



## Fact Sheet

### Cooling Water Intake Structures At Large Existing Power Plants- Proposed Rule

#### Summary

- On February 28, 2002, the EPA Administrator approved a proposed regulation that will establish location, design, construction and capacity standards for existing power plants that use the largest amounts of cooling water.
- The proposed regulation is designed to protect fish, shellfish and other aquatic life from being killed or injured by cooling water intake structures.
- The rule is flexible. Strong, technology-based performance standards would apply unless a facility shows that these standards would result in very high costs or little environmental benefit at their site.
- Facilities could choose to demonstrate to permitting authorities that protecting wetlands or restoring degraded habitat would result in comparable environmental performance within a waterbody as meeting the technology requirements.
- With EPA approval, States could set alternative requirements for facilities that achieve comparable environmental performance within a watershed.
- EPA estimates that this rule would affect approximately 550 facilities and cost \$182 million per year. EPA estimates that the benefits of today's rule would be as much as \$700 million.
- The rule would not cause any electric generating facilities to close and would not adversely effect energy supply, distribution or use.

#### Background

- Section 316(b) of the Clean Water Act requires EPA to ensure that the location, design, construction and capacity of cooling water intake structures reflect the best technology available for minimizing adverse environmental impacts.
- EPA is developing these regulations under the terms of an Amended Consent Decree in *Riverkeeper, Inc. v. Whitman*, U.S. District Court, Southern District of New York, No. 93-Civ.0314 (AGS).

#### Additional Information

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