Appendix B: ECS Samples Request Prioritization Criteria

Protocols for evaluating ECS sample requests as described in this sample policy are in place to promote the goals of the ECS Project, as well as maintain integrity and transparency in practice. To ensure that all responses to ECS sample requests are clear and equitable, all decisions made will be in accordance with the following criteria:

Request Prioritization

1. **Research that may benefit the ECS analysis and determination of the outer limits of the U.S. ECS as defined by the mission of the ECS Project.** All samples collected are for the primary purpose of defining the U.S. ECS. Any samples requested for analysis specifically directed to aid this definition get first priority. Cruise participants whose research is determined by the SAG to meet these criteria will have priority over other researchers.

2. **Research that builds upon previously approved requests.** Further research with new techniques and ideas can build upon the current knowledge of the U.S. Continental Shelf, and may aid in defining the ECS. Any requests for samples with proposed research that will build upon previous work done in evaluating other ECS samples will get second priority.

3. **Other research conducted by shipboard scientists.** Shipboard scientists have been approved to participate in ECS fieldwork because their research has been deemed by the ECS Task Force to have scientific value, even if only marginally applicable to the U.S. ECS submission. If these scientists substantially contribute to the collection and documentation of geologic samples during the ECS cruise, their requests for ECS sample material will get third priority. However, if they were sanctioned to collect samples other than those of interest to the ECS Task Force during the cruise, they will have first priority access to those “non-ECS” samples.

4. **Research that benefits government agency mission requirements.** Any request from a researcher funded by a Federal agency for ECS samples to help further mission goals for these agencies will get fourth priority.

5. **Other research with the potential for advancing a field of science.** Research proposed on ECS samples using analyses that do not clearly help define the U.S. ECS will get fifth priority and be evaluated on merit.

6. **All other requests.** All other sample requests will be considered, but will get lowest priority.

All requests will be filled in order of the priority designated during their approval. Other factors being equal, requests received resulting from shipboard inspection will be filled first and requests identified during a post-cruise working party will be filled second.

Future requests for samples by researchers will be evaluated in light of their previous compliance with ECS sample policies and procedures in effect at the time of their acknowledgement of sample policies. Past research productivity, including report and publications history will be considered as part of the review process.