endangered and threatened species (50 CFR parts 222-226).

Permit No. 14122, issued on July 14, 2010 (75 FR 43150), authorizes research in Alaskan waters through July 31, 2015. The research is focused on humpback (*Megaptera novaeangliae*), sperm (*Physeter macrocephalus*), and killer whales (*Orcinus orca*) and includes photo-identification, biopsy sampling, multiple tag types, and active and passive acoustics. The minor amendment (No. 14122-01) extends the duration of the permit through July 31, 2016, but does not change any other terms or conditions of the permit.

Permit No. 14585, issued on July 14, 2010 (75 FR 43150), authorizes research in the Eastern, Western and Central North Pacific Ocean, primarily Hawaii and Alaska, through July 31, 2015. The research is focused on humpback whales and includes photo-identification, underwater videogrammetry, underwater videography, passive acoustic recordings, Crittercam studies, and biopsy sampling. The minor amendment (No. 14585-01) extends the duration of the permit through July 31, 2016, but does not change any other terms or conditions of the permit.

Dated: August 25, 2015.

**Julia Harrison,**

Chief, Permits and Conservation Division, Office of Protected Resources, National Marine Fisheries Service.

[FR Doc. 2015-21391 Filed 8-28-15; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 3510-22-P**

## DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

### National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN 0648-XD856

#### Marine Mammals; File No. 18902

**AGENCY:** National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Commerce.

**ACTION:** Notice; receipt of application.

**SUMMARY:** Notice is hereby given that Colleen Reichmuth, Ph.D., Long Marine Laboratory, University of California at Santa Cruz, 100 Shaffer Road, Santa Cruz, CA 95060, has applied in due form for a permit to conduct research on pinnipeds in captivity.

**DATES:** Written, telefaxed, or email comments must be received on or before September 30, 2015.

**ADDRESSES:** The application and related documents are available for review by selecting "Records Open for Public Comment" from the "Features" box on the Applications and Permits for Protected Species (APPS) home page, <https://apps.nmfs.noaa.gov>, and then selecting File No. 18902 from the list of available applications.

These documents are also available upon written request or by appointment in the Permits and Conservation Division, Office of Protected Resources, NMFS, 1315 East-West Highway, Room 13705, Silver Spring, MD 20910; phone (301) 427-8401; fax (301) 713-0376.

Written comments on this application should be submitted to the Chief, Permits and Conservation Division, at the address listed above. Comments may also be submitted by facsimile to (301) 713-0376, or by email to [NMFS.Pr1Comments@noaa.gov](mailto:NMFS.Pr1Comments@noaa.gov). Please include File No. 18902 in the subject line of the email comment.

Those individuals requesting a public hearing should submit a written request to the Chief, Permits and Conservation Division at the address listed above. The request should set forth the specific reasons why a hearing on this application would be appropriate.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Amy Sloan or Courtney Smith, (301) 427-8401.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The subject permit is requested under the authority of the Marine Mammal Protection Act of 1972, as amended (MMPA; 16 U.S.C. 1361 *et seq.*), and the regulations governing the taking and importing of marine mammals (50 CFR part 216).

The applicant proposes to conduct comparative psychological and

physiological studies with captive California sea lions (*Zalophus californianus*), harbor seals (*Phoca vitulina*), spotted seals (*Phoca largha*), ringed seals (*Pusa hispida*), and bearded seals (*Erignathus barbatus*) at Long Marine Laboratory (Santa Cruz, CA) and the Alaska SeaLife Center (Seward, AK). Up to four individuals per species may be studied at both facilities combined over the duration of the permit. Animals may participate in daily activities using behaviors established through operant conditioning and may refuse participation in an activity at any time. For psychological assessments, pinnipeds are trained to voluntarily participate in the research on land and in water. Controlled sensory cues are used to evaluate sensory and cognitive performance with an emphasis on the auditory sense to address conservation issues related to ocean noise. Electrophysiological methods may be used to monitor passive neuronal responses during exposure to similar sounds. Behavioral experiments will test hearing sensitivity in the presence or following the cessation of noise to determine how exposure to anthropogenic noise may influence the ability to detect various sounds.

The pinnipeds will also participate in physiological assessments to study their general biology including growth and development, nutritional requirements, health status, and environmental tolerance. Open-flow respirometry methods will be used to gather metabolic data from animals trained to rest and breathe under a plastic dome. Daily to weekly, animals may participate in voluntary physiological procedures including weighing, measuring, ultrasound, thermographic imaging, and sampling of hair, skin, feces, urine, and naturally shed vibrissae. Each month (up to 12 times per year), animals may be fed benign fecal markers and blood samples may be obtained. The applicant requests a 5-year permit.

In compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 *et seq.*), an initial determination has been made that the activity proposed is categorically excluded from the requirement to prepare an environmental assessment or environmental impact statement.

Concurrent with the publication of this notice in the **Federal Register**, NMFS is forwarding copies of the application to the Marine Mammal Commission and its Committee of Scientific Advisors.

Dated: August 25, 2015.

**Julia Harrison,**

Chief, Permits and Conservation Division,  
Office of Protected Resources, National  
Marine Fisheries Service.

[FR Doc. 2015-21392 Filed 8-28-15; 8:45 am]

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## DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

### National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN 0648-XE009

#### Marine Mammals; File Nos. 18722, 18897, 19425, and 19497

**AGENCY:** National Marine Fisheries  
Service (NMFS), National Oceanic and  
Atmospheric Administration (NOAA),  
Commerce.

**ACTION:** Notice; issuance of permits.

**SUMMARY:** Notice is hereby given that  
permits have been issued to the  
following entities to receive, import,  
and export specimens of marine  
mammals for scientific research:

Permit No. 18722: Cornell University,  
157 Biotechnology Building, Ithaca, NY  
14850 [Responsible Party: Sharron  
Mitchell, Ph.D.];

Permit No. 18897: Kathleen  
Colegrove, Ph.D., University of Illinois,  
College of Veterinary Medicine,  
Zoological Pathology Program, LUMC  
Room 0745, Building 101, 2160 South  
First Street, Maywood, IL 60153;

Permit No. 19425: Melissa McKinney,  
Ph.D., University of Connecticut, Center  
for Environmental Sciences and  
Engineering, 3107 Horsebarn Hill Road,  
U-4210, Storrs, CT 06269; and

Permit No. 19497: University of  
Florida, College of Veterinary Medicine,  
Department of Infectious Diseases and  
Pathology V3-100, VAB, PO BOX  
110880, Gainesville, FL, 32611-0880  
[Responsible Party: Thomas B. Waltzek,  
D.V.M., Ph.D.].

**ADDRESSES:** The permits and related  
documents are available for review  
upon written request or by appointment  
in the Permits and Conservation  
Division, Office of Protected Resources,  
NMFS, 1315 East-West Highway, Room  
13705, Silver Spring, MD 20910; phone  
(301) 427-8401; fax (301) 713-0376.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** The  
following Analysts at (301) 427-8401:  
Rosa L. González (Permit No. 19497),  
Carrie Hubard (Permit No. 19425),  
Brendan Hurley (Permit Nos. 18722 and  
18897) and Jennifer Skidmore (Permit  
Nos. 18722, 18897, 19425, and 19497).

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** On June  
26, 2015, notice was published in the

**Federal Register** (80 FR 36768) that four  
requests for permits to receive, import,  
and export specimens of marine  
mammals for scientific research had  
been submitted by the above-named  
applicants. The requested permits have  
been issued under the authority of the  
Marine Mammal Protection Act of 1972,  
as amended (16 U.S.C. 1361 *et seq.*), the  
regulations governing the taking and  
importing of marine mammals (50 CFR  
part 216), the Endangered Species Act of  
1973, as amended (ESA; 16 U.S.C. 1531  
*et seq.*), the regulations governing the  
taking, importing, and exporting of  
endangered and threatened species (50  
CFR parts 222-226), and the Fur Seal  
Act of 1966, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1151  
*et seq.*).

Permit No. 18722 authorizes Cornell  
University to receive, import, or export  
unlimited samples from up to 2000  
pinnipeds (excluding walrus) and 2000  
cetaceans world-wide. These samples  
will be used for genotyping on marine  
mammals including trait mapping,  
population/ecological studies, and  
germplasm characterization. No live  
animals would be harassed or taken,  
lethally or otherwise, under the  
authorized permit. The permit is valid  
through August 10, 2020.

Permit No. 18897 authorizes Dr.  
Colegrove to import unlimited  
biological samples from up to 100  
individual cetaceans and up to 100  
individual pinnipeds (except walrus)  
world-wide. All samples (bones and  
organ tissue samples) are being  
imported for diagnostic testing to  
determine the causes of outbreaks or  
unusual natural mortalities, the ecology  
of diseases in free-ranging animals, or  
unexpected mortalities in captive  
populations. Samples will be from  
animals found deceased or euthanized  
in nature, collected opportunistically  
during the animals' capture by other  
researchers possessing permits for such  
activities, or legally held in captivity  
(including those held for rehabilitation)  
outside the U.S. No live animals would  
be harassed or taken, lethally or  
otherwise, under the authorized permit.  
The permit is valid through August 10,  
2020.

Permit No. 19425 authorizes Dr.  
McKinney to study marine mammal  
contaminant levels, specifically using  
fatty acid and stable isotopes to examine  
diets and contaminant loads and how  
they are affected by climate change.  
Tissue samples from cetaceans and  
pinnipeds may come from remote  
biopsy sampling, captured animals, and  
animals collected during subsistence  
harvests and may originate in the  
United States, Canada, and Greenland/  
Denmark. Samples (up to 50 of each

species group per year, except for those  
species specified below) will be  
analyzed, with a focus on the following  
Arctic species: Ringed seal (30 per year),  
bearded seal (10 per year), and narwhal  
(10 per year). No live animals would be  
harassed or taken, lethally or otherwise,  
under the authorized permit. The permit  
is valid through August 1, 2020.

File No. 19497 authorizes the  
University of Florida to receive, import,  
and export marine mammal tissue and  
other specimen materials (*e.g.*, body  
fluids) to research the etiologies and  
cofactors of emerging marine mammal  
infectious diseases, utilizing standard  
molecular and sequencing approaches.  
Unlimited samples from up to 300  
individual cetaceans and 700 individual  
pinnipeds (excluding walrus) are  
authorized to be received, imported, or  
exported annually on an opportunistic  
basis. They will be collected by others  
under separate existing permits and may  
be obtained from the following sources:  
(1) Animals killed during legal U.S. or  
foreign subsistence harvests; (2) animals  
stranded alive or dead in foreign  
countries; (3) animals that died  
incidental to commercial fishing  
operations in the U.S. where such taking  
is legal (*i.e.*, bycatch); (4) animals that  
died incidental to commercial fishing  
operations in foreign countries where  
such taking is legal; (5) animals in  
captivity where samples were taken as  
a result of routine husbandry  
procedures or under separate permit;  
and (6) samples from other authorized  
researchers or collections in academic,  
federal, state or other institutions  
involved in marine mammal research in  
the U.S. or abroad. Samples collected  
from stranded animals in the U.S. and  
received under separate authorization  
may be exported and re-imported. No  
takes of live animals are requested or  
would be permitted. The permit is valid  
through July 31, 2020.

In compliance with the National  
Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42  
U.S.C. 4321 *et seq.*), a final  
determination has been made that the  
activities proposed are categorically  
excluded from the requirement to  
prepare an environmental assessment or  
environmental impact statement.

As required by the ESA, issuance of  
these permits was based on a finding  
that such permits: (1) Were applied for  
in good faith; (2) will not operate to the  
disadvantage of such endangered  
species; and (3) are consistent with the  
purposes and policies set forth in  
section 2 of the ESA.