

**Minutes of the Edisto RBC Meeting
Wednesday, March 16, 2022**

Meeting was held in-person and virtually via the Zoom application

Members Present: Alta Mae Marvin, Amanda Sievers, John Bass, Danny Burbage, Jerry Waters, Will Williams, Jason Thompson, Brandon Stutts, Hugo Krispyn, Eric Odom, Hank Stallworth, David Bishop, Laura Bagwell Jeremy Walther, Alex Tolbert, Mark Aakhus, Landrum Weathers, Joel Duke, JJ Jowers & Kirk Bell.

Members Absent: Johney Haralson, Trey McMillan & Alan Mehrzad

Planning Team Present: John Boyer, Scott Harder, Leigh Anne Monroe, Rob Devlin, Joe Gellici, Andy Wachob, Tom Walker, Jeff Allen, Chikezie Isiguzo, Matthew Petkewich & Greg Cherry

Total attendance: 49

1. Call to Order, Approval of Agenda, and Approval of February 16th minutes.

Hank Stallworth called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. He reminded everyone the meeting is being recorded. He announced we have a quorum of Council members.

Hank reviewed the agenda that had been previously submitted to the council and the Council members gave a unanimous approval. Jason – 1st and Jerry – 2nd

Hank asked for motions to approve the minutes from the February 16th meetings. The council members gave a unanimous approval. Laura – 1st and Hugo 2nd

2. Public and Agency Comment

John invited members of the public and agencies to submit comments. There were no comments submitted from the public or agencies.

3. Old Business/New Business

John Boyer informed the Council members that he sent an email to the members of the Surface Water subcommittee to apprise them of Batesburg-Leesville's water use and a future interbasin transfer. He noted that the agreement could have an impact on the SWAM model projections for the Edisto RBC.

Hank Stallworth commented in the need to commence deliberate monitoring of attendance in line with the requirements of the Framework bylaws. John Boyer noted that a member missed about 5 consecutive meetings over the last several months. The members agreed that the rules

on attendance are clear but recognized the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic and the improvements in restrictions. Consequently, David moved a motion requiring the planning committee/DNR to reach out to the absentee members informing them of the need to attend meetings, reminding them of the role of the alternates, and counting from today, March 16, 2022, the Council will enforce the rules on absence in meetings. The motion was seconded by Landrum and thirded by Hugo. The motion passed by a majority vote.

Hugo Krispyn invited the Council members to take notice of the plans to reorganize/reform DHEC and the potential implications it may have on the activities of the Council and/or the Planning process.

4. Update on Edisto River Basin Plan Chapters

John announced that the support team was had received some reviews on the draft Section 1 of the river basin plan from DNR. The draft of the Section 2 is almost ready to be sent to the subcommittee before the next RBC meeting. The RBC will get a review of Section 1 once DNR's reviews are addressed and Section 2 once it is approved by the subcommittee. He outlined further steps moving forward with drafting the remaining sections of the plan.

5. Additional Output and Comparisons for the Current Use and Fully Permitted and Registered Scenarios (Greg Cherry and Matthew Petkewich, USGS)

Greg Cherry introduced the presentation on *Simulation of Groundwater Flow in the Edisto River Basin*. Matthew Petkewich continued the final portion of the presentation showing comparisons. ***For details of presentation, see presentation slides or meeting recording (distributed at meeting and available on the SCDNR hydrology website).***

See Alex Butler's (SCOR) comment about aquifers in RBC Chat.

6. Groundwater Modeling Results for Business-as-Usual and High Demand (Greg Cherry and Matthew Petkewich, USGS)

Matthew Petkewich continued the final portion of the presentation.

For details of presentation, see presentation slides (distributed at meeting) on the DNR hydrology website, or view the recording.

Discussion

Questions regarding this component of the presentation: Regarding the simulated water levels and declines in the Gordon aquifer, drought conditions and pumping levels increasing could account for those declines. Assumption is that new wells are not added to the model in the future, a simulation that could be requested would be to possibly add wells and see model outputs. New wells that come online are included in this model. Discussion also included

questions about if the SWAM could reflect some of the output from the groundwater model and the surficial aquifer and if connecting the two would help or more likely not help the modeling. The interaction between the two suggests the effort required to model that interaction was probably not worth the effort due to the relatively small amount of water. It could be potentially more of an impact in some parts of the basin but overall was almost negligible basin-wide.

Additional discussion focused on the DHEC Western Capacity Use Area and Groundwater Management Plan and what this data presented means regarding that process and permitting. One example used discussed new permits and new wells in another part of the state and with the data available, new wells were not allowed to go into that aquifer, but current permits were allowed to continue pumping. Evaluation of the permits is every 5 years. There is a process in place (groundwater management plan) and does the RBC want to add anything separate from that plan? Additional discussion focused on model validity and certainty and aquifer declines and permitting. Static levels and recharge do not seem to be reflected in the model. The model tended to focus on problem areas. Another point was that the model output was based on a very dry year (2017). Potentially choosing a wetter year would have produced different outputs. The end data presented does include wetter years as well as dry years. The discussion pivoted to discussing the identified potential groundwater areas of concern and make appropriate recommendations. The Grambling aquifer was brought up as a potential aquifer for use. It is a deep aquifer, has brackish water and has a lot of clay. Wells and interaction between aquifers with wells in multiple aquifers was also discussed.

Break: The group went to break from 11-11:15.

7. RBC Discussion of Results and Consideration of Groundwater Areas of Concern and Groundwater Conditions (John Boyer) – powerpoint slides available on the website along with the recording.

John noted that the discussion would focus on four questions: Does the RBC want to designate one or more Groundwater Areas of Concern? Does the RBC want to designate any Groundwater conditions? What Groundwater Management strategies would the RBC like to evaluate? Does the RBC need more information to make these decisions?

Discussion began with the capacity use areas and the three capacity use areas that are already in existence and whether the RBC should support those instead of reinventing or duplicating any of that work. Responses included water budgets and conjunctive use of the surface and ground waters. How do we get the most water out of the system with the least harm? If we can identify potential areas of concern, those should be acknowledged. Compaction of the aquifer was discussed, and permanent damage done to the aquifers could result if water levels decline and would never fully recover. Again, the capacity use program and plans do encompass many of the discussion points. Groundwater management strategies rely more on monitoring data. Monitoring wells that do exist are away from the cones of depression in the model output. More monitoring wells could help improve the gaps in the data and improve the modeling. How much water is needed by users and how much it costs to pump and the option of going to deeper

aquifers for water supply was discussed. While monitoring may show the wells have water now, the models might be able to inform whether there will be water in the future. A proposed motion to identify groundwater areas of concern was introduced. The wording of the motion was revised several times through discussion and additional discussion continued. The RBC is required to coordinate with other Capacity Use Areas and groundwater management groups when making groundwater recommendations. Salt water intrusion was discussed briefly. The lines of surface water basins, groundwater capacity use areas, and drought management areas was brought up as a confusing point for this and other processes. Potentially the RBC can see the recommendations as weighing in on the issue and the capacity use areas could consider the recommendations. Why not flag the areas of concern and learn more about those areas? The discussion does reflect the groundwater management plan with new model data to inform the recommendations and the RBC will be the first group to weigh in on the issue. Straw polls were held to gauge interest in moving forward on identifying groundwater areas of concern. Models were again discussed and if the model reflects reality - the model looks at yearly averages and the model can potentially point to areas where more data could be collected. This process is trying to identify potential problems and investigate those areas to help water users and prevent restrictions on new wells and withdrawals in the future.

1. The Council members adopted a motion: **Majority decision: Edisto RBC recommends establishing areas of groundwater concern in regions where groundwater data and/or groundwater modeling predict water levels drop below the top of the aquifers. 17 – Yes and 3 – No majority vote. Introduced by Laura Bagwell and seconded by JJ Jowers.**

8. Upcoming RBC Agenda and Schedule (John Boyer)

John noted the next meeting will feature informational topics and discussion items that will lead to more RBC decisions. We will discuss Surface Water conditions. Low flow management strategy and consider evaluated water management strategies for inclusion in the plan.

9. Meeting Conclusion (John Boyer, Hank Stallworth, Chair)

April meeting is scheduled for April 20. John emphasized the focus of the next meeting and the need to revisit low flow management strategy and identify reaches of interest for surface water conditions. Also, John informed the council members that the next meeting may feature a presentation on Groundwater Management Strategy results and their feasibility.

Meeting was adjourned at approximately 12:58.

Meeting Minutes: Chikezie Isiguzo and Tom Walker

Approved: 4/20/22

RBC Chat:

08:52:46 From Alex Pellett to Everyone:
the audio is a bit garbled

08:52:53 From Chike Isiguzo to Thomas Walker(Direct Message):
clear

08:53:00 From Chike Isiguzo to Thomas Walker(Direct Message):
but there's echo

08:53:04 From Alex Pellett to Everyone:
yes, I can hear you Tom

08:53:19 From Alex Pellett to Everyone:
No echo, just the background noise

08:53:27 From Chike Isiguzo to Thomas Walker(Direct Message):
just background voice

08:54:04 From Amanda Sievers (Orangeburg Co) to Everyone:
Good morning. Sound is better now

08:55:38 From Thomas Walker to Everyone:
I have the mic up all the way is it too intense or ok?

08:56:21 From Brooke Czwartacki, SCDNR to Everyone:
I think it sounds OK

08:56:22 From Alta Mae to Everyone:
Good Morning everyone.

08:56:33 From Thomas Walker to Everyone:
thanks!

08:56:40 From Thomas Walker to Everyone:
good morning :)

09:04:55 From Thomas Walker to Everyone:
public comment period

09:05:03 From Thomas Walker to Everyone:
if anyone has anything you can unmute

09:05:15 From Thomas Walker to Everyone:
agency comments?

09:22:01 From Thomas Walker to Everyone:
in favor

09:22:13 From Thomas Walker to Everyone:
any opposed

09:22:17 From Amanda Sievers (Orangeburg Co) to Everyone:
in favor

09:22:23 From John to Everyone:
yes

09:24:46 From John to Thomas Walker(Direct Message):
did the motion pass

09:25:01 From Thomas Walker to John(Direct Message):

it has passed but there is more discussion

09:25:06 From Thomas Walker to John(Direct Message):
going on

09:25:10 From John to Thomas Walker(Direct Message):
thanks

09:47:35 From Alex Butler (SCOR) to Everyone:
I have to drop off the call but wanted to mention that negative impacts from aquifer drawdowns can happen without water levels in the aquifer being lowered to the top of the aquifer.

09:47:59 From Thomas Walker to Everyone:
ok, I will mention your comment. thank you alex

09:58:24 From Alex Pellett to Everyone:
2021 reported withdrawals are not yet available.

09:58:42 From Thomas Walker to Everyone:
do you want to unmute?

09:59:19 From Alex Pellett to Everyone:
It seems like they explained it. I can try to explain more if there are still questions.

09:59:26 From Thomas Walker to Everyone:
ok

10:46:03 From Thomas Walker to Everyone:
rbc member questions or comments?

10:46:48 From John to Thomas Walker(Direct Message):
no the slides pretty well displays what happens

11:04:40 From Thomas Walker to Everyone:
15 minute break

12:20:10 From John to Thomas Walker(Direct Message):
in our plan could we not include the Calhoun area as a foot note of concern since it is outside ERB

12:21:00 From Thomas Walker to John(Direct Message):
possibly, it would need to be brought up and voted on. do you want to unmute and discuss it with the other RBC members?

12:21:51 From John to Thomas Walker(Direct Message):
yes

12:22:15 From Thomas Walker to John(Direct Message):
one minute let me get johns attention first thanks

12:26:22 From Thomas Walker to John(Direct Message):
thank you

12:37:04 From Thomas Walker to Everyone:
thank you I got the straw poll hands online

12:39:49 From Thomas Walker to Everyone:
any rbc members want to add discussion points on this potential motion?

12:41:02 From John to Thomas Walker(Direct Message):
what is the potential motion

12:41:17 From Thomas Walker to John(Direct Message):

the one laura has mentioned

12:41:28 From John to Thomas Walker(Direct Message):
thanks

12:55:17 From John to Thomas Walker(Direct Message):
John is correct about what we are trying to do

13:00:34 From John to Thomas Walker(Direct Message):
next meeting