

Eaton, Kristin

Subject: RE: Least Terns at Turkey Point

From: Zambrano, Ricardo [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, June 15, 2016 10:52 AM
To: ALDECOA, Mario
Subject: Least Terns at Turkey Point

CAUTION - EXTERNAL EMAIL

Hi Mario,

Thank you for taking us out last Friday to conduct a least tern survey at Turkey Point. Below are the results.

June 19, 2106

We counted a total of 50 adult least terns and 19 fledged/feathered chicks at Berm 14 and 15, Section 3. Keep in mind that this is a minimum number for both adults and young. Since we conducted the survey late in the day when the sun is hottest we did want to walk through the colony to look for small, flightless chicks or nests with eggs. It is quite possible both were present during the survey. Also, since we conducted the survey so late in the season it is possible that some of the chicks had already fledged and had left the area.

Nevertheless, based on the number of adults and the fact that all or most of the chicks we observed via binoculars were able to fly indicates that this population started in early April and were successful in nesting. In other words, there was little to no nest failures requiring them to renest.

Unfortunately, due to the storm that came in we were not able to check all the other berms where they historically have nested. However, I am quite confident that most, if not all of the colony was located on these two berms and section. The reason for this is because the recent deposit of fill atop the berms made them all the more attractive to the terns. Least terns, which are a State Threatened species, prefer to nest in areas that are completely surrounded by water and have little to no vegetation. Studies show that they prefer sites with less than 15% cover. These two berms were completely bare of vegetation and thus were more attractive for nesting purposes than the other berms which are now getting overgrown with vegetation.

Finally, as I mentioned to you at this time, this may be the largest ground nesting colony on the east coast between Key West and Melbourne. There is one other ground colony in West Palm Beach that recorded 32 nests this year but as I mentioned I believe we may have missed several more nests and young at Turkey Point.

Let me know if you have any questions on the data. We look forward to continue working on the protection of this species at Turkey Point

Cheers,

Ricardo Zambrano
Regional Biologist
Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission
[REDACTED]

Turkey Point Units 3 and 4
Docket Nos. 52-250 and 52-251
FPL Response to NRC RAI No. SS-FWS-1
E-2018-136 Attachment 20 Enclosure 1 Page 2 of 2
Fax: 561-625-5129

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