



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE
NORTHEAST REGION
One Blackburn Drive
Gloucester, MA 01930-2298

JUL 13 2007

Mr. Eric Benner
Branch Chief, Environmental Branch A
Division of License Renewal
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington, D.C. 20555-0001

Dear Mr. Benner:

We have reviewed the Hope Creek Extended Power Uprate Essential Fish Habitat Assessment, dated June 14, 2007, for the Hope Creek Generating Station on Artificial Island in Lower Alloways Creek Township, New Jersey, adjacent to the Delaware Estuary

We find that this EFH assessment satisfactorily describes the potential impacts of uprating the generating plant from a capacity to produce 3,339 megawatts to produce up to 3,952 megawatts. And because the Hope Creek Generating Station operates with closed cycle cooling, we agree with the document's conclusion that closed cycle cooling systems are the most reasonable way to reduce aquatic organism loss through entrainment and impingement, and offer no conservation recommendations. However, we note on page 14 of the document, under the section "6.0 Mitigation Measures," the statement "Continuous operation of the traveling screens may reduce the mortality of those organisms that are impinged." We agree with this statement, but note that the first paragraph of page 6 verifies that the traveling screens do not operate continuously. Within the limits of practical and technical feasibility, we recommend that the traveling screens be in operation as much as possible.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment. If you have further questions or comments, please contact Stan Gorski, stationed at the James J. Howard Marine Sciences Laboratory in Highlands, New Jersey, at 732-872-3037.

Sincerely,

Peter D. Colosi, Jr.
Assistant Regional Administrator
Habitat Conservation Division

