

Oyster Creek Nuclear Generating Station

Sea Turtle Incidental Capture Report 99-2

October 23, 1999

At approximately 0200 hours on Saturday, October 23, 1999, an Oyster Creek Nuclear Generating Station (OCNGS) operator removed a sea turtle in front of the trash rack in Bay # 4 of the dilution water intake structure. The turtle was carefully removed from the trash racks with a trash rake, and found to be inactive and either dead or comatose. Attempts were made to resuscitate the turtle for several hours after the incidental capture, but the attempts were unsuccessful. OCNGS Environmental Affairs personnel who took custody of the turtle confirmed it to be an immature green sea turtle (*Chelonia mydas*). The water temperature at the time of the incidental capture was approximately 62.8 F (17.1 C) and OCNGS was in operation at full power with four circulating water pumps and two dilution pumps operating. Although it is impossible to say precisely how long the turtle had been near the intake structure prior to removal, the intake trash racks had been mechanically cleaned the previous day.

The turtle measured 10.6 in (27.0 cm) carapace length straight line and weighed 6.1 lb (2.75 kg). Sex was not determined. No tags were present on the turtle when captured.

The cause of death was not immediately apparent. There were no obvious boat propeller wounds and no open wounds that would have been life threatening. After the turtle was examined by Environmental Affairs personnel, arrangements were made for it to be examined further by Dr. Steven Morreale, a Cornell University sea turtle expert who has conducted numerous necropsies on sea turtles in the past.

USNRC and NMFS personnel were notified of the incidental capture the following workday.