



BILLING CODE 3510-22-P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RTID 0648-XA489

Marine Mammals; File No. 23447

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

ACTION: Notice; receipt of application.

SUMMARY: Notice is hereby given that the Alliance of Marine Mammal Parks and Aquariums, 218 N. Lee Street, Suite 200, Alexandria, Virginia, 22314 (Responsible Party: Kathleen Dezio), has applied in due form for a permit to receive, import, and export marine mammal parts for scientific research.

DATES: Written, telefaxed, or e-mail comments must be received on or before [*insert date 30 days after date of publication in the **FEDERAL REGISTER***].

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. 23447 from the list of available applications. These documents are also available upon written request via email to NMFS.Pr1Comments@noaa.gov.

Written comments on this application should be submitted via email to NMFS.Pr1Comments@noaa.gov. Please include File No. 23447 in the subject line of the email comment.

Those individuals requesting a public hearing should submit a written request via email to *NMFS.Pr1Comments@noaa.gov*. The request should set forth the specific reasons why a hearing on this application would be appropriate.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Jennifer Skidmore 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.*), 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.*).

The applicant proposes to receive, import, and export marine mammal parts (unlimited samples from up to 700 individual cetaceans and 400 individual pinnipeds [excluding walrus]) to study and enhance the health and biology of both wild marine mammals and those in public display, research, and stranding facilities. Research topics include diseases of marine mammals, pathology, health diagnostics, endocrinology, effects of environmental contaminants, immunology, toxicology, stock structure, distribution, age determination, reproduction, sperm preservation, artificial insemination, feeding habits and nutrition. Specimens and parts will come from the following U. S. or foreign sources: Animals in captivity (samples taken during routine husbandry procedures or under separate authorization); animals in foreign countries stranded alive or dead or that died during rehabilitation; animals killed during legal subsistence

harvests; animals killed incidental to legal commercial fishing operations; or samples from other authorized persons or collections. It is expected that the majority of samples would be exchanged between designated Alliance of Marine Mammal Parks and Aquariums members (from captive animals) and their collaborators. The proposed action will not result in additional takes of individual animals. The applicant has requested 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: September 14, 2020.

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

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