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**U.S. House of Representatives**  
**Committee on Natural Resources**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

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DEMOCRATIC STAFF DIRECTOR

March 11, 2016

The Honorable Gina McCarthy  
Administrator  
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20460

Dear Administrator McCarthy:

Earlier this week, Miami-Dade County Mayor Carlos A. Gimenez released a report showing that water contaminated with radioactive material, phosphorous, ammonia, and toxic levels of salt is leaking out of cooling water canals at the Turkey Point Nuclear Power Station and into the waters of Biscayne National Park. This is irrefutable evidence that the canals are not operating as a closed loop system and therefore any discharges are subject to regulation and enforcement under the Clean Water Act. The Natural Resources Committee has jurisdiction over the National Park System, coastal habitats, living marine resources, and migratory birds, all of which stand to incur significant damage if the flow of contaminated water into Biscayne Bay is not stopped immediately.

The National Park Service and local officials in South Florida long ago identified the antiquated and insufficient cooling water canal system at Turkey Point as a significant environmental hazard and potential public health risk. That potential is being realized now, as the plume of contaminated water is not only seeping into Biscayne National Park but also encroaching on the drinking water supply of three million Floridians.

Instead of accounting for the geology of South Florida and requiring the cooling canals to be lined, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission has consistently let Florida Power and Light (FPL) – the plant’s owner and a subsidiary of Fortune 200 company NextEra Energy – cut corners on environmental protection and safety. Recent examples include allowing “cooling” water in the canals to rise as high as 104 degrees and diverting water from the Everglades into the canals, depriving Biscayne Bay of a critical fresh water input.

I urge you to use your Clean Water Act authority to force FPL to stop discharging pollution into Biscayne Bay, and to work closely with your partners at other federal, state, and local agencies to ensure that existing damage is remediated and future damage does not occur. I appreciate your attention to this matter. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to have your staff contact Matt Strickler on the Natural Resources Committee Democratic Staff at (202) 225-6065.

Sincerely,



Raúl M. Grijalva  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Natural Resources

Cc: The Honorable Sally Jewell, Secretary of the Interior  
Dr. Kathryn Sullivan, Administrator, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration  
Stephen G. Burns, Chairman, Nuclear Regulatory Commission  
Christy Goldfuss, Managing Director, White House Council on Environmental Quality