

Mr. Eric Hawk  
Protected Species  
NOAA National Marine Fisheries Service  
263 13<sup>th</sup> Avenue South  
St. Petersburg, FL 33701

Re: MV Sperchios Grounding

Dear Mr. Hawk,

In accordance with the Endangered Species MOA for Oil and Hazardous Substance spills, we are providing the information on actions taken with regard to the above referenced grounding incident. The plan to pump cargo out of the vessel and into an adjacent barge to lighten it and float it off its grounding site was successful. There was no oil released as a result of these actions. Enclosed is a list of resources at risk and possible booming strategies in the event of a spill.

#### Resources at Risk

##### Federally Listed Threatened and Endangered Species

Currently there is no threat to federally listed endangered species as a result of the actions taken by the Coast Guard or the grounding of the vessel.

##### Marine Habitats

Guayanilla is a submarine canyon with shallow reef systems on either side. The Unitas and Guayanilla reef systems are located immediately west of the grounding site. The vessel grounded on a hardground shelf that forms the reef front. The area is mapped as reef colonized pavement in the NOAA Benthic Habitat maps. There are two species of coral (T & E candidate species *Acropora palmate* and *Acropora cervicornis*) that may have been impacted by the grounding, but not the response actions.

These two reef systems crest and form a complex system of shallow (2-3 feet) seagrass beds and patch reefs that extend all the way to Punta Ventana, to the west and north to Punta Verraco.

After lightering the vessel it was re-floated and removed from its grounded location without any pollution release. Currently all protective booming around the two sand cays and the vessel has been removed. We believe that these actions to date, have not adversely affected federally listed threatened or endangered species. The vessel was inspected and no serious damage was to the hull was found. The CG closed the response on November 25.

Thank you for your attention in this matter.

Sincerely,

Captain Raymond Perry  
US Coast Guard