

## NRR-PMDAPEm Resource

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**From:** Susco, Jeremy  
**Sent:** Monday, May 21, 2012 1:33 PM  
**To:** Travers, Allison  
**Cc:** Logan, Dennis; Balsam, Briana  
**Subject:** FW: NRC St Lucie Plant; NMFS comments  
**Attachments:** NRC-StLuciePlant\_EFH\_FINAL.pdf

Ali,

Just got this, and it closes the loop on that EFH assessment for the St. Lucie EPU EA. You should be able to use this address ([NRR-PMDA-ECapture Resource](#)) or Sylvia to get the memo into ADAMS. Please give the ADAMS # to Dennis and Briana after you get it for their files.

Thanks,  
Jeremy

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**From:** Imboden, Andy  
**Sent:** Monday, May 21, 2012 1:25 PM  
**To:** Balsam, Briana; Susco, Jeremy; Logan, Dennis  
**Subject:** FW: NRC St Lucie Plant; NMFS comments

FYI.  
Let me know if I should thank Robin...  
Andy

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**From:** Robin Wiebler [<mailto:robin.wiebler@noaa.gov>]  
**Sent:** Monday, May 21, 2012 12:09 PM  
**To:** Imboden, Andy; Logan, Dennis; David Dale; Sharon Rolfes; Jocelyn Karazsia; Brandon Howard; Pace Wilber  
**Subject:** NRC St Lucie Plant; NMFS comments

**Hearing Identifier:** NRR\_PMDA  
**Email Number:** 379

**Mail Envelope Properties** (70E4AAC55311054EA919EE77C68EEE9815F21AC9C6)

**Subject:** FW: NRC St Lucie Plant; NMFS comments  
**Sent Date:** 5/21/2012 1:32:38 PM  
**Received Date:** 5/21/2012 1:32:39 PM  
**From:** Susco, Jeremy

**Created By:** Jeremy.Susco@nrc.gov

**Recipients:**

"Logan, Dennis" <Dennis.Logan@nrc.gov>  
Tracking Status: None  
"Balsam, Briana" <Briana.Balsam@nrc.gov>  
Tracking Status: None  
"Travers, Allison" <Allison.Travers@nrc.gov>  
Tracking Status: None

**Post Office:** HQCLSTR02.nrc.gov

<b>Files</b>	<b>Size</b>	<b>Date &amp; Time</b>
MESSAGE	799	5/21/2012 1:32:39 PM
NRC-StLuciePlant_EFH_FINAL.pdf		23883

**Options**

**Priority:** Standard  
**Return Notification:** No  
**Reply Requested:** No  
**Sensitivity:** Normal  
**Expiration Date:**  
**Recipients Received:**



**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**  
**National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration**  
NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE

Southeast Regional Office  
263 13<sup>th</sup> Avenue South  
St. Petersburg, Florida 33701-5505  
(727) 824-5317; FAX (727) 824-5300  
<http://sero.nmfs.noaa.gov/>

May 18, 2012

F/SER4:BH/pw

(Sent via Electronic Mail)

Andrew S. Imboden, Chief  
Environmental Review and Guidance Update Branch  
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission  
Washington, D.C. 20555-0001

Dear Mr. Imboden:

NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) reviewed the Nuclear Regulatory Commission's (NRC) essential fish habitat (EFH) assessment dated March 20, 2012, for the proposed changes to reactor operations that would require discharging warmer water than currently occurs from St. Lucie Plant Units 1 and 2 (TAC No. ME5091) on Hutchinson Island, St. Lucie County, Florida. NRC's initial determination is the proposed changes to reactor operations would not adversely impact EFH or federally managed fishery species. As the nation's federal trustee for the conservation and management of marine, estuarine, and anadromous fishery resources, the following comments and recommendations are provided pursuant to authorities of the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act and the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act.

*Project Description*

The revised reactor operations would increase the temperature of cooling waters leaving the plant's two units yielding a maximum temperature of 119° F at the two discharge outfalls. This increase in temperature would require the addition of 6,896 cubic feet to the allowable mixing zone. The northern outfall pipe is 1,500 feet offshore, while the southern outfall is 1,900 feet offshore. Both outfalls lie in approximately 23 feet of water in areas devoid of corals and hardbottom.

*Project Area Habitat and Fishery Species*

While NMFS agrees with NRC's identifications of EFH present near the outfalls, NMFS believes Table 3 of the EFH assessment excludes species present in the project area that should have been included in Section 4 of the EFH assessment. These species are Spanish mackerel (*Scomberomorus maculatus*), cobia (*Rachycentron canadum*), king mackerel (*Scomberomorus cavalla*), and spiny lobster (*Panulirus argus*). However, NMFS does not believe this omission has changed the overall evaluation of the proposed changes to reactor operations.

*Conclusion*

NRC has received a National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit from the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) and an Industrial Wastewater Facility Permit from St. Lucie County. The proposed cooling water discharges would not exceed thresholds identified in those permits for water temperature at the edge of the allowed mixing zone. Florida Power and Light (FPL)



will conduct a baseline assessment prior to and during the upgrade to Unit 1. The assessment will study important fishery species and water quality parameters within the affected area. Post-operational monitoring will begin once Unit 2 is completed and will continue for two years. As a result of these studies, FDEP could require mitigation measures should unanticipated impacts occur.

Based on the above discussion of impacts likely to result from the proposed project, NMFS agrees with the NRC's determination that the proposed project would not have a substantial adverse impact on EFH.

We appreciate the opportunity to provide these comments. Questions should be directed to the attention of Mr. Brandon Howard in our West Palm Beach Field Office, which is co-located with the US Environmental Protection Agency at USEPA, 400 North Congress Avenue, Suite 120, West Palm Beach, FL 33401. He also may be reached by telephone at (561) 616-8880 extension 210, or by email at Brandon.Howard@noaa.gov.

Sincerely,



/ for

Virginia M. Fay  
Assistant Regional Administrator  
Habitat Conservation Division

cc:

NRC, Andy.Imboden@nrc.gov  
NRC, Dennis.Logan@nrc.gov  
F/SER4  
F/SER47, Karazsia, Howard