

BELLEFONTE

New owner's proposal projects \$1 billion annually, 12,000 jobs

After selling the partially completed Bellefonte nuclear plant at auction, TVA has now released the project proposal submitted by the new owner, Nuclear Development LLC.

After winning the bid for the Bellefonte nuclear plant in November (NN, Dec. 2016, p. 21), Nuclear Development LLC gave little insight into its plans for the partially completed facility. But on January 12, the Tennessee Valley Authority—the previous owner of Bellefonte—released the letter of intent to bid submitted by Nuclear Development. It includes plans to complete the construction of and to operate Bellefonte as a nuclear power plant and details the economic and environmental benefits the company hopes to bring about by utilizing Bellefonte as originally intended by TVA.

According to Nuclear Development's proposal, the company plans to complete the two pressurized water reactors and operate them as merchant power reactors connected to the grid through the existing transmission lines of TVA and Southern Company. Once completed, the units will have a 1,250-MW nameplate capacity. Nuclear Development estimates that based on similarly sized U.S. nuclear projects,

the Bellefonte project will create 8,000 to 10,000 direct and indirect construction jobs during the period of peak construction. Nuclear Development also projects that the completion of the plant will create approximately 2,400 direct and indirect permanent jobs and produce an ongoing economic impact to the surrounding area of more than \$1 billion per year.

According to the proposal, Nuclear Development was formed by Franklin Haney, a Chattanooga, Tenn., developer, in 2012 specifically to “acquire, finance, complete, and operate” the two partially completed reactors at the Bellefonte site near Scottsboro, Ala. In addition to the \$111-million purchase price (the minimum bid had been set at \$36.4 million), the company plans to invest \$13 billion to bring the plant on line.

“In addition to the high value the construction and operation of these nuclear plants would provide to the local communities and the state of Alabama,” the proposal states, “TVA should consider that having a long-term source of base power, should TVA need it, is a tremendous advantage to TVA.”

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission has not yet approved the transfer of the existing construction licenses for Bellefonte, and the completion of the transfer ultimately depends on this step. According to TVA, Nuclear Development has up to two years to close on the property, and until then, TVA will maintain the site.



Photo: TVA

Bellefonte: Nuclear Development LLC plans to invest \$13 billion to bring the partially finished plant on line.