



Phone/Conference Call Record

Project/Plant: Watts Bar Unit 2

Date/time: November 2, 2009

Time: 12:35 pm PDT

Attendees:

Name	Title	Agency/Organization
Katie Cort	Socioeconomics	PNNL
Jerry Levensgood 423-775-7813	Superintendent	Rhea County Schools

Call title/subject: Watts Bar Nuclear Plant Impact on Regional School System

Purpose of call: I called to speak with Superintendent Levensgood to discuss the current and expected future impacts on the regional school system from Watts Bar construction and operation activities.

Call notes:

General Information

- There are 6 schools in system with 4500 students. The County Seat, Dayton, maintains a separate kindergarten through 8th grade school system with 700 students.
- Rhea County school district is a rapidly growing school district, primarily due to residential growth in the south. He attributes most of this growth due to residential growth out of Chattanooga toward the north in part because of the improved road (U.S. Highway 27, which connects Spring City with Chattanooga has been expanded from a 2-lane highway to a 4-lane highway). There is also some growth in the north, but less so.
- Mr. Levensgood has only been superintendent since July 2009; however, he has been part of the Rhea County school system for 31 years, in both an administrative (principal) capacity and also as a teacher.
- Currently Mr. Levensgood would say that about 50% (3 of the 6 schools) are operating below capacity (e.g., they could easily absorb more students), while 1 of the schools is operating at capacity. The remaining two schools (one elementary and one middle school) are operating beyond capacity, or, in other words, they could be considered “over-crowded.” They are doing what they can to deal with capacity constraints (e.g., trying to pass bonds, and using some portables), but these kinds of things take a bit of time.
- Although they are experiencing some crowding issues, it is not an overwhelming issue, and has been pretty common for some time in this high-growth county.

Potential Impacts on School System from Watts Bar Activities

- Mr. Levensgood stated that he does not believe the activities taking place on the Watts Bar site in the past couple of years have significantly contributed to the crowding issues at the schools. Rather, he attributes most of the growth in the school system to the growth in the south of county, due to growth out of Chattanooga.

- Mr. Levensgood stated that TVA has kept them well informed of the activities and he believes the Rhea County school system will be able to handle the potential influx of students from activities taking place at the site.
- Mr. Levensgood has been with the Rhea County school system when they did experience an influx of students related to the construction and operation activities of Watts Bar Unit 1. Over the course of a few years the school system experienced about 500 additional students followed by a decrease of about 150 students. They were able to accommodate the influx of students and TVA kept them informed of plans.
- Watts Bar plant employees seem to reside throughout the county, and do not concentrate in certain areas such that the impact on schools is dispersed throughout the school system rather than being concentrated on one or two schools. There have been no noticeable traffic concerns that have arisen since the construction started on Watts Bar 2, and Mr. Levensgood believes that traffic will continue to flow well throughout the county.
- The only noticeable impact that Watts Bar construction impacts have had on the school system is that many of the school system's bus drivers have gone to work driving truck at the site; thus, they have had to hire several new bus drivers.
- Mr. Levensgood considers TVA to be a good corporate citizen. They have kept the school district informed of their plans for the Watts Bar site. They have also played a very positive role in providing Spring City schools (the closest schools to the plant) with needed supplies and resources when things get tight.