



309 East Chestnut Street | Goldsboro, NC | p: 919.731.7700 | www.waynealliance.org

NEWS ROOM

January 26, 2011

For Immediate Release

Progress Energy Plant on the Rise

Published in the Goldsboro News-Argus on January 22, 2012

As many as 1,100 construction workers have been on site at Progress Energy's new \$900 million natural gas-fired power plant, well above the 500 construction jobs that had been anticipated when the project was first announced in August of 2009.

Currently there are 867 workers, including 239 from either North Carolina or South Carolina at the site on Black Jack Church Road just west of Goldsboro.

"That number of people is having a huge impact on the local economy," said Wayne Toms, site construction manager. "We were just told this morning that Progress (Energy) was bringing somebody in to interview, and they didn't have a hotel room."

"Hotels, restaurants, those kind of things should be seeing a boom during this construction phase," said Dan Oliver, Progress Energy manager for community relations for the eastern region. "I think the uniqueness is that it is a significant commitment to Wayne County and the surrounding area -- a \$900 million investment."

Oliver said the plant, scheduled for completion by the end of the year, is important to providing service to the 1.5 million customers Progress Energy serves in the Carolinas and would not be affected by the company's proposed merger with Duke Energy.

About 85 people are employed at the nearby H.F. Lee Plant. The area will be renamed the H.F. Lee Energy Complex once the project is completed.

It is expected that 47 employees will operate the new facility.



309 East Chestnut Street | Goldsboro, NC | p: 919.731.7700 | www.waynealliance.org

NEWS ROOM

"We have a number of coal plants that we are closing as a part of this effort," Oliver said. "About half of those employees have jobs either in other locations in the company now or they have taken employment outside the company or are part of the team that will serve this plant.

"There are about 30 percent that we are still working with to help them find satisfactory employment either internally or externally. There is a group that has indicated they intend to retire when the plant closes. So it is going very well. When you look at the time span we have, and we still have another year, most folks will have the opportunity to find employment."

All of the major equipment has been moved on-site since a July 2010 groundbreaking and most of it has already been placed on its foundation.

The large equipment was brought to the county on rail and offloaded at the spur at Georgia-Pacific at Dudley. Those moves required temporarily closing some roads and escorts by law enforcement.

"It went very well, I think, for about 120 heavy, large loads that came here," Toms said.

Rain, including the drenching by Hurricane Irene in August caused some issues, he said.

"This clay, it might rain for so many hours and it might take you two or three days to recover from that rain just because of that much mud," Toms said. "We are little bit behind schedule, but we are making it up quickly. We have time to make it up."

The construction schedule is based on five days a week, 10 hours a day, he said. However, the schedule is now six days a week, 10 hours a day and a night shift has been added.

"Because we added that night shift, we are catching up quickly to our schedule," Toms said. "This is a fixed-price contract. We are paying what we are going to pay to build this. The risk is on the contractor. If he gets behind, he will have to put more people on to catch up."

All of the site work is completed, and 25,000 cubic yards of concrete have been poured thus far, he said.

Workers were poised to begin a large 1,100 cubic yard pour of concrete Thursday night that was to last until 8 or 9 a.m. Friday, finishing up around noon, Toms said.

It will be the second time that the concrete has been poured for the steam generator turbine.



309 East Chestnut Street | Goldsboro, NC | p: 919.731.7700 | www.waynealliance.org

NEWS ROOM

"It is elevated," Toms said. "It is 30 feet in the air. It is eight foot thick. It is huge. Picture 30-foot high this eight-foot thick slab with a steam turbine on there and the rotor of the steam turbine rotates at 3,600 revolutions per minute."

However, there was a problem with the initial pour. It was determined that there was a way to "engineer" around the problem so as to not to have to redo the job. However, it was decided it would be more prudent to redo the pour because of the sensitivity of the equipment, Toms said.

"That made sense to do in light that the plant is expected to operate for at least 40 years," he said.

And it did not add any cost to the project since it is a fixed-price contract, Toms said.

The next step is to actually bring power to the plant to finish the construction phase.

Another feature of the project that is expected to play a significant role in the county's economy is a new 20-inch gas line to feed the plant's turbine, Oliver said.

"While we will consume a significant portion of that capacity, it does add the opportunity to bring additional natural gas into eastern North Carolina and particularly into this area," he said

Piedmont Natural Gas' investment in the pipeline and compression facilities is estimated at \$85 million and is supported by a long-term service agreement with Progress Energy Carolinas. Piedmont Natural Gas has all of the necessary easements for the line that will stretch about 32 miles, Oliver said.

"That will hopefully offer another economic development tool here for this portion of eastern North Carolina," Oliver said. "It is a significant commitment to the future of power generation in this area. It is a commitment of new resources so that our facilities will be highly reliable."

The new, cleaner-burning plant also addresses environmental concerns, he said.

There will be a 60 percent improvement in terms of carbon emissions, a 95-percent reduction in nitrogen oxides and an almost 100-percent reduction in terms of mercury and sulfur dioxide, he said.

While larger than the current plant, the new one will use considerably less water, Oliver said.

Also, instead of venting hot exhaust gas, the gases will be recaptured to create steam to turn turbines to create more energy out of the same amount of fuel.



309 East Chestnut Street | Goldsboro, NC | p: 919.731.7700 | www.waynealliance.org

NEWS ROOM

The three Lee Plant coal units were built in 1951, 1952 and 1962. In 2000, the company built four combustion-turbine units (fueled interchangeably by natural gas or oil) at a site adjacent to the Lee Plant, called the Wayne County Energy Complex.

A fifth combustion turbine was added later. Those units are used primarily as peaking plants, to meet increased demand for electricity on the hottest and coldest days of the year.

The old plant will be dismantled including the smokestacks that have been part of the county for more than half a century. Some of those parts will be sold.

The coal ash pond at the current site will be capped.

"They will put so many layers of soil on top of it. There are different layers, the end is soil and it is seeded," Oliver said. "That will be managed in conjunction with state oversight. It will be managed for several years -- as long as the state requires that you do that."

-END-
