

# ATTACHMENT 27

Hearing before San Diego Regional Water Quality Control Board  
 December 16, 2009  
 Transcription of DS300093 .wav file  
 JEFFREY SEMINOFF  
 (2:41 to 5:51)

SPEAKER	
Chairman Wright	Jeffrey Seminoff, followed by Jonathan Hardy.
Jeffrey Seminoff	<p>Thank you, Mr. Chairperson. Thank you, Board. My name is Dr. Jeffrey Seminoff. I am the Director for the Marine Turtles Research Program for U.S. National Marine Fishery Service in La Jolla, California. And I am up here today simply to spend just a couple minutes to clarify some mistruths that have been promulgated in the media, both on Internet, in newspapers, as well as in the <u>San Diego Reader</u>. I just want to give you just a bit of background to make sure that, when the decisions are made with respect to this permit, you understand the facts related to the marine turtles and the impacts of the power plant on the marine turtles.</p> <p>Firstly, just to point out, this is a natural population. It is not a population that was seeded at some point in time in the past from escapees during the times of the turtle trade. With respect to migration, the animals actually stay in the bay throughout their entire immature life period. Despite what has been suggested in the past, the hot waters of the plant in no way inhibit the migratory behaviors of these animals.</p> <p>With respect to diet, I'm just rattling off my list here, just to get everything in. With respect to diet, there's been some suggestion that the green turtles absolutely depend on the eelgrass (<i>Zostera</i>) in San Diego Bay. Our data suggests that that is absolutely not the case, and in fact the turtles do not inhabit the coastal areas where the sea grasses are, but instead are foraging out in central, deeper waters of the bay, likely foraging on vertebrates – on invertebrates, rather than on sea grass.</p> <p>Another aspect, with respect to health, there has been some suggestion that the power plant and the warm waters are affecting the health of the turtles. We have conducted exhaustive health studies. There is no smoking gun suggesting that the power plant in any way impacts the health of these animals. Clearly, there are environmental toxicants in the waters. These are manifested in the tissues of the turtles, but there's no adverse health effects. In fact, the warm waters of the power plant make the turtles grow much faster than they would outside of the bay. So perhaps it's an unnatural condition, but still,</p>

<b>SPEAKER</b>	
	<p>it's very beneficial to marine turtles, in this case green turtles, that are an endangered species. So any jump start to the reproductive cycle of these animals is very beneficial.</p> <p>So, what happens when the power plant closes? The turtles will not leave the bay. They will stay around, as many have noted. In the summertime, they will disperse throughout the bay as our telemetry data, our tracking data have demonstrated for the last several years. And I might add that my research program has been working on these – researching these turtles for about 19 years now in San Diego Bay, so we have a fairly large body of scientific knowledge to base these assertions on. There are no ill effects on sea turtles in the bay. It clearly is – the closure is imminent. I understand that, I respect that. I stand up here as a member of the National Marine Fishery Service, and I'm not voicing my personal opinions, but I will say that, based on the data, there are no indications that any expedited closure of the power plant would in any way greatly benefit these turtles. And I'll leave it at that. Thank you.</p>
Chairman King	Thanks.
	<b>END OF TRANSCRIPTION</b>