

Location:

July 20, 2022

9:00 AM – 2:00 PM

Clemson Edisto REC

Hybrid Meeting

Action Items:

1. Edisto RBC members to complete survey distributed by John Boyer by Friday, July 29.

Decisions:

1. **Majority decision: Edisto RBC recommends establishing groundwater areas of concern in regions where groundwater data and/or groundwater modeling predict water levels drop below the top of the aquifers. Majority Vote: 17 – Yes and 3 – No. (March)**
2. **The RBC does not want to identify specific groundwater conditions but instead focus on a “desired future condition” approach in the final Plan recommendations. (April)**
3. **RBC recommends Agricultural Portfolio of Water Efficiency Strategies in priority order of: Water Audits and Nozzle Retrofits, Irrigation Equipment Changes, Soil Management and Cover Cropping, Irrigation Scheduling, Crop Variety, Crop Type & Crop Conversions, and Future Technologies. (May)**
4. **RBC recommends Portfolio of Water Conservation and Efficiency Strategies in no order of priority. (May)**
5. **The RBC recommends that responsible agencies and stakeholders consider encouraging new pumping in areas of concern come from aquifers that can support the additional withdrawals. One example indicted by modeling was the area of concern in the Crouch Branch of Calhoun County. Here the RBC recommends that future pumping be transitioned to the McQueen Branch, if monitoring suggest continued, increasing drawdowns in the Crouch Branch aquifer. Majority vote: 16 – Yes, 3 – No & 1 - Abstain (May)**
6. **The RBC recommends the use of small impoundments limited to 2nd order or lower tributaries to enhance availability during dry/low flow periods to build resilience. Majority vote: 17 – Yes and 1 – Abstain (May)**
7. **The RBC recommends conjunctive use as a supplement to surface water use during low-flow periods. (May)**
8. **The Edisto RBC adopt the proposed low flow management strategy which would trigger whenever the total basin discharge (measured at Givhans) drops below a surface condition of 20% median (currently about 332 cfs) with the goal of reducing withdrawals equal to the exceedance of the surface condition in the following**

increments. The low flow strategy excludes withdrawers whose peak monthly withdrawals are less than 60 MGM (20x the regulated threshold of 3 MGM). The low flow management strategy is to be implemented over time contingent upon identified available funding. Majority Vote: 16 – Yes and 1 – No (June)

20% Increments Percent Below MIF	River Flow Range (cfs)		Basin-wide % Reduction in SW Withdrawals
	Lower	Upper	
0 - 20%	266	332	20%
20 - 40%	199	266	40%
40 - 60%	133	199	60%
60 - 80%	66	133	80%
80 - 100%	0	66	100%

Meeting:

- Review of Meeting Objectives
- Approval of Agenda and June 22nd Minutes and Summary Documents
- Public and Agency Comment Periods
- Old business/New business Discussion
- Update of Edisto River Basin Plan Chapters
- Review of June meeting and RBC-identified priorities
- Discussion and identification of Policy, Legislative & Regulatory Recommendations
- Implementation Plan Development
- Identification of Progress Metrics
- Upcoming RBC agenda and schedule

Meeting Summary (July 20th)

The Edisto RBC Chair, Hank Stallworth, called the July 20th meeting of the Edisto RBC to order at 9:00 AM. The twenty-fifth meeting of the Edisto RBC was held in-person and virtually via the Zoom virtual meeting platform. Including the Edisto RBC members and planning team, there were 40 people present at this RBC meeting in-person and online. The meeting began with Hank Stallworth discussing the agenda items for the meeting. The Edisto RBC approved the RBC meeting agenda and the June 22nd minutes and summary documents. A public comment period was held with no comments received. An agency public comment period was held with no comments received. Old and new business reviewed current drought status and a quick recap of lower stream flows. Recent precipitation had helped alleviate drought conditions at the time of meeting. John Boyer discussed the timeline for distributing draft chapters and incorporating feedback/edits into the finalized draft river basin plan.

The first major agenda item was discussion and identification of policy, legislative, and regulatory recommendations to include in the Edisto river basin plan. Discussion began with minimum instream flows and the mean versus median statistics presented at several Edisto

meetings. Jason Thompson reviewed safe yield calculations for the basin and the state which again pointed towards median as a more appropriate statistic for use over mean. Other discussion points included: creating a narrative in the plan to cover many of the discussion points in case consensus cannot be reached on certain items, allocation of the resource and resource availability versus minimum instream flows emphasis, permitting and registrations and surface water reasonable use criteria, and funding considerations. A survey from John Boyer will be distributed to RBC members to solicit feedback.

The next agenda item was for implementation plan development: prioritized, five year objectives, funding needs and potential sources, five-year implementation schedule, long-term planning objectives. Proposed objectives included: reduce demand to conserve water resources, conserve surface water during low flow conditions, augment source of supply, protect groundwater supplies and existing users, improve technical understanding of water resource management issues, and effectively communicate RBC findings and recommendations. DNR will be heavily involved in implementing the plan but the Edisto river basin council and members will also be critical in communicating the plan to other stakeholders.

Finally, the RBC meeting moved to a discussion on identification of progress metrics. John reviewed suggested progress metrics from the planning framework. Some additions from the RBC included adding securing funding and success of implementing recommended water conservation strategies.

The meeting concluded with John Boyer discussing the final schedule for the Edisto river basin planning process. The RBC meeting was adjourned. The next Edisto RBC meeting will be held August 17, 2022.

The meeting concluded at 1:48 PM.

Summary: Tom Walker

Approved: 8/17/22