

Subject: St. Lucie meeting summary

From: Harriet Nash <HLN@nrc.gov>

Date: Mon, 23 Apr 2007 11:08:27 -0400

To: ed_Hollowell@fpl.com, Michael_Bresette@fpl.com, Stacy_Foster@fpl.com, Shelley.Norton@noaa.gov

CC: Dennis Logan <DTL1@nrc.gov>, Elizabeth Wexler <EMW1@nrc.gov>

All,

Attached is the first cut at the meeting summary. Liz is out of the office today so please send me your comments if you get to this today. If it's after today, please send them to Liz. We'll try to get this out formally as soon as possible.

I have not included information regarding the discussion of trend analysis (scrapes, etc). If you think this should be included, please let me know. Otherwise, I'm assuming this would factor into the design of the excluder device at the velocity caps.

Also, I think I left Vince's card at home, and he did not sign the paper we passed around at the table. So, if we need his input as well, please forward to him.

Thanks,
Harriet

St Lucie April 18 meeting summary_HLN.wpd

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Stacy Foster
FPL Environmental Services
St. Lucie Nuclear Station
6501 S. Ocean Drive
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Shelley Norton
National Marine Fisheries Service
263 13th Avenue South
St. Petersburg, FL 33701

SUBJECT: SUMMARY OF APRIL 17-18, 2007 MEETING REGARDING FORMAL
CONSULTATION UNDER SECTION 7 OF THE ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT
REGARDING OPERATION OF THE ST. LUCIE NUCLEAR POWER PLANT
(TAC NOS. MD4260 AND MD4261)

Dear Ms. Foster and Ms. Norton:

Under Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act, the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) reinitiated formal consultation with the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) regarding the continued operation of the St. Lucie Nuclear Power Plant (SLNPP), after the incidental take limit for sea turtles was exceeded in 2006. At that time, NRC and NMFS were already in consultation regarding the capture of a smalltooth sawfish (*Pristis pectinata*) at SLNPP, and the agencies agreed that the consultations could be combined for a comprehensive biological opinion addressing sea turtles and the smalltooth sawfish. On April 17-18, 2007, representatives of the NRC, NMFS, and FPL's Environmental Services met to observe the inspection of the southern 12-ft-diameter intake pipe and discuss possible mitigation measures to reduce impingement and entrainment of protected marine species, specifically sea turtles and smalltooth sawfish, into the SLNPP intake canal.

As a result of the October 2006 loggerhead turtle (*Caretta caretta*) hatchling impingements at the intake wells, NRC, NMFS, and FPL discussed potential mitigation measures to prevent pregnant female sea turtles from nesting on the intake canal banks. NRC and NMFS agreed that short chain-link fences should be installed immediately along the banks of the intake canal. This prudent measure should be implemented as soon as possible since the 2007 sea turtle nesting season has already begun.

During the April 2007 outage at SLNPP, Florida Power & Light Company (FPL) inspected the intake and discharge pipes. Inspection results are expected to identify the amount and location of any significant biofouling and debris accumulation in the intake pipes that may adversely affect animals entrained into the intake canal. Based on the pipe inspection report, FPL should develop an implementation plan for cleaning the intake pipes during the fall 2007 outage. Removal of significant biofouling and debris would minimize adverse effects on animals entrained into the intake canal.

The exploration of the intake pipes also revealed a dead-end section in each 12-ft-diameter intake pipe. A live green turtle (*Chelonia mydas*) was discovered in the dead-end section of the southern 12-ft-diameter intake pipe. We observed the turtle breathe from an air pocket in the dead-end pipe section. FPL was able to blow air into that section so the turtle could continue breathing from the pocket overnight. It is expected that the turtle would enter the intake canal

when full flow was restored in the pipe. This event, however, revealed the potential for animals to be trapped in this section, and since it has no functional purpose, NRC and NMFS agreed that FPL should seal off the dead-end sections of the 12-ft-diameter intake pipes during the fall 2007 outage.

To reduce the potential for incidental takes in 2007, NRC and NMFS agree that FPL should employ several mitigation measures: install fences along intake canal banks, clean intake pipes, and seal off the dead-end sections of the intake pipes. In addition, the agencies agreed that FPL should develop a plan to install excluder devices at the velocity caps to prevent large marine organisms, such as adult sea turtles and smalltooth sawfish, from entering the intake pipes. Design and installation of such devices would likely be a longer-term project, but should be done as soon as possible. Finally, if FPL conducts any dredging, bank restoration, or other similar activities within the intake canal, FPL should work with NRC and NMFS to identify appropriate mitigation measures to ensure the safety of any marine organisms that might be affected.

NRC should submit to NMFS a biological assessment regarding sea turtles and foreseeable future activities at SLNPP that may affect protected marine species. After receiving the pipe inspection report, FPL should submit to NRC any new or updated information, including an updated description of the cooling system if necessary, for inclusion in the biological assessment for sea turtles. At the meeting, several changes were suggested to FPL's smalltooth sawfish handling, transportation, and release protocol; FPL should send the revised document to NRC and NMFS for approval. Also, the NRC and NMFS agreed that FPL should continue communicating with both agencies regarding the design and implementation of any mitigation measures and projects that could affect protected marine species.

If there are any questions regarding this meeting summary or the recommendations described, please contact Ms. Elizabeth Wexler at EMW1@nrc.gov or 301-415-1522.

Sincerely,

Harriet Nash, Environmental Scientist
Environmental Branch A
Division of License Renewal
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Docket Nos. 50-335 and 50-389

cc: See next page