CFPP Advances to the Next Phase

Los Alamos, New Mexico— Participants in the Utah Associated Municipal Power Systems (UAMPS) Carbon Free Power Project (CFPP) voted on November 9, 2020 to advance to the next phase and approve the associated Budget and Plan of Finance. Integral to this phase will be the preparation of the Combined Operating and Construction License Application (COLA) for the proposed CFPP - a nuclear generating facility to be sited in Idaho utilizing small modular reactor technology. Upon direction of the Board of Public Utilities and the County Council, Utilities Manager Philo Shelton on behalf of Los Alamos County (a participant in the CFPP) voted with the majority.

Considering the number of participants in this phase went from 35 to 27, which includes a new member (Wells Rural Electric) and a total subscription level at 100 megawatts, Shelton elected to reduce Los Alamos County’s subscription. Shelton lowered the County’s subscription from 11.2 to 6.37 megawatts and maintaining the target price of $55 a megawatt hour on 2020 dollars. Prior to submitting the COLA in May 2023, and prior to starting construction in December 2025, the county will have the flexibility to adjust the subscription level or exit the project.

Shelton notes that, “subscription to the CFPP still needs to reach full capacity prior to the project being constructed, otherwise the project committee participants can vote to terminate the project and refund a portion of committed funds.” He further added that risk associated with the project was reduced by the $1.35 billion multi-year award announced by the U.S. Department of Energy last month, resulting in growing interest in the project from utilities outside of UAMPS.
As the development of the COLA proceeds, Shelton is optimistic that additional utilities will join the project and full subscription will be achieved. Shelton concluded, “The project is still evolving. While we are excited to see how it is progressing, we are cautious and will watch closely over the next few years so that we exercise options that are in the best interest of our community.”

More information on the CFPP is available on the county website at https://ladpu.com/CFPP.

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