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Notice of Receipt and Availability of Application for a Combined License

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Comment On: NRC-2009-0337-0020
Combined License Application for Turkey Point Nuclear Plant, Unit Nos. 6 and 7; Draft Environmental Impact Statement

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Submitter Information

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General Comment

Florida Power and Light is seeking permission to build two new nuclear reactors at its existing plant next to Biscayne National Park and other natural areas; the project would be highly water-intensive, potentially threatening Biscayne Bay and the Biscayne Aquifer. It would threaten other sensitive marine resources, including dozens of federally protected species such as the American crocodile, Florida manatee and five species of sea turtle. In addition, power lines from the expanded plant could be run across the eastern side of Everglades National Park.

This goes far beyond the discussion of whether nuclear power is the right or wrong choice at this point in time, said Matthew Schwartz, executive director at South Florida Wildlands Association. Biodiversity in the ecosystem surrounding the existing Turkey Point plant is second to none. This is absolutely the wrong location for a massive new engineering project of this scale.

Turkey Point is on the shoreline and adjacent to Biscayne National Park, one of the nations largest marine parks famous as an ecotourism destination and teeming with wildlife, said Jaclyn Lopez, Florida director at the Center for Biological Diversity. But with two new reactors, Turkey Point would become one of the largest nuclear facilities in the country. Marine parks and huge nuclear plants simply dont go together. Important natural resources would be in serious jeopardy.

The new reactors will require 90 million gallons a day of Miami-Dades treated wastewater for cooling. The vented hot steam will likely contain household chemicals, pharmaceuticals, bacteria and viruses that end up in the countys wastewater. Even in small amounts, these can affect human health and terrestrial and marine environments like mangroves, seagrass beds and coral reefs. The aerosol mist can be dispersed widely by wind and water currents.

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If there is insufficient treated wastewater for cooling the reactors, the radial wells used for back-up cooling would become one of the largest well-fields in the Southeast and could lead to further saltwater intrusion into the Biscayne Aquifer, a major problem already impinging on South Floridas limited freshwater supply.

There are a state-managed aquatic preserve, expansive wetland habitat preserve, two national parks and a national wildlife refuge all within six miles of the proposed site. The half-life of the main fuel, U-235, is 703.8 million years. Plutonium is also routinely created in the process of running a nuclear plant. It is highly toxic and its various isotopes have half-lives ranging from about 25,000 to 80 million years.

These extremely dangerous substances will require secure storage and protection for a very long period of time in an area likely to be hard hit by increasing sea-level rise, storm surges and hurricanes.