



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE
1315 East-West Highway
Silver Spring, Maryland 20910

December 23, 2020

Stephen M. Coan, Ph.D.
President and CEO
Mystic Aquarium
55 Coogan Boulevard
Mystic, CT 06355

Dear Dr. Coan:

The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) has issued the enclosed minor amendment (No. 22629-01) to Permit No. 22629 to Mystic Aquarium for the importation of and scientific research on five captive-born beluga whales (*Delphinapterus leucas*).

The changes to specific Terms and Conditions are reflected in bold font. This includes amending Appendix 1, Table 1 of the permit to substitute three whales authorized for importation, as requested, and to clarify authorized methods for monitoring reproductive status as part of normal husbandry and preventing breeding in compliance with the approved breeding prevention plan.

The minor amendment is effective upon signature by the Office Director and valid through August 31, 2025. The minor amendment must be attached to Permit No. 22629.

Also enclosed are Marine Mammal Data Sheets (MMDS) for the three new whales authorized under the amendment. In accordance with Condition III. F.1.b of Permit No. 22629, upon completion of the importation from Canada, please complete the MMDS for each whale imported and submit them to the Permits and Conservation Division by email (NIMM.Inventory@noaa.gov).

Sincerely,

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S.1365710607

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Date: 2020.12.23 14:55:24 -05 00'

Donna S. Wieting
Director, Office of Protected Resources

Enclosures

cc w/ enclosures: Anna Barry, USFWS
Barbara Kohn, D.V.M., USDA/APHIS
Peter Thomas, Ph.D., MMC

Minor Amendment No. 22629-01 (attach to Permit No. 22629)

Permit No. 22629 is amended as follows in **bold font**.

Appendix 1: Tables Specifying the Kinds of Protected Species, Locations, and Manner of Taking

Table 1. Importation and captive maintenance of five beluga whales for over the duration of the permit. Importation from Marineland of Canada, Inc. (Niagara Falls, Ontario, Canada) to Mystic Aquarium (Mystic, Connecticut) pursuant to MMPA Section 104 for scientific research (see Table 2). Captive maintenance pursuant to MMPA Section 112(c) (captive maintenance) and Section 104 (scientific research) at Mystic Aquarium. Transport from Mystic Aquarium to Georgia Aquarium (Atlanta, Georgia) under the same authorities for captive maintenance and scientific research if approved by the Office Director per Condition B.6.j. Captive maintenance includes husbandry, health assessments, and medical sampling; treatments as warranted by the attending veterinarian ¹ ; and, humane euthanasia if warranted for medical reasons, and necropsy. Beluga whales may be displayed to the public incidental to research.							
Species	Stock ^{2,3,4}	Origin	Current Life Stage	Sex	No. Animals	Activities Procedures	Details
Whale, beluga	Offspring of dam Aurora (wild capture, Sea of Okhotsk, Russia); sire Kodiak (wild capture, Sea of Okhotsk, Russia)	Captive born	Juvenile; Born 07/20/14	Female	1	Import; Captive, maintain permanent; Transport	KHARABALI; NOA0010671

¹This includes reproductive monitoring (as described in Study 7 in the permit application and including **but not limited to** behavioral observations [video monitoring], biological sampling [blood, breath, **urine**, and vaginal swabs], and ultrasound) **and physical separation or other means (i.e., contraception if approved)** to prevent breeding **as described in the breeding prevention plan and conditionally approved by the Office Director.**

²NMFS considers the parents captured in the Sea of Okhotsk to be from the depleted Sakhalin Bay-Nikolaya Bay-Amur River Stock, and Kharabali **and Havok** are thus considered to be members of that depleted stock. For the purposes of this permit, NMFS is treating the whale Havana with mixed-stock parentage, as a member of the depleted stock. **Whales Sahara and Jetta with unknown stock parentage are assumed to have sires from the Sea of Okhotsk Sakhalin Bay-Nikolaya Bay-Amur Rivers Stock and are also considered to be members of that depleted stock.**

Mystic stated that that the information on the exact location of Russian origin of the parents “is not available and it is not possible to complete genetic testing prior to transport. We understand this will mean they are considered Depleted Status.” For the purposes of the permit, as amended, NMFS considers all three substitute whales as depleted.

³The permit application stated that Andre was collected from the Barents Sea. However, there is evidence suggesting Andre may have been collected from the White Sea and that the Barents and White Sea populations may be of one stock.

⁴Parental stock data is according to Ceta-Base (<https://www.cetabase.org/captive/cetacean/marineland-canada/>).

Table 1. Importation and captive maintenance of five beluga whales for over the duration of the permit. Importation from Marineland of Canada, Inc. (Niagara Falls, Ontario, Canada) to Mystic Aquarium (Mystic, Connecticut) pursuant to MMPA Section 104 for scientific research (see Table 2). Captive maintenance pursuant to MMPA Section 112(c) (captive maintenance) and Section 104 (scientific research) at Mystic Aquarium. Transport from Mystic Aquarium to Georgia Aquarium (Atlanta, Georgia) under the same authorities for captive maintenance and scientific research if approved by the Office Director per Condition B.6.j. Captive maintenance includes husbandry, health assessments, and medical sampling; treatments as warranted by the attending veterinarian¹; and, humane euthanasia if warranted for medical reasons, and necropsy. Beluga whales may be displayed to the public incidental to research.

Species	Stock ^{2,3,4}	Origin	Current Life Stage	Sex	No. Animals	Activities Procedures	Details
Whale, beluga	Offspring of dam Acadia (wild capture, Sea of Okhotsk, Russia); potential sires: Andre (wild capture, Barents or White Sea, Russia), Kodiak or Orion (wild capture, Sea of Okhotsk, Russia)	Captive born	Juvenile; Born 7/23/14	Female	1	Import; Captive, maintain permanent; Transport	SAHARA; NOA0010683
Whale, beluga	Offspring of dam Skyla (wild capture, Sea of Okhotsk, Russia); potential sires: Andre (wild capture, Barents or White Sea, Russia), Kodiak, Orion, or Tuktoyaktuk (wild capture, Sea of Okhotsk, Russia)	Captive born	Juvenile; Born 7/17/14	Female	1	Import; Captive, maintain permanent; Transport	JETTA; NOA0010684
Whale, beluga	Offspring of dam Secord (wild capture, Sea of Okhotsk, Russia); potential sires: Tuktoyaktuk or Orion (wild capture, Sea of Okhotsk, Russia)	Captive born	Juvenile; Born 8/10/15	Male	1	Import; Captive, maintain permanent; Transport	HAVOK; NOA0010685
Whale, beluga	Offspring of dam Kelowna (wild capture, Sea of Okhotsk, Russia); sire Andre (wild capture, Barents or White Sea, Russia)	Captive born	Juvenile; Born 07/23/15	Female	1	Import; Captive, maintain permanent; Transport	HAVANA; NOA0010675

