



Protecting our oceans through science and advocacy

**To: Chief, Permits and Conservation Division
Office of Protected Resources
NMFS
1315 East-West Highway Room 13705
Silver Spring, MD 20910**

RE: NOAA-NMFS-2012-0158 Permit to import beluga whales for public display

To Whom it May Concern,

Pacific Whale Foundation, on behalf of its thousands of members worldwide, formally registers its opposition to NOAA-NMFS-2012-0158 - Georgia Aquarium's application to National Marine Fisheries Service for a permit to import eighteen (18) beluga whales (*Delphinapterus leucas*) for public display purposes.

Pacific Whale Foundation does not believe that the public display of wild animals is necessary to engage people, and instead provides the public with a false picture of the animal's natural lives. Captive cetaceans encourage people to consider wildlife as isolated objects, rather than integral parts of an ocean ecosystem.

For these reasons, we ask that National Marine Fisheries Service to set an example and deny the Georgia Aquarium a permit to import 18 beluga whales from Russia, an importation which holds no scientific or conservation value.

Sincerely,

Lauren Campbell
Conservation Manager
Pacific Whale Foundation