



UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20555-0001

December 19, 2025

E-MAIL ONLY

Florida Ecological Services Field Office
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
777 37th Street, Suite D-101
Vero Beach, FL 32960-3559

SUBJECT: REQUEST FOR CONCURRENCE WITH ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT DETERMINATIONS FOR ST. LUCIE PLANT, UNITS 1 AND 2, PROPOSED SUBSEQUENT LICENSE RENEWAL IN ST. LUCIE COUNTY, FLORIDA (IPAC PROJECT CODE 2022-0011212) (DOCKET NUMBERS: 50-335 AND 50-389)

Dear Florida Ecological Services Field Office:

With this letter, the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) requests the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's (FWS) concurrence with the NRC staff's "may affect, not likely to adversely affect" (NLAA) determinations pursuant to Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (ESA), concerning federally listed species that may be affected by the proposed action on the St. Lucie Plant, Units 1 and 2 (St. Lucie), site in St. Lucie County. This letter includes information explaining and supporting this request.

Proposed Action

St. Lucie is a two-unit nuclear power plant located on Hutchinson Island in St. Lucie County, Florida approximately eight miles southeast of Fort Pierce, Florida that is owned by Florida Power & Light Company (FPL). The site consists of approximately 1,130 acres located on Hutchinson Island. St. Lucie is bordered by the Atlantic Ocean to the east and the Indian River Lagoon to the west.

By letter dated August 3, 2021, FPL applied for subsequent license renewal (SLR) of St. Lucie's current renewed facility operating licenses (Agencywide Documents Access and Management System Accession No. [ML21215A314](#)). The current renewed facility operating license for Unit 1 expires at midnight on March 1, 2036, and the current renewed facility operating license for Unit 2 expires at midnight on April 6, 2043. The NRC's Federal action is to determine whether to issue subsequent renewed facility operating licenses that would authorize FPL to operate St. Lucie for an additional 20 years. If the NRC subsequently renews the current renewed facility operating licenses, FPL would be authorized to operate Unit 1 until midnight on March 1, 2056, and Unit 2 until midnight on April 6, 2063.

Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement for St. Lucie Subsequent License Renewal

In support of its environmental review related to the proposed St. Lucie SLR, the NRC staff is preparing, as a supplement to NUREG-1437, "Generic Environmental Impact Statement for License Renewal of Nuclear Plants" ([ML24087A133](#)), a supplemental environmental impact statement (SEIS) to comply with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended (NEPA), and the NRC's regulations at Title 10 of the *Code of Federal Regulations* Part 51, "Environmental protection regulations for domestic licensing and related regulatory functions," that implement NEPA. This SEIS will address the environmental impacts of the proposed action and reasonable alternatives to the proposed action. In support of this concurrence request, the NRC staff is providing the FWS with a copy of the draft SEIS, which is attached. The draft SEIS contains the staff's biological evaluation in support of ESA consultation, as well as other supporting information. Information relevant to this concurrence request can be found in the following sections of the draft SEIS.

Section 1.1 describes the proposed action, including the purpose, duration, timing, and associated activities that would be carried out during the proposed subsequent license renewal term.

Section 3.4 describes the terrestrial ecology of the site and surrounding area.

Section 3.5 describes the aquatic ecology of the site and surrounding area.

Appendix C includes the NRC staff's biological evaluation for ESA-protected species and critical habitats.

Request for NLAA Concurrence and Conference Concurrence

The NRC staff requests your written concurrence with its NLAA determinations for the crested caracara (*Caracara plancus audubonii*), eastern black rail (*Laterallus jamaicensis ssp. jamaicensis*), eastern indigo snake (*Drymarchon couperid*), Everglade snail kite (*Rostrhamus sociabilis plumbeus*), green sea turtle (*Chelonia mydas*) North Atlantic DPS, leatherback sea turtle (*Dermochelys coriacea*), loggerhead sea turtle (*Caretta caretta*) Northwest Atlantic Ocean DPS, piping plover (*Charadrius melodus*) Atlantic Coast and Northern Great Plains populations, southeastern beach mouse (*Peromyscus polionotus niveiventris*), wood stork (*Mycteria americana*) AL, FL, GA, MS, NC, and SC populations, loggerhead sea turtle critical habitat, and West Indian manatee critical habitat. Additionally, the NRC staff requests your written conference concurrence with its NLAA determinations for the monarch butterfly (*Danaus plexippus*) and the green sea turtle proposed critical habitat.

The NRC staff also determined that the proposed action would have "no effect" (NE) on the American crocodile (*Crocodylus acutus*) Florida population, Florida panther (*Puma concolor coryi*), Florida scrub-jay (*Aphelocoma coerulescense*), fragrant prickly-apple (*Cereus eriphorus* var. *fragrans*), hawksbill sea turtle (*Eretmochelys imbricata*), Kemp's ridley sea turtle (*Lepidochelys kempii*), and tiny polygala (*Polygala smallii*). While the ESA does not require the NRC to consult with or receive concurrence from the FWS regarding NE determination findings, the NRC staff welcomes any comments the FWS may have on these species or the NRC's impact assessment.

West Indian Manatee

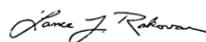
Following its assessment of the potential impacts of the proposed action on the West Indian manatee (*Trichechus manatus*), the NRC staff has determined that the proposed action may result in adverse effects to this species in the form of entrapment in the St. Lucie intake canal. As such, the NRC staff has reached a “may affect and is likely to adversely affect” determination under the ESA.

The NRC understands that the FWS cannot complete ESA consultation for the West Indian manatee until all applicable requirements under the Marine Mammal Protection Act of 1972, as amended (MMPA), have been fulfilled by FPL. The NRC anticipates that if subsequent renewed facility operating licenses for St. Lucie, Units 1 and 2 are issued before the completion of ESA consultation, then they would be conditioned to require that FPL ensure compliance with the MMPA and the ESA regarding the West Indian manatee before the expiration date of the current renewed facility operating licenses (i.e., March 1, 2036 and April 6, 2043, respectively) and maintain compliance throughout the SLR period (i.e., from March 1, 2036 and April 6, 2043 to March 1, 2056 and April 6, 2063, respectively). The NRC staff is actively coordinating with FPL to ensure that it obtains the appropriate MMPA authorizations. The NRC staff also remains in close coordination with Lindsay Needs and other technical staff at your office. Once FPL has obtained the required MMPA authorizations, the NRC staff will notify you so that the NRC and FWS can proceed with ESA consultation for the West Indian manatee. Thank you for your continued coordination and support throughout this process.

Conclusion

The NRC requests your written concurrence or non-concurrence with its NLAA determinations for the species identified in this letter in accordance with Title 50 of the *Code of Federal Regulations* Section 402.13(c)(2). Please provide your response electronically to the following email addresses: EndangeredSpecies.Resource@nrc.gov and Mitchell.Dehmer@nrc.gov. If you have any questions regarding information in this letter, please contact me by phone at (301) 415-4016 or via email at Mitchell.Dehmer@nrc.gov.

Sincerely,



Rakovan, Lance signing on behalf
of Dehmer, Mitchell
on 12/19/25

Mitchell Dehmer, Environmental Scientist
Environmental Technical Review Branch 1
Division of Rulemaking, Environment,
and Financial Support
Office of Nuclear Material Safety
and Safeguards

Docket Nos. 50-335 and 50-389

Enclosure: Draft SEIS

cc: Listserv

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DATED: December 19, 2025

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***via email**

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