

Duke submits plans to expand Bad Creek operations

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GREENVILLE — Duke Energy could soon be doubling the peak hourly capacity of its Bad Creek Hydrostation.

The utility is preparing to meet a surge in electric needs by using an “all of the above” approach, it announced Tuesday, and formally submitted an integrated resource plan with the Public Service Commission of South Carolina (PSCSC).

“Over the next 15 years, electric use by Duke Energy customers in the Carolinas is projected to surge by around 35,000 gigawatt-hours — more than the annual electric generation of Delaware, Maine and New Hampshire combined,” Mike Callahan, Duke Energy’s South Carolina state president, said. “We’re preparing for this extraordinary growth in energy demand by prioritizing grid reliability, energy affordability and the deployment of a diverse range of energy options that support the sustainability goals of our South Carolina customers.”

The IRP includes three energy portfolios providing a range of generation options — hence the “all of the above” label — as a path to a reliable, affordable and smart clean energy transition that also supports economic prosperity.

INCREASED BAD CREEK CAPACITY

The recommended plan, “Portfolio 3,” builds on the economic development in the area, Callahan said, but also uses tax incentives and credits and efficient operations to help keep costs low. It also takes into consideration the transition

to electric transportation and would reliably get rid of coal-produced energy by 2035.

The portfolio also makes the most of the existing system, extending the lives of Duke’s nuclear plants and the license of the Bad Creek Project in Salem, which is set to expire in 2027.

Not only would Duke double the peak hourly capacity of the 1,400-watt hydroelectric system through an expansion, but the agency said the increased operations will provide upward of \$7 billion in economic benefits to the state.

“We appreciate the significant input we received from everyone that helped inform these plans,” Callahan said. “Preparing for a successful energy future for South Carolina will take coordination and cooperation among many varied interests, and we look forward to continuing this dialogue.”

NEXT STEPS

Tuesday’s filing starts the clock on a public regulatory process at the PSCSC which involves the evaluation of thousands of pages of testimony and data from the company, customers and related parties. A hearing will be scheduled and PSCSC will make a decision sometime in mid-2024, Duke officials said.

Duke Energy serves about 830,000 households and businesses in the state through its two utilities, Duke Energy Carolinas — primarily serving the Upstate — and Duke Energy Progress. Duke Energy Carolinas owns 19,500 megawatts of energy capacity, supplying electricity to 2.8 million customers.