



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration  
NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE  
West Coast Region  
7600 Sand Point Way NE, Bldg. 1  
Seattle, Washington 98115

February 10, 2016

Mr. Virgil Moore  
Idaho Department of Fish and Game  
P.O. Box 25  
Boise, ID 83707

Mr. Curtis E. Melcher  
Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife  
4034 Fairview Industrial Drive SE  
Salem, OR 97302

Mr. James Unsworth, Ph.D.  
Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife  
600 Capitol Way North  
Olympia, WA 98501

Dear Directors Moore, Melcher, and Unsworth:

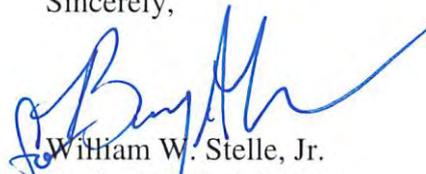
I am writing to acknowledge receipt of your January 27, 2016, application requesting a five-year extension of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) Letter of Authorization (LOA) to the states under Section 120 of the Marine Mammal Protection Act for the lethal removal of predatory California sea lions known to forage in the vicinity of Bonneville Dam.

This letter also serves as NMFS' determination that your January 27, 2016, application contains sufficient evidence of the problem interaction and expected benefits of the taking.

Therefore, we will be making the proposal to extend the LOA available for public comment in the *Federal Register*. We will also engage the Pinniped-Fishery Interaction Task Force, which NMFS established under the MMPA in 2007, to recommend a course of action regarding the proposed extension of the LOA.

We look forward to our continued coordination with your agencies in the conservation of these up-river salmon and steelhead stocks.

Sincerely,



William W. Stelle, Jr.  
Regional Administrator

cc: Eileen Sobeck, Assistant Administrator for Fisheries, NMFS  
Chris Yates, Robert Anderson, Scott Rumsey – NMFS/WCR/PRD  
Mark Eames – NOAA GCNW  
Robin Brown – ODFW

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