

CHAPTER 4

2003 IN-PLANT FISH ASSESSMENT

INTRODUCTION

This chapter reports on fish impingement at the San Onofre Nuclear Generating Station (SONGS) in compliance with National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) requirements. The term "impingement" refers to entrapped fish that are killed in the SONGS cooling system and are removed by traveling screens. This chapter summarizes in-plant fish collection data for the year 2003 at San Onofre Units 2 and 3. San Onofre Unit 1 was taken out of service in 1992 and did not operate in 2003. Since circulating water pumps were not in service in 2003, no fish impingement samples could be taken, nor are they required by the NPDES permit.

Also included in this chapter is a report on the operation and effectiveness of "Fish Chase" procedures carried out in 2003 as a means of increasing fish survival at SONGS. The "Fish Chase" is a procedure used at SONGS to remove as many fish as possible from the circulating water system before heat treatment procedures are begun to eliminate fouling organisms from colonizing within the system¹.

Fish enter Units 2 and 3 of the generating station via seawater intakes supplying cooling water to the station. Most of the fish are guided through the intake screenwell to the fish return system and are returned to the ocean alive. Those remaining are impinged on the traveling screens and are deposited in containers for disposal. Estimates of the total number and weight of fish impinged during normal plant operation, including heat treatment, and analysis of size (age) and sex structure of select impinged species are presented in this report for Units 2 and 3 at SONGS.

¹ Information in this report regarding the Fish Chase procedure also meets requirements of Condition B of the Coastal Development Permit for SONGS (permit no. 6-81-330-A, formerly 183-73 issued by the California Coastal Commission.