**TEMPLATE REQUEST FOR TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE**

Date

Dear [field supervisor of local USFWS office(s) or NMFS Assistant Regional Administrator (ARA) or Branch Chief in the applicable office],

The USCG and EPA share responsibility for responding to oil spills and other hazardous substances releases under OPA, CERCLA, CWA, and the NCP. These Federal response activities are subject to the requirements of section 7(a)(2) of the Endangered Species Act (ESA). As such, the [lead response agency] is requesting technical assistance from your office in order to prepare and analyze potential impacts from spill response actions, as described in the attached response action matrix and definitions to ESA listed species [and proposed ] and designated [and proposed] critical habitats within [action area]. Specifically we are seeking: (1) your Points of Contact for section 7 and spill response [and (2) a species and critical habitat list for the location/area identified above if not available on line]. In addition we request to work collaboratively with your POCs to describe the anticipated impacts from our potential actions and develop conservation measures to avoid or minimize these impacts where possible. We anticipate this collaboration would occur as a series of short meetings/conference calls over [XX time period] to draft our species response matrix (see attached example). Our anticipated outcome of this collaboration is a clear and concise “Biological Evaluation,” based on the species action matrix, which we will use to initiate informal or formal consultation for our response actions. Our preference is to consult on our response actions prior to an incident where possible and understanding that emergency consultation may be necessary for specific incidents.

We look forward to working with your team. This collaboration will facilitate our ability to carry out spill response actions while avoiding or minimizing impacts to ESA listed species and habitats.

Sincerely,

XXXXX

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