Florida Power
A Progress Energy Company

Crystal River Nuclear Plant
Docket No. 50-302
Operating License No. DPR-72

10 CFR 50.36b

November 19, 2002
3F1102-08

U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Attn: Document Control Desk
Washington, DC 20555-0001

Subject: Crystal River – Unit 3 - Sea Turtle Mortality Report Submitted to the U. S. National Marine Fisheries Service

Dear Sir:

Florida Power Corporation hereby provides the NRC a copy of a sea turtle mortality report submitted to the U. S. National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS). The report to the NMFS is required by NMFS's Crystal River – Unit 3 (CR-3) Biological Opinion, dated August 8, 2002, Terms and Conditions, Item 2. Reporting to the NRC is required by the CR-3 Operating License, Appendix B – Part II, Environmental Protection Plan (Non-Radiological) Technical Specifications, Section 4.0, Environmental Conditions, Item 4.1, Significant Environmental Events.

If you have any questions regarding this submittal, please contact Mr. Sid Powell, Supervisor, Licensing and Regulatory Programs at (352) 563-4883.

Sincerely,

D. L. Taylor
Manger, Support Services

DLT/rmb

Attachment

xc: Regional Administrator, Region II
Senior Resident Inspector
NRR Project Manager

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Florida Power
A Progress Energy Company

Crystal River Nuclear Plant
Docket No. 50-302
Operating License No. DPR-72

November 19, 2002
LRP02-0076

U.S. National Marine Fisheries Service
South East Regional Office
Attn: Assistant Regional Administrator
Protected Resource Division
9721 Executive Center Drive North
St. Petersburg, FL 33702

Subject: Crystal River Unit 3 – Sea Turtle Mortality Report

Dear Sir:

The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), Nuclear Regulatory Commission, and the Crystal River Energy Complex (CREC) recently completed an Endangered Species Act Section 7 formal consultation process. In the Biological Opinion, issued August 8, 2002 by the NMFS, terms and conditions were included which required that if any listed species are apparently injured or killed in the CREC intake canal or the Crystal River Unit 3 bar racks, a report summarizing the incident must be provided to the NMFS within 30 days of the incident.

On October 24, 2002, at approximately 1:00 A.M., a green sea turtle (*Chelonia mydas*) was recovered from the Crystal River Unit 3 intake bar racks. When first spotted, the turtle was reported to be positioned against the bar racks in a head-up position, approximately 1 foot below the surface of the water.

The juvenile turtle (39.5 cm straight carapace length) was suffering from a severe infestation of fibropapillomatosis, with tumors on most fleshy parts of the turtle, including around all four flippers and the tail. Some tumors were > 4 cm in diameter. Tumors also completely occluded vision in both eyes. The turtle appeared to be moderately emaciated.

When first removed from the bar racks, the turtle was reported to display faint movement of the flippers and possible plastron movement, indicative of respiration. However, by the time the turtle was transported the short distance to a holding tank at the Crystal River Mariculture Center, the turtle was still and lifeless.

The turtle was evaluated by a Mariculture Center biologist, who found no pupil response, tail pinch response, respiration, or other signs of life. However, due to the initial recovery report of possible signs of life, the turtle was treated as being comatose and passive resuscitation procedures were implemented. After several hours of observation with no movement or other signs of life, the turtle was declared dead.

The Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission was consulted to discuss the circumstances surrounding the recovery of the turtle and to make a determination of causal vs. non-causal mortality. It was confirmed that the turtle had a severe infestation of fibropapillomatosis, significantly affecting health, feeding, and navigation of the turtle. Initial reports were that flipper movement was detected, though within 15 minutes the turtle was reported to be lifeless. Resuscitation procedures were unsuccessful. It is likely the fibropapillomatosis resulted in a severely debilitated condition in the turtle. Though it is difficult to confirm the turtle was alive when first recovered, this was considered to be a causal mortality due to the fact that the turtle was not seen floating in the canal, but was initially reported to be under the surface of the water on the intake bar racks, and there is no other definitive cause of death at this time. The turtle carcass will be transferred to the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission for use in an investigative study of fibropapillomatosis in green sea turtles.

This is the first casual sea turtle mortality at the Crystal River Energy Complex for 2002.

If you have any questions regarding this submittal, please contact Mr. Ted Williams, Superintendent, Environmental and Chemistry at (352) 563-4356.

Sincerely,

D. L. Taylor
Manger, Support Services

DLT/pfe