

National Marine Fisheries Service

Marine Mammal Public Display Permit Application for Capture from the Wild

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Introduction

This application is for requesting a **Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA) public display permit** to capture (i.e., take¹) National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) marine mammals in the wild in the United States or on the high seas including:

- Cetaceans (dolphins, porpoises, and whales)
- Pinnipeds (seals and sea lions)

Need help or have questions?

Visit our [public display permit web page](#), see [Additional Information](#), or contact us at nmfs.pr1.apps@noaa.gov.

When filling out your application:

- Your application must be a stand-alone document, readable to a layperson.
- If you do not follow these instructions, your application will be returned.
- You will need to enter this information in our online permit system [APPS](#)²

Entering your information into APPS:

- **Save your application every 30 minutes or you will lose information!**
- Consider using these instructions as a template to draft your application in Word and then cut and paste into APPS.
- To save any information you must click the "Save" button. Once the application has been initialized you will see additional sections. Your application will remain in draft mode until you submit.

Application Instructions

Project Information

File Number: This number is generated by APPS and cannot be changed. To facilitate processing, reference this File Number in correspondence with our office.

Project Title: Provide a concise title that includes activities, species, location, and purpose. For example:

- *Wild capture of up to four harbor seals from the West Coast of California for the purpose of public display.*

Previous Federal Permit #: If applicable, state your most recent and closely related NMFS permit number. Otherwise leave blank.

Permits Requested: A permit type will be listed based on your answers in the APPS PAG. If the option is incorrect, please contact us at nmfs.pr1.apps@noaa.gov

¹A take under the MMPA means to harass, hunt, capture, collect, or kill, or attempt to harass, hunt, capture, collect, or kill any marine mammal. This includes, without limitation, any of the following: the collection of dead animals, or parts thereof; the restraint or detention of a marine mammal, no matter how temporary; tagging a marine mammal; the negligent or intentional operation of an aircraft or vessel, or the doing of any other negligent or intentional act which results in disturbing or molesting a marine mammal; and feeding or attempting to feed a marine mammal in the wild. Under the ESA, a take means to harass, harm, pursue, hunt, shoot, wound, kill, trap, capture, or collect, or attempt to do any of the preceding.

² We are in the process of revising APPS and this link will be updated when the new system is available.

Where Will the Activities Occur? One or more general locations will be listed based on your answers in the APPS pre-application guide.

Timeframe: Enter the desired start and end dates of the proposed activities in the following format: MM/DD/YYYY. See the public display [permit web page](#) for details about when to apply.

Duration Justification: Justify your requested permit duration. The duration should be reasonable in scale, based on your objectives, study design, and available resources.

Sampling Season/Project Duration: Describe in which months or seasons you will work. If year-round, indicate when activities are most likely to occur. How frequently will you conduct your activities?

Abstract: Provide a short summary that must include:

- Purpose of the collection.
- Target species and any non-target species that may be affected (common names).
- Take activities (i.e., capture).
- Where your activities will occur and where animals or samples will be imported or to where they will be exported.

Project Purpose

1. Discuss the purpose of your activity including your objectives and justification for the capture.
2. Describe the exhibit and the social group for this animal(s) at the destination facility, including the number, sex, and age of the resident animals.
3. Explain why animals cannot be obtained from captive collections in the United States or abroad.
4. Provide the information required for maintaining marine mammals for public display purposes:
 - a. Describe the educational program and include educational materials as attachments or provide a webpage where this information is available. Specify the professionally recognized standards³ of the public display community upon which the education or conservation program offered by the applicant is based.

³ Standards for education and conservation programs developed and endorsed by the Association of Zoos and Aquariums, formally the American Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA) and the Alliance of Marine Mammal Parks and Aquariums (Alliance), representing approximately 60% of the U.S. marine mammal public display community at the time, were published in the Federal Register on October 6, 1994 (59 FR 50900). If applicable, these AZA/Alliance standards may be referenced as the standards on which your education or conservation program is based. However, please note that while these professionally recognized standards have been provided by the AZA and Alliance, they represent only one example of such standards. Other professionally recognized standards of the public display community may differ from this example. If your education or conservation program is based upon different professionally recognized standards of the public display community, please provide a copy of these standards.

- b. Include a copy of your current Animal Welfare Act license issued by APHIS.⁴ If you are a new facility in the process of applying for your APHIS license, please contact us for guidance.
- c. Provide your hours of operation. This may include copies of facility brochures or public notices (e.g., webpage) advertising this information.

Project Description

1. Describe the animals to be captured including:
 - a. Number and species of animals to be captured annually.
 - b. Estimated or known age (including an explanation how age classes [e.g., neonate, calf/pup, juvenile, subadult, adult] are distinguished by taxa or species).
 - c. Minimum and maximum sizes/masses of animals.
 - d. Sex or sex ratio, if multiple animals.
 - e. Reproductive condition of the marine mammals.⁵
 - f. The stock the animals will be taken from.
2. Give a detailed description of the manner of capture, including gear to be used. Describe the techniques and equipment to be used to approach, capture, and restrain; including any drugs to be used. You may use figures and photographs that illustrate your methods, included as attachments to your application. In addition, provide citations for methods where applicable, but do not substitute a literature citation in lieu of a complete description of the methods.

See [Table 1](#) below for guidance on the types of information to include when describing your capture methods. You must provide the following information in the narrative description of your methods: the take actions, observe/collect methods, and procedures in the APPS take table.

Table 1. Guidance on Describing Commonly Used Methods

When describing your methods, include the following information, as applicable:

Take action/ procedures	Method Description Guidance
Administering drugs or other substances (e.g., sedatives)	Name of each drug/chemical and its purpose, including for reversal/recovery Emergency response and euthanasia drugs and protocols Dosage of each drug/chemical Delivery method and route (e.g., dart gun, inhalation, intramuscular, intravenous, subcutaneous, optical); if dart gun, distance of animal to water Location of administration on body Duration of anesthesia or sedatives Post drug administration monitoring

⁴ As issued under 7 U.S.C. 2131 et seq.

⁵ Permit holders may not capture a marine mammal from the wild that is unweaned or less than 8 months old, or is part of a mother-calf/pup pair, unless such take is specifically authorized by the Office Director.

Take action/ procedures	Method Description Guidance
Aerial and vessel surveys (e.g., to locate animals in the wild)	Number of surveys per year Type of survey craft and vessel Number of platforms (aircraft and vessel) to be operated at the same time Type of survey (e.g., line transect, photogrammetry) Minimum altitude/approach distance Air/vessel speed Protocols for breaking track to ID species Duration spent with group or individual per day
Uncrewed aircraft systems (UAS)	Same details as above for aerial surveys and also: Type of UAS – fixed wing or vertical takeoff and landing (VTOL) Number of UAS to be operated at the same time Payload components – what is the UAS carrying and for what purpose? Ground control station description (what it is, where is it located - on shore or on vessel, number of stations, and how close the station will be to animals) Encounter duration – maximum amount of time over same animals Do you have the appropriate FAA permits/authorizations (including pilot licenses)?
Capture and restraint	Type of capture (e.g., hand, hoop net, trap) and gear description (e.g., net dimensions and mesh size) Deployment methods (e.g., on foot or boat approach and net deployment) Configuration, duration, and monitoring of net sets (how often net set is checked) Additional equipment or personnel necessary for capturing and handling excess numbers Number and types of animals captured at a time; including age class, sex, reproductive status, and lactating females and their dependent young as applicable Number of animals processed at a time Criteria for selecting individuals for permanent captivity, including a description of the assessments/sampling to be conducted on all captured individuals Dimensions and type of holding container/manner of restraint Anesthesia/sedation (see Administer Drugs above) Manner of release, if applicable Number and roles of personnel (must be adequate to perform all activities without harming excess captured animals; else they must be released immediately) Duration of restraint/holding from capture to transport

3. If, after capture, an animal is determined to be unsuitable for captivity, give details regarding the specific protocol for return to the wild, including:
 - a. The maximum length of time the animals could be held;
 - b. Description of post-release monitoring protocols;
 - c. Prevention of disease transmission between released animals and the wild population;
 - d. Assessment of the animals to forage and protect themselves from predators; and
 - e. Desensitization of animal to eliminate behaviors that could prove detrimental to the released animals or the social structure of local populations.

Non-target Marine Mammals

1. Discuss whether and how non-target marine mammals may be unintentionally harassed, captured, or otherwise affected.

These are species that co-occur with your target species and that could be harassed or taken during your research but that you will not opportunistically incorporate into your activity. Include these non-target marine mammals on separate rows in the Take Table if you expect take (e.g., unintentional harassment or capture). For ESA species designated by Distinct Population Segment (DPS), specify the DPSs.

Other non-target taxa (e.g., sea turtles, seabirds, corals,) should be addressed in the Effects and Mitigation section below.

Transport Information

1. Will you be transporting animals, including removing animals from the wild into captivity, transporting animals to or from a facility, or translocations?
If no, skip to [Project Supplemental Information](#).
If yes, address the following or explain if not applicable.
2. Mode(s) of transportation: Describe the vehicle or other platform used to transport animals.
3. The name of the transportation company, if applicable, and the qualifications of the common carrier to transport live animals.
4. Maximum transport time including stop-overs.
5. Description of the container (e.g., cage, tank) used to hold the animal during transit: Include details (e.g., material of container, dimensions). You may attach photos or illustrations on the Attachments page at the end of the application.
6. Describe any procedures to acclimate the animals to the transport equipment, containers, personnel, etc.
7. Describe any special care procedures (e.g., moisture, medicines) to be administered during transport (e.g., moisture, medicines, aeration, management of environmental parameters).
8. Identify who (e.g., veterinarian or similarly qualified person) will accompany the animal during transport.

Project Supplemental Information

Status of the Affected Species

MMPA-depleted and ESA-listed species cannot be captured for public display purposes.

Indicate the status of the species or stock under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) - Appendix I, I, or III.

Species information is available at the following web sites:

<https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/species-directory>

<http://www.fws.gov/>

<http://www.cites.org/>

Mortalities

9. Are you requesting authorization for serious injury (an injury more likely than not to result in death) or mortality (euthanasia/intentional or accidental/unintentional)? If yes, address the following or explain if not applicable.
10. What take actions, observe/collect methods, or procedures could result in serious injury or mortality?
 - a. Explain how these activities or procedures may result in serious injury or mortality (e.g., drowning, capture myopathy).
 - b. Explain why it's not feasible to use other methods that won't result in serious injury or mortality.
11. Would you euthanize animals under any circumstances? If so, how is it decided, conducted (including use of drugs), and who conducts it?
12. Briefly summarize any mortalities or serious injuries that have occurred during any previous import or wild capture conducted by your facility and staff using the same or similar techniques.
 - What were the circumstances that led to death or euthanasia?
 - What was the cause of death?
 - What steps will you take to reduce the potential for additional serious injury or mortality?
13. What is the maximum number of animals of each species/stock/DPS that could be seriously injured, unintentionally die, or be euthanized annually and over the life of the permit? For example, two serious injury/mortalities per year, not to exceed four over the life of the permit.
14. **Justify the number** of mortalities requested. Explain how the requested number of serious injuries or mortalities is **reasonably likely to occur**.
15. What are the protocols for **necropsy and carcass disposal**? If necropsy cannot occur, explain why.
16. What are the protocols for **disposition of dependent young** if lactating females may die as a result of your actions?

Effects and Mitigation

1. Discuss how your proposed activities (capture) as outlined in the [Take Table](#) will affect the target animal(s). You may include mitigation and monitoring protocols here or in the Methods section above. Do not restate them here if they are included above; simply reference the section where the following information appears. You should discuss serious injury and mortality in the Mortalities section above.

Cite the **best available science** (i.e., peer-reviewed literature or other published data sources) and your experience (e.g., personal communication, annual permit reports). References must be made available upon request.

Group together actions with similar responses and describe, as applicable:

2. Describe quarantine procedures for the animal(s).

3. Describe the acclimation plan for the animal(s) and how the animal(s) will be incorporated into your public display program. Include contingency plans in the event adverse responses are observed.
4. Describe the anticipated responses:
 - During and after captures.
 - Post-release behavior of animals not selected for retention.
 - For pinnipeds, time it takes for animals to repopulate rookeries/haul outs after flushing.
 - During and after transport and acclimation into the destination facility's enclosure/pool. Include the time it takes to resume normal behavior after transport or handling.
 - During introductions to the existing collection animals.
 - Worst-case responses.
 - % of animals that may exhibit each response type.
 - Average/estimated recovery time associated with health assessments, sedation, capture, and transport, including wound healing.
 - Effects on lactating females and their dependent young or other sensitive life stages.
5. For **novel procedures** for capture, discuss the most likely anticipated responses based on literature from studies on other species, if available, and any results from testing, if applicable.
6. Discuss the anticipated effects **on the species or stock** from capture, especially if mortalities or reproductive effects are possible. On what is your determination based?
7. For capture-related health assessments, describe your steps to prevent infection. For example, describe how you will:
 - Prepare the sampling site by cleaning and disinfecting the fur or skin.
 - Utilize single-use, sterile instruments (e.g., needles).
 - Sterilize other devices prior to use and in the field if contaminated including but not limited to use of cold sterilization.
 - Administer prophylactic antibiotics to animals (include the drug, dosage, and route of administration).
8. Describe what **mitigation measures** you will employ to **minimize adverse reactions** to capture. If you will use the same mitigation measures for a suite of activities, you may provide one discussion for each suite of activities (e.g., transport/import; close approach; capture; health assessments).
9. If working with dependent calves/pups, their moms, or known pregnant females, give specific protocols for working around them. For example, how will you avoid separating mothers from calves/pups?
10. Describe your short- and long-term import or **post-capture monitoring** protocols. Explain if and why monitoring or mitigation is not feasible for specific procedures, species, situations, etc.

11. **Humane⁶ determination:** Explain how you determined your methods involve the least possible degree of pain and suffering possible and why there are no feasible alternative methods.
 - a. Provide alternatives to the proposed manner of capture and transport, and explain why the proposed methods are considered humane.
 - b. Attach a written statement from the responsible veterinarian certifying that the methods of capture and transport, facilities, and methods of care and maintenance will be adequate to ensure the well-being of the animals and will comply with all care and transport standards established under the AWA.
12. Describe any mitigation you will take to avoid or minimize impacts to non-target protected species (e.g., sea turtles, corals, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service species). Discuss whether and how they may be unintentionally harassed, captured, or otherwise affected. Identify if you require takes of these species.
13. Coordination for captures: Describe how you will coordinate and collaborate with other Permit Holders in your action area.
 - a. List their names and affiliations.
 - b. Explain how you will work together. For example, will you share vessels or coordinate the timing of activities to avoid repeated takes of the same animals?

Attach a References File

On the Attachments page, you will be asked to upload a **bibliography** of references cited in this application. Referenced materials must be made available upon request, as needed for evaluation of the application and preparation of ESA or NEPA analyses. If a link to your referenced material is available, add the link to your References File.

Resources Needed to Accomplish Objectives

14. Explain how your expertise, facilities, and resources⁷ are adequate to accomplish your proposed objectives and activities.
15. List relevant proposals, contracts, grant awards, or letters of agreement that would demonstrate your resources. Copies must be made available upon request.
16. Indicate the status of other international, federal, state, or local authorizations and permits you have applied for, secured, or will apply for.

Project Locations

First, follow the guidance below to describe where you plan to work. Then, for each location, use the [Take Table](#) to list the species you expect to encounter and the procedures you will conduct in each location.

1. Add **New Location**: provide information about one or more study areas
 - General area (ocean basin)
 - State(s), as applicable.
2. Enter **Location Details**, as applicable:
 - Waterbody: enter names of rivers, estuaries, bays, etc.

⁶ Humane means using the method that involves the least possible degree of pain and suffering possible.

⁷ **Expertise** includes a summary of the cumulative experience of you and your personnel. **Facilities** include such things as your existing infrastructure or laboratories. **Resources** include financial (e.g., current funding and/or history of securing funding); material (e.g., transport equipment); and other resources (e.g., collaborative partnerships) that can be drawn on to support your work.

- Latitude and longitude of your study area
 - River miles (Begin Mile and End Mile)
 - Limits of your capture area (e.g., to the U.S. EEZ, to the edge of the continental shelf, to 50m depth)
 - Names of land masses where captures will occur (e.g., islands, rookeries).
3. Use the mapper tool at the bottom of the page to denote your study location(s) or, on the Attachments page, attach a map(s) to scale that clearly shows the location of your proposed activity.

Take Table

The take table summarizes the **estimated** number of animals you expect to capture **annually**. Create a new take table for each location and list the species you expect to encounter and the procedures you will conduct.

Columns you will fill out in the take table:

1. **Species:** Provide the common and scientific name for each species you wish to collect from the wild.
2. **Listing Unit/Stock:** Provide the MMPA stock for your species. You may refer to our [website](#) for species listed under the MMPA.
3. **Life Stage:** Identify from below as appropriate.

Cetacean	Pinnipeds
Adult	Adult
All	All
Calf	Juvenile
Juvenile	Subadult
	Pup

4. **Sex:** Create separate rows for males and females.
5. **Take Action:** The “take action” is a generalized overview of how animals will be imported or taken. If more than one action is proposed, you must enter the takes on separate rows. Your options are:
 - a. Capture/Captive/Handle– for target animals that are captured, including those not selected for public display
 - b. Harass – for non-target species or conspecifics that may be harassed by the capture operations, and
 - c. Mortality – for cases of accidental deaths associated with capture activities.
6. **Observe/Collect Method:** Choose the appropriate option from below:
 - Net, hoop
 - Net, seine
 - Net, other
 - Trap, floating
 - Other.

If using “net, other” or “Other,” please explain what you mean.
7. **Expected Take:** This represents the maximum number of animals you will take via capture, annually. You will additionally need to add take rows to account for

unintentional harassment of non-target species or animals, capture/release of animals that are captured but not selected, or unintentional mortality.

8. **Procedures:** Provide specific information on the activities that will be conducted. Choose “captive permanent” and “transport” for the row associated with removal. If you choose to include other take actions:
 - a. For harassment rows, the associated procedure would be “Unintentional harassment.” Animals captured but not retained, would experience “Unintentional harassment” as well. Please note that if you wish to collect data on animals captured but not selected for permanent captivity, you must select the procedures associated with your activities and clearly describe in the narrative.
 - b. For Unintentional mortalities (including euthanasia as necessary and necropsy), the procedure would “Unintentional mortality.”
9. **Begin Date:** Populated with the Begin Date you entered on the Project Information page. You may change the date to coincide with a specific project time shorter than the overall duration of the permit. You cannot enter a date that is earlier than your original Begin Date.
10. **End Date:** Populated with the End Date you entered on the Project Information page. You may change the date to coincide with a specific project time shorter than the overall duration of the permit. You cannot enter a date that is later than the End Date you previously entered.
11. **Details (Optional):** You may enter details on each take table line. This is especially useful to clarify details.

Anticipated Effects on the Environment

1. Will you be working in or near areas with unique environmental characteristics or important scientific, cultural or historical resources? Yes or no.
Examples include:
 - Animals used for subsistence
 - Archaeological resources
 - [Critical Habitat of ESA-listed species](#)
 - [Essential Fish Habitat](#) including wetlands, coral reefs, sea grasses, and rivers
 - Federally recognized Tribal and Native Alaskan lands, cultural or natural resources, or religious or cultural sites
 - [Marine Protected Areas](#)
 - [National](#) or State Parks
 - [National Marine Sanctuaries](#) and [National Monuments](#)
 - [National Historic Landmarks](#)
 - Sites listed in or eligible for listing in the [National Register of Historic Places](#)
 - [Wild and Scenic Rivers](#)
 - [Wilderness Areas](#)
 - [Wildlife Refuges](#)
 - a. If yes, please list those areas. As applicable, mention if you will need to or have already obtained permission (licenses, permits, authorizations) to work in these areas.
 - b. How would your activities affect such resources? What measures will you take to ensure your work does not cause loss or destruction of such resources?

- c. For marine mammal activities in Alaska or Washington, how will you ensure your project does not adversely affect the availability (e.g., distribution, abundance) or suitability (e.g., food safety) of marine mammals for subsistence uses?
2. Discuss if your activities have the potential to impact the physical or biological environment, in particular coastal and marine environments. Impacts can be positive or negative. Examples of potential impacts include:
 - Altering substrate while anchoring vessels and buoys
 - Using bottom trawls or other types of nets
 - Erecting blinds or other structures
 - Ingress and egress of researchers
 - Injuring or killing benthic organisms (e.g., sea grass, corals)
 - Altering the physical or chemical characteristics of water (e.g., oil spills)
 - Affecting a species' abundance or distribution
3. Invasive Species
 - a. Does your project involve activities known or suspected of introducing or spreading invasive species, intentionally or not? Examples include transporting animals, discharging ballast water, and using boats/equipment at multiple sites.
 - b. Describe measures you would take to prevent the possible introduction or spread of non-indigenous or invasive species, including plants, animals, microbes, or other biological agents.
4. Biological Specimens
 - a. Will your activities involve collecting, handling, or transporting potentially infectious agents or pathogens, such as biological specimens (animals, blood, tissues)?
 - b. Will your activities involve using or transporting hazardous substances, such as toxic chemicals?
 - c. If yes to either question, describe the protocols you will use to ensure that public health and human safety are not adversely affected, such as by spread of zoonotic diseases, chemical injuries, or contamination of food or water supplies.
5. Do your activities involve equipment (e.g., scientific instruments) or techniques that are untested, or have unknown or uncertain impacts on the biological or physical environment? If yes:
 - a. Briefly describe the equipment or techniques and provide any information about the use of these in your study area and/or with other taxa and what is known about their impacts.
 - b. Discuss the degree to which they are likely to be adopted by others for similar activities or applied more broadly.

Project Contacts

The person entering the application in APPS will automatically be assigned the following roles: **Applicant/Permit Holder**, **Principal Investigator (PI)**, and **Primary Contact**.

1. You may need to change or add personnel.
2. Use the guidance below to help you decide who should have what role.
3. To prevent duplicate entries, **ALWAYS search APPS for the person before entering a new contact**. Start with the last name in the APPS search box.

4. **Include a table** with the names of the PI and Co-Investigators (CIs), and the specific procedures they will oversee or conduct (see example [Table 3](#)). **Attach the table on the [Attachment page](#).**
5. As you add personnel, **check whether each person already has a Qualifications Form (QF) in APPS.** It will appear next to their name once you add them to your Contacts page. If there is not a QF in APPS, then attach one for the PI and each CI. See [Qualifications and Experience](#) below.

Descriptions of Personnel Roles

A project must have a **Responsible Party if the Applicant/Permit Holder is an organization, institution, or agency.** The Responsible Party or Applicant/Permit Holder is an official who has the legal authority to bind the organization, institution, or agency and is ultimately responsible for the activities of any individual operating under the authority of the permit.

The **Principal Investigator (PI)** is the individual primarily responsible for the take, import, export, and any related activities conducted under the permit. There can only be one PI on a permit. The PI:

- Must have qualifications, knowledge, and experience relevant to the activities authorized by the permit.
- Must be on site during activities conducted under the permit unless a Co-Investigator is present to act in place of the PI.
- May also be the Applicant/Permit Holder and Primary Contact.

The **Primary Contact** is the person primarily responsible for correspondence during the application review process and after a permit is issued. Typically this person administers the permit, requests amendments/modifications (e.g., personnel changes), and submits reports. The Primary Contact may also serve other roles on the permit (e.g., Applicant/Permit Holder, PI, CI).

The Applicant/Permit Holder or Responsible Party, PI, and Primary Contact will have access to APPS to enter and edit the application, submit reports and modification requests, and will receive automatic emails from APPS.

Co-Investigators (CIs) are individuals who are qualified and authorized to conduct or directly supervise activities conducted under a permit without the on-site supervision of the PI.

- You must add CIs to the application if the PI will not always be present during the permitted activities.
- CIs can also be added or removed once a permit has been issued.

If a researcher is always under supervision of the PI or another CI, they do **not** need to be named on the permit.

UAS Pilots are persons who have their FAA-certification to fly UAS and experience piloting UAS. A CI or the PI with marine mammal experience may be qualified to serve

in this role. In other cases, you may designate someone as a UAS Pilot who is tasked with only that role and does not have marine mammal experience.

Personnel for UAS

To fly UAS, we recommend you have: 1) someone with experience working with the target species in the wild, and 2) someone who is FAA-certified to conduct or oversee UAS flights with flight experience. These may be satisfied by one or more persons, depending on the qualifications of your team. The following scenarios describe the personnel roles for UAS that you may request based on their qualifications.

Table 2. UAS Personnel

Scenario 1: Species expert who is also an FAA-certified UAS pilot	
If the person has:	They may be named as:
Experience working with the subject species/taxa in the wild and UAS experience with an FAA UAS certification	PI or CI to supervise and operate UAS. No separate UAS Pilot required to be named on the application
Scenario 2: Species expert (PI or CI) accompanied by an FAA-certified UAS pilot	
If the person has:	They may be named as:
Experience working with the subject species/taxa in the wild, but no UAS experience	PI or CI to supervise UAS. A separate UAS Pilot must be named for the UAS operation
UAS experience and FAA UAS certification but no marine mammal experience	UAS pilot to operate the UAS or directly oversee operation as the remote pilot in command. The UAS pilot must be supervised by the PI or a CI with marine mammal experience

In addition, **you must submit a table (see [Table 3](#)) defining the PI and CI roles and activities (i.e., supervising or conducting specific procedures).** Attach this table as [on](#) the Attachments page.

Table 3. Example Personnel Roles

Name	Role	Activities
Jane Smith, Ph.D.	Principal Investigator	Supervise all activities under the permit; conduct all activities except anesthesia
John Smith	Co-Investigator	Conduct all activities excluding UAS and anesthesia
Mary Smith, D.V.M.	Co-Investigator and Attending Veterinarian	Oversee and conduct anesthesia and all biological sampling during capture activities
Jane Doe, Ph.D.	Co-Investigator	Conduct photo-ID and supervise UAS pilot
John Doe, Ph.D.	Co-Investigator	Collect remote skin/blubber biopsy samples and create cell lines
Bob Smith	UAS pilot	UAS pilot supervised by the PI or a CI

Qualifications and Experience

We recommend the PI and each CI submit a QF. Once you fill out a QF and attach it to your profile in APPS, you won't need to upload a new QF unless you acquire new skills,

your level of experience changes, or 10 years have passed. Each contact should only have **1 QF file** in their profile; it will apply to all permits they are affiliated with. They may **replace** the QF with an updated version as they gain new experience.

Persons authorized as the PI or CIs must have qualifications corresponding to their duties. Note, if the PI or a CI will be supervising but not performing specific procedures, they must demonstrate sufficient cumulative experience to oversee the project, personnel (e.g., other CIs, research assistants, veterinarians), and procedures. If you do not provide sufficient information, we will not authorize the person(s).

Attachments

You can attach files requested throughout the application on the Attachments page.

- Preferred file formats: Microsoft Word, Excel, or PDF.
- As applicable, attach a personnel table (See [Table 3](#)) with the names of the PI and CIs, and the specific procedures they will oversee or conduct.
- Examples of required files, depending on the permit type: literature references, map, figures, and photographs, drug table for permits with intrusive research (including dosages and reversals)

Certification and Signature

Before you can submit your application you must authenticate your identity, certify that all information is correct, and sign the application.

Submit Application

Submit your application via our online system [APPS](#). If you encounter problems email us at nmfs.pr1.apps@noaa.gov.

Additional Information

What activities are NOT covered by these instructions?

1. Importing or taking [marine mammals listed as depleted under the MMPA or threatened or endangered under the ESA](#).
2. Importing a marine mammal for necessary medical treatment not otherwise available.
3. Maintaining or receiving marine mammals within the United States for the [purpose of public display](#).
4. Importing a marine mammal for the purpose of scientific research or enhancement.
5. Conducting scientific research or enhancement activities on captive marine mammals.
6. [Exporting marine mammals for public display](#).
7. Obtaining a [non-releasable stranded marine mammal](#).
8. Obtaining [CITES \(Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora\) permits](#).

When should you apply?

At least 1 year before the captures will begin.

What is the process for getting a permit?

1. Follow these instructions and contact the Permits and Conservation Division at nmfs.pr1.apps@noaa.gov or 301-427-8401 with any questions.
2. Submit your application via [APPS](#).
 - a. A permit analyst will review your application and contact you if additional information is needed.
3. Address any questions within 60 days or your application will be withdrawn.
 - a. Once we consider your application complete, we will publish a notice in the [Federal Register](#), which starts a mandatory 30-day public comment period.
 - b. Concurrently, we will send your application to the Marine Mammal Commission, the U.S. Department of Agriculture Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), and other subject matter experts in partner institutions and federal and state agencies for review.
4. Address any questions received during the comment period.
 - a. We will draft the permit and supporting documentation (including National Environmental Policy Act analyses, responses to public comments, and documentation of MMPA and ESA issuance criteria).
 - b. The documents will be reviewed by various NMFS offices including a legal review.
 - c. The Office Director will decide whether to issue or deny your permit.

What is the process for requesting an amendment to a permit?

Use [APPS](#) to request an amendment to your permit. You'll need to provide a description of your proposed changes and include all the necessary details for those changes, as applicable. Use these application instructions as a guide. For example, changes to your objectives will require that you discuss all the points in the Project Purpose section. Additions to personnel require QFs and descriptions of their roles.

Applicable Laws and Regulations

Under section 104(c) of the [MMPA](#), persons may be authorized to import or take marine mammals for public display purposes. Interested persons are required to submit an application in accordance with the MMPA and the implementing regulations at [50 CFR part 216, subpart D](#). These instructions for applying for a public display permit are drawn from, but do not substitute for, the MMPA and its regulations. Under [NEPA](#), Federal agencies must assess the effects of federal actions on the environment. NMFS regulations implementing the permit provisions of the MMPA are in 50 CFR sections 216.33 – 216.35, and 216.12. Section 216.33 contains requirements for application submission, the process for application review, and issuance or denial procedures. Section 216.34 specifies issuance criteria, specifically indicating that the applicant must demonstrate how their proposed activity meets the criteria. Section 216.35 specifies permit restrictions, including limitations on importation. Section 216.12 specifies conditions under which importation of marine mammals is prohibited, including by permit. All permit documentation, including the application, permit and amendments, reports, inventory information, and any other associated documents are subject to the [Freedom of Information Act](#).

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement

A Federal agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, nor shall a person be subject to a penalty for failure to comply with an information collection subject to the requirements of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 unless the information collection has a currently valid OMB Control Number. The approved OMB Control Number for this information collection is 0648-0084. Without this approval, we could not conduct this information collection. Public reporting for this information collection is estimated to be approximately 50 hours per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the information collection. All responses to this information collection are required to obtain a permit pursuant to the MMPA, NEPA, and their implementing regulations. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this information collection, including suggestions for reducing this burden to the Chief, Permits and Conservation Division, Office of Protected Resources, F/PR1, NOAA/National Marine Fisheries Service, 1315 East-West Highway, Silver Spring, MD 20910; email nmfs.pr1.apps@noaa.gov.