

National Marine Fisheries Service

Marine Mammal Public Display Permit Application

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Introduction

These instructions are for requesting a Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA) public display permit to import or take¹ National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) marine mammals:

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

Public display permits are required for:

- Import of marine mammals into the United States
- Capture of marine mammals from the wild in the United States or on the high seas

Need help or have questions?

We recommend you visit our [public display permit web page](#), see the [Additional Information](#) on page 24, or contact us at nmfs.pr1.apps@noaa.gov. A list of activities that are not covered by this permit application can be found in [Additional Information](#).

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.
- We will not consider your application if you have overdue reports.
- If you believe any of the questions are not applicable; indicate this with N/A and explain why the question is not applicable.

¹ A 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.

Application Instructions

I. Project Information

- A. **Project Title** (up to 255 characters): Provide a concise title that includes activities, species, location, and purpose. For example: *Import of four harbor seals from ABC Aquarium in Country D to XYZ Zoological Park for the purpose of public display.*
- B. **Previous Federal Permit #**: If applicable, state your most recent and closely related NMFS permit number. Otherwise leave blank.
- C. **Where Will the Activities Occur?** List the locations of your activities.
1. For imports: List the country of export and the receiving facility's address.
 2. For wild captures in the United States or on the high seas: List the geographic area of collection, the location of temporary staging, and the final destination of the animals. You must include a map of the collection site.
 - For captures, attach a high quality map(s) with the correct scale that clearly shows the capture location and any environmental areas of interest. If possible, include a shapefile, Google Earth kmz/kml, or ASCII text file with lat/long data and the associated basic metadata with your electronic application submission.
- D. **Timeframe**: Enter the desired start and end dates of the proposed activities in the following format: MM/DD/YYYY. The start date cannot be before the date you submit the application and should be at least 6 months (for imports) or 1 year (for captures) after the date you submit. The end date must be within 5 years of the start date because public display permits may be valid for a maximum of 5 years.
- E. **Sampling Season/Project Duration** (up to 1,000 characters)
1. For imports: When do you anticipate the import will occur?
 2. For wild captures: Describe the field season(s) including the months and frequency of collections. When and how many times per year will you conduct your activities?

F. **Abstract** (up to 2,000 characters): Provide a short summary that must include:

1. Purpose.
2. Target species and any non-target species that may be affected (common names).
3. Proposed activities (i.e., import or capture).
4. Numbers of animals to be imported or taken, by species, annually.
5. Location from which animals will be imported or specific geographic locations of captures.
6. Requested duration of the permit. The maximum is 5 years.

II. **Project Purpose: Objectives and Justification** (up to 64,000 characters)

- A. Discuss the purpose of your activity including your objectives and justification for the import or capture.
- B. Explain:
 1. For imports, why animals cannot be obtained from captive collections in the United States.
 2. For captures from the wild, why animals cannot be obtained from captive collections in the United States or abroad.
- C. Provide the information required for maintaining marine mammals for public display purposes:
 1. Describe the educational program and include educational materials as attachments or provide a webpage where this information is available. Specify the professionally recognized standards² of the public display

² 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

community upon which the education or conservation program offered by the applicant is based.

2. Include a copy of your current Animal Welfare Act license issued by APHIS³.

If you are a new facility in the process of applying for your APHIS license, please contact us for guidance.

3. Provide your hours of operation and cost of admission. This may include copies of facility brochures or public notices (e.g., webpage) advertising this information.

III. Project Description (up to 64,000 characters)

A. Importing Marine Mammals into the United States (If applicable)

For **importing marine mammals into the United States**, please include the following information:

1. Identify the animal(s) to be imported including:
 - a. Animal identification
 - b. Estimated or known age
 - c. Size (length and/or weight)
 - d. Sex
 - e. Reproductive condition⁴
2. Locations:
 - a. Country of origin
 - b. Exporting facility
 - c. Ports of entry (<https://www.fws.gov/le/designated-ports.html>)

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.

³ As issued under 7 U.S.C. 2131 et seq.

⁴ Permit holders may not import a marine mammal that is pregnant, lactating, or either unweaned or less than 8 months old, whichever comes later, unless the Office Director determines that such importation is necessary for the protection and welfare of the animal. Contact nmfs.pr1.apps@noaa.gov for questions on such importations, which are not covered by this application.

- d. Whether you will be requesting a port of entry exemption
 - e. Final destination/facility
3. The animal's previous transport history (e.g., attach a NOAA Marine Mammal Data Sheet, Species 360 specimen report, or statement from the shipping facility) including dates.
4. For importing wild-caught animals:
- a. Describe how the animal was captured and maintained in the country of origin, including how the captures and captive holding were conducted in a humane⁵ manner.
 - b. Indicate the wild stock and the geographic location the animal was collected from. Include latitude/longitude coordinates and/or waterbody location.
 - c. Provide documentation that the take was legal in accordance with the capture country's laws.
5. For importing captive-born animals:
- a. Provide documentation of the animal's birth.
 - b. Identify the parents of the animal and, to the extent practicable, provide documentation of their origin (e.g., lineage), including the wild stock and geographic location the animals were collected from.
 - c. Use NOAA ID numbers, if applicable.
6. Attach a statement from the exporting facility and, to the extent practicable, documentation concerning whether the marine mammal to be imported is presently being held in compliance with the laws of the country of exportation.
7. Attach a statement from the exporting facility explaining if the requested import will likely result in the taking of marine mammals beyond those proposed.
- a. Will marine mammals be acquired to replace the marine mammals to be imported?

⁵ Humane means using the method that involves the least possible degree of pain and suffering possible.

- b. Will the proposed import result in an increased demand for marine mammals?
- c. Provide justification for these statements.

B. Capturing Marine Mammals from the Wild (If not applicable, skip to [Section III.C Transport](#))

If proposing **captures in the United States or on the high seas**, provide the following information:

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.⁶
 - 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 [Appendix A](#) for a list of procedures associated with captures to insert in your take table and [Appendix B](#) for the types of information you must include when describing your capture methods.

⁶ 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.

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.
4. Non-target marine mammals: 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 activities but that you will not opportunistically incorporate into your activity.
 - a. Explain how you will avoid them or minimize impacts to them (e.g., not in area during captures; would not approach closer than 100 yards; would halt operations until non-target species moved out of study area).
 - b. Include these non-target marine mammals on separate rows in the Take Table if you expect take (e.g., unintentional harassment or capture).
 - c. Other non-target taxa (e.g., corals, sea turtles, seabirds) should be addressed in the [Effects and Mitigation](#) section.

C. Transport:

Thoroughly describe your transport procedures:

1. Describe the method of transportation to the receiving facility (your institution):
 - a. Mode of transportation.
 - b. Name of transportation company, if known.

- c. Description of the pen, tank, container, cage, cradle, or other device used
(e.g., material of container, dimensions, photos or illustrations).
- d. Description of climate-control or other environmental parameters.
- 2. Describe any special care during transport.
- 3. Include the total transport time and time per each transport leg if stop-overs are included.
- 4. Describe quarantine procedures for the animal(s).
- 5. 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.
- 6. 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.

IV. Project Supplemental Information

A. Status of the Affected Species (up to 2,000 characters)

MMPA-depleted and ESA-listed species cannot be imported or captured for public display purposes. This also includes progeny from individuals with this status.

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/>

B. Mortalities (up to 2,000 characters)

If authorization for serious injury⁷ or mortality⁸ (accidental/unintentional or humane euthanasia/intentional⁹) is proposed:

1. What activities could result in mortality?
2. Justify the number of mortalities.
3. How is euthanasia decided, conducted, and who conducts it?
4. What are the protocols for necropsy and carcass disposal?
5. What are the protocols for disposition of dependent young if lactating females may die as a result of capture activities?

C. Effects and Mitigation (up to 64,000 characters)

You may include mitigation and monitoring protocols here, or above in your methods. Do not restate them here if they are included above; simply reference the section where the following information is found

1. Discuss how your proposed activities (import or capture) as outlined in the [take table](#) will affect target and non-target animals (See [Observe/Collect Methods](#) and [Procedures](#)).
2. 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.

⁷ A serious injury is an injury that will more likely than not result in mortality.

⁸ Caused by the presence or actions of personnel including but not limited to deaths or serious injuries sustained during capture and handling, while attempting to avoid or escape capture, or from injuries sustained during transport.

⁹ This includes unintentional euthanasia for humane reasons (e.g., due to serious injury caused during permitted activity).

3. Group together actions with similar responses and describe, as applicable:
 - a. For imports, describe the anticipated responses:
 - During and after import 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 to import, acclimation, and introduction.
 - % of animals that may exhibit each response type.
 - b. For captures, 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.
4. For novel procedures for import or capture, discuss the most likely anticipated responses based on literature from studies on other species, if available, and any results from testing, if applicable.

5. Briefly summarize any mortalities or serious injuries that have occurred during any previously permitted import or wild capture conducted by your facility and staff identified in the application using the same or similar techniques; include circumstances and cause of death.
6. Discuss the anticipated effects on the species or stock from import or 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:
 - a. Prepare the sampling site by cleaning and disinfecting the fur or skin.
 - b. Utilize single-use, sterile instruments (e.g., needles).
 - c. Sterilize other devices prior to use and in the field if contaminated including but not limited to use of cold sterilization.
 - d. 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 import or 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. For captures, if working in proximity to or with lactating females and dependent young, or known pregnant females, give specific protocols for working around them. For example, how will you minimize disturbance and avoid separating mothers from young?
10. Describe your short- and long-term import or post-capture monitoring protocols.
11. Explain if and why monitoring or mitigation is not feasible for specific procedures, species, situations, etc.

12. Humane¹⁰ 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/or 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/or 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.
13. For captures, describe any mitigation you will take to avoid¹¹ or minimize impacts to non-target protected species (e.g., sea turtles, corals, USFWS species). Discuss whether and how they may be unintentionally harassed, captured, or otherwise affected.
14. 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?

D. Attach a References File

Attach 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 MMPA or NEPA analyses.

E. Resources Needed to Accomplish Objectives (up to 2,000 characters and attach files if necessary)

1. Explain how your expertise, facilities, and resources¹² are adequate to accomplish your proposed objectives and activities.

¹⁰ Humane means using the method that involves the least possible degree of pain and suffering possible.

¹¹ Public display permits cannot authorize take for ESA listed species.

¹² **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

2. List relevant proposals, contracts, grant awards, or letters of agreement that would demonstrate your resources. Copies must be made available upon request.
3. Indicate the status of other international, federal, state, or local authorizations and permits you have applied for, secured, or will apply for.

V. Take Table

The take table summarizes the estimated number of animals you expect to import or 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:

- A. **Species:** Provide the common and scientific name for each species you wish to import or collect from the wild.
- B. **Listing Unit/Stock:** Provide the MMPA stock for your species. You may refer to our website (<https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/species-directory>) for species listed under the MMPA.
- C. **Production/Origin:** Enter the original source of the animal – Wild (captured or stranded) or Captive (captive born) as applicable.
- D. **Life Stage:** Identify from below as appropriate.

Cetacean	Pinnipeds
Adult	Adult
Adult/Juvenile	All
All	Juvenile
Calf	Juvenile/Subadult
Juvenile	Non-Adult
Non-neonate	Non-Pup
	Pup/Juvenile
	Subadult
	Pup

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.

- E. **Sex:** For imports, create separate rows for each individual animal. For captures, create separate rows for males and females.
- F. **Expected Take:** This represents the maximum number of individuals you will import or take, annually. For wild captures, 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.
- H. **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.
1. For imports, enter “Captive animals (public display)”.
 2. For capture from the wild, your options are:
 - a. Removal from wild (permanent) – for animals that will be captured
 - b. Capture/Handle/Release – for target animals that are captured but not selected for public display
 - c. Harass – for non-target species or conspecifics that may be harassed by the capture operations, and
 - d. Unintentional mortality – for cases of accidental deaths associated with capture activities.
- I. **Observe/Collect Method:** Identify the method (e.g., import or capture). Use only one Observe/Collect method per row. If various methods will be used, you must provide take information in separate rows for each observe method.
1. For imports, enter “Captive.”
 2. For capture from the wild, choose the appropriate option from below:

• Net, hoop	• Net, other	• Underwater lasso
• Net, seine	• Trap, floating	• Other

If using “net, other” or “Other,” please explain what you mean.
- J. **Procedures:** Provide specific information on the activities that will be conducted.

1. For imports, enter “captive maintain” and “transport.”
2. For capture from the wild, enter “captive maintain” and “transport” for the row associated with removal.
3. 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.”

Example take tables are provided below.

Example Take Table 1 (Import activities): Import of one bottlenose dolphin from Foreign Facility Name in Foreign Country to Facility Name, City, State, United States.

Species (common name/ scientific name)	Stock/ Listing Unit	Production/ Origin	Life Stage	Sex	Expected Take	Take Action	Observe/ Collect Method	Procedures	Details
Harbor seal (<i>Phoca vitulina</i>)	Western North Atlantic Stock	Captive	Adult	Female	1	Captive animals (public display)	Captive	Import; Transport	ID No. X12, "Rosey" (captive born, 9/8/2012). Offspring of dam, ID No. X10, "Honey" (wild capture, Western North Atlantic Stock, est DOB, 6/7/2010) and sire, ID No. Y11, "Fred" (non- releasable, Western North Atlantic Stock, est. DOB 3/17/2011).

Example Take Table 2 (Capture activities): Proposed captures of up to three bottlenose dolphins in Florida over 2 years.

Species (common name/ scientific name)	Stock/ Listing Unit	Origin	Life Stage	Sex	Expected Take	Take Action	Observe/ Collect Method	Procedures	Details
Bottlenose Dolphin (<i>Tursiops truncatus</i>)	Indian River Lagoon Estuarine System Stock	Wild	Juvenile	Female	2	Removal from wild (permanent)	Net, seine	Captive, maintain; Assessment procedures (see potential procedures in Appendix); Transport	Two females over duration of permit
Bottlenose Dolphin (<i>Tursiops truncatus</i>)	Indian River Lagoon Estuarine System Stock	Wild	Juvenile	Male	1	Removal from wild (permanent)	Net, seine	Captive, maintain; Assessment procedures (see potential procedures in Appendix); Transport	One male over duration of permit
Bottlenose Dolphin (<i>Tursiops truncatus</i>)	Indian River Lagoon Estuarine System Stock	Wild	All	Male and Female	10	Capture/ Handle/ Release	Net, seine	Assessment procedures (see potential procedures in Appendix)	Animals that may be caught with target animals, no sets will be made on groups larger than 4 animals.
Bottlenose Dolphin (<i>Tursiops truncatus</i>)	Indian River Lagoon Estuarine System Stock	Wild	All	Male and Female	40	Unintentional Harassment	Net, seine	Unintentional Harassment	Animals that may be with the target animals, but not caught in the set.
Bottlenose Dolphin (<i>Tursiops truncatus</i>)	Indian River Lagoon Estuarine System	Wild	Juvenile	Male and Female	1	Unintentional Mortality	Net, seine	Unintentional Mortality	One mortality over the life of the permit. Includes euthanasia for humane purposes and necropsy.

VI. 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](#)
- Minority or low-income communities
- [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? (up to 1,200 characters)
 - 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? (up to 800 characters)
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. (up to 2,000 characters)

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. a. Does your project involve activities known or suspected of introducing or spreading invasive species, intentionally or not? Examples include transporting animals or other biological specimens, discharging ballast water, and using boats/equipment at multiple sites. Yes or no.
- 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. (up to 1,200 characters)
4. a. Will your activities involve collecting, handling, or transporting potentially infectious agents or pathogens, such as biological specimens (animals, blood, tissues)? Yes or no.
- b. Will your activities involve using or transporting hazardous substances, such as toxic chemicals? Yes or no.
- 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. (up to 1,200 characters)
5. Do your activities involve equipment (e.g., scientific instruments) or techniques that are new, untested, or have unknown or uncertain impacts on the biological or physical environment? Yes or no.

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. (up to 1,200 characters)

- b. Discuss the degree to which they are likely to be adopted by others for similar activities or applied more broadly. (up to 800 characters)

VII. Project Contacts

Please provide information about the personnel who will be working under the permit.

- Identify the personnel under Project Contacts who will accompany the animals.
- Include a table (see example Table 4) listing the names of the PI and CIs, and the specific procedures they will oversee or conduct.
- Attach a Qualifications Form for the PI and each CI. See [Qualifications and Experience](#) below.

A. 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.

1. The Principal Investigator (PI) is the individual primarily responsible for the take and any related activities conducted under the permit, such as the curator. 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.
2. The Primary Contact is the person who we contact with questions or updates about the application. This may be the registrar or other person responsible for maintaining the marine mammal inventory records at the facility. Please include full name, title, and contact info for this person.
3. 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, such as the team lead or veterinarian overseeing the transport.

- You may 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.
4. The Veterinarian is responsible for: 1) overseeing the medical care of the animal(s) being imported or collected from the wild, and 2) providing the written statement (required in the Project Description) certifying that the methods of import/capture and post-import/capture care will be adequate to ensure the well-being of the animal(s).

Table 3. Personnel Roles and Requirements

Project Contact	Must be named in the permit	Able to make changes to the application, request changes to the permit, and submit reports.	Description of qualifications required
Applicant/ Permit Holder	Yes	Yes	Yes
Responsible Party	Yes	Yes	Required only if also serving as the PI or a CI
Principal Investigator	Yes	Yes	Yes
Primary Contact	Yes	Yes	Required only if also serving as the PI or a CI
Co-Investigator	Yes	No	Yes
Veterinarian	Yes	No	Yes

B. Qualifications and Experience

The PI and each CI must have a Qualifications Form (QF). Previously we accepted CVs, resumes, and biosketches, but often these did not include sufficient information about the person's experience. The QF is designed to give us the information we

need. You can download a QF form and view an example QF on our [public display permit webpage](#).

Persons authorized as the PI or CIs must have qualifications corresponding to their duties. Each person's QF must specify the number and species of animals they have transported and by what methods (e.g., air, land).

If you do not provide sufficient information, we will not authorize the person(s) to conduct the relevant activities.

In addition, you must submit a table (see Table 4) defining the roles and activities to be performed for the PI and each CI listed in the application.

Table 4. Example table showing personnel and their roles.

Name/Affiliation	Role	Activities
John Doe, Institution A, City, State	Responsible Party	Director of Institution A
John Smith, Ph.D., Institution A, City, State	Principal Investigator	Supervise and perform all activities under the permit
Jane Smith, D.V.M., Institution A, City, State	Veterinarian	Attending veterinarian
Jane Doe, Ph.D., Institution A, City, State	Co-Investigator	Team lead overseeing the transport

VIII. Certification, Signature, and Submission of Application

- A. The following Certification, followed by the Signature, Name, and Title of the Applicant or Responsible Party, must be submitted as the concluding section of the application.

"I hereby certify that the foregoing information is complete, true, and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief. I understand that this information is submitted for the purpose of obtaining a permit under the following statute and the regulations promulgated thereunder, as indicated in section I. of this application:

The Marine Mammal Protection Act of 1972 (16 U.S.C. 1361 *et seq.*) and regulations (50 CFR Part 216).

I also understand that any false statement may subject me to the criminal penalties of 18 U.S.C. 1001, or to penalties provided under the Marine Mammal Protection Act of 1972."

Signature of Applicant and Date of Signature

Typed or Printed Name of Applicant

Title of Applicant

- B. Submit an electronic copy of the application by email: nimm.inventory@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?

- Imports: at least 6 months before the import will begin (longer if animals to be imported were captured from the wild).
- Captures: at least 1 year before the captures will begin.

What is the process for getting a public display permit?

1. Follow these instructions and contact the Permits and Conservation Division at nmfs.pr1.apps@noaa.gov with any questions.
2. Submit your application:
 - a. By email: nimm.inventory@noaa.gov (preferred), or
 - b. By mail: Office of Protected Resources, Permits and Conservation Division, 1315 East-West Highway, Room 13805 Silver Spring, MD 20910.
3. A permit analyst will review your application and assign a File Number. To facilitate processing, reference the application File Number in all correspondence.
4. Your permit analyst will contact you regarding the status of your application. If deficiencies are identified, you must address them within 60 days or your application will be returned to you without action.
5. Once we consider your application complete:
 - a. 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 U.S. Marine Mammal Commission, the U.S. Department of Agriculture Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), and subject matter experts for review.
6. We may receive substantive comments during the public comment period. We will forward these comments to you, as appropriate, for your response.
7. We will draft documentation (including NEPA analyses and documentation of MMPA issuance criteria).
8. The documents will be reviewed by various NMFS offices including a legal review.
9. The Office Director will decide whether to issue or deny your permit.

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 Act 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 MMPA regulations. These regulations are available at the following web site: <http://www.gpo.gov/> and are summarized below.

MMPA section 104 is available at the following web site:

<https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/marine-mammal-protection-act>. 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 through 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.

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement

The information requested in this application is required and is used to determine whether the activities described in the application are consistent with the purposes and policies of the Act and their implementing regulations.

Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to *average 30 hours per response*, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, 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.

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.

Notwithstanding any other provision of the law, no person is required to respond to, nor shall any person be subject to a penalty for failure to comply with, a collection of information subject to the requirements of the Paperwork Reduction Act, unless that collection of information displays a currently valid OMB Control Number.

Appendix A: Assessment procedures for capture from the wild

In the take table, insert the procedures from the list below that correspond to the activities you will conduct to assess the suitability of an individual animal for permanent captivity.

For Cetaceans:

- Auditory brainstem response test
- Measure
- Other
- Sample, anal swab
- Sample, blood
- Sample, blowhole swab
- Sample, exhaled air
- Sample, fecal
- Sample, milk (lactating females)
- Sample, muscle biopsy
- Sample, skin and blubber biopsy
- Sample, skin biopsy
- Sample, sperm
- Sample, tooth extraction
- Sample, urine
- Ultrasound
- Weigh

For Pinnipeds:

- Administer drug, IM
- Administer drug, intraperitoneal
- Administer drug, IV
- Administer drug, subcutaneous
- Administer drug, topical
- Anesthesia, gas w/cone or mask
- Anesthesia, gas w/intubation
- Anesthesia, injectable sedative
- Measure (standard morphometrics)
- Sample, blood
- Sample, blubber biopsy
- Sample, clip hair
- Sample, clip nail
- Sample, fecal loop
- Sample, fecal swab
- Sample, nasal swab
- Sample, ocular swab
- Sample, oral swab
- Sample, other
- Sample, skin biopsy
- Sample, swab all mucus membranes
- Sample, tooth extraction
- Sample, urine catheter
- Sample, vibrissae (clip)
- Sample, vibrissae (pull)
- Ultrasound
- Weigh

Appendix B: Guidance on Describing Commonly Used Methods

If administering drugs or other substances (e.g., sedatives), provide:

- 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

For aerial and vessel surveys (e.g., to locate animals in the wild), provide:

- 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

If using unmanned aircraft systems (UAS), answer the aerial questions above and provide:

- 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)?

For capture and restraint, provide:

- 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