



**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**  
**National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration**  
**NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE**  
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**TO:** William G. Gilmartin, Leader, Marine Mammals and Endangered Species Program

**FROM:** George H. Balazs, Wildlife Biologist

**SUBJECT:** Brief report on a one-day trip to Kahului, Maui, to investigate the occurrence of turtles aggregated at the warm-water discharge of the Maui Electric Plant

On Saturday morning, April 7, 1984, I received a telephone call from Mr. Rene Sylva of Paia, Maui, stating that he had seen a group of large turtles aggregated at night close to shore in the discharge water of the Maui Electric Plant. Mr. Sylva formerly fished for turtles and is very knowledgeable of their habits. He was not previously aware of turtles occurring at this site, and he expressed concern for their survival in view of the poaching problem on Maui. I subsequently telephoned NMFS Enforcement Agent Gene Witham, who was already on Maui. Arrangements were made for him to meet with Mr. Sylva that evening to obtain more information. Additional telephone conversations with Gene Witham verified the continued nightly presence of the turtles.

On Monday, April 9, I traveled to Maui to dive at the site and observe the turtles firsthand. My main concern at that point was to gather as much biological information as possible, in the event that this was a short-lived phenomenon. Gene Witham and Rene Sylva's assistance on the night of April 9 greatly facilitated this work. I returned to Honolulu early in the morning on April 10 in time to attend the JACADS meeting at the Fish and Wildlife Service.

The findings of my short study proved to be most interesting. The site has considerable potential for future investigation. We should discuss these aspects at our earliest opportunity following my return from field work on the Big Island on April 17.