



7555-01

NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION

Notice of Permit Modification Received Under the Antarctic Conservation Act of 1978

AGENCY: National Science Foundation.

ACTION: Notice of Permit Modification Request Received and Permit Issued.

SUMMARY: The National Science Foundation (NSF) is required to publish a notice of requests to modify permits issued to conduct activities regulated and permits issued under the Antarctic Conservation Act of 1978. NSF has published regulations under the Antarctic Conservation Act in the Code of Federal Regulations. This is the required notice of a requested permit modification and permit issued.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Nature McGinn, ACA Permit Officer, Office of Polar Programs, National Science Foundation, 2415 Eisenhower Avenue, Alexandria, VA 22314; 703-292-8030; e-mail: ACApemits@nsf.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The National Science Foundation (NSF), as directed by the Antarctic Conservation Act of 1978 (Public Law 95-541, 45 CFR 670), as amended by the Antarctic Science, Tourism and Conservation Act of 1996, has developed regulations for the establishment of a permit system for various activities in Antarctica and designation of certain animals and certain geographic areas a requiring special protection.

NSF issued a permit (ACA 2018-012) to Jay J. Rotella on October 16, 2017. The issued permit allows the applicant to continue long-term studies of Weddell seal populations in Erebus Bay and the McMurdo Sound region to evaluate how temporal variation in the marine environment affects individual life histories and population dynamics of a long-lived mammal. These studies may require the applicant and agents to enter into six ASPAs in the area. Research involves capture and release of up to 675 Weddell seal pups at one to four days after birth for flipper tagging per year.

Now the applicant proposes a permit modification to increase the total take of Weddell seal pups for flipper tagging from 675 to 1000. The Environmental Officer has reviewed the modification request and has determined that the amendment is not a material change to the permit, and it will have a less than a minor or transitory impact.

Dates of Permitted Activities: November 22, 2017 to September 30, 2022.

The permit modification was issued on November 22, 2017.

Nadene G. Kennedy,

Polar Coordination Specialist,

Office of Polar Programs.

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