

**MINUTES OF PEE DEE RIVER BASIN COUNCIL (RBC) MEETING (HYBRID FORMAT) HELD ON JUNE 28<sup>TH</sup>, 2022 AT CLASSROOM #240, 2200 POCKET ROAD FLORENCE, SC.**

RBC Members Present

Onsite: Cricket Adams, Everett Allen, Michael Bankert, Walter Beard, John Crutchfield, Brandon Durant, Jason Gamble, Michael Hemingway, Megan Hyman, Eric Krueger, Frances McClary, Doug Newton, Hughes Page, Benjamin Petrone, Lindsay Privette, Buddy Richardson, John Rivers, Jeff Steinmetz & Bill Wiegand

Online: Jeff Parkey, Bob Perry, Charlie Gray, Christy Everett, Cara Schildtknecht & Cliff Chamblee

Absent: Cynthia Walters (excused)

Planning Team Present: Scott Harder, Brooke Czwartacki, Leigh Anne Monroe, JD Solomon, Kirk Westphal, Thomas Walker & Chikezie Isiguzo.

Total Attendance: 51

**1. CALL TO ORDER AND WELCOME**

The meeting was called to order at 9:00 AM with Ken Rentiers (Deputy Director, SCDNR) welcoming the RBC (Committee) members. He appreciated them for their willingness to participate in the RBC. He summarized the purpose of the process and encouraged the Committee to stay committed to the cause. He introduced the support team, including the Facilitator, SCDNR, Clemson University, and noted that other teams from agencies such as DHEC will be part of the process. He emphasized that the team would provide the RBC members with a foundation of sound science to guide their planning process for the basin and urged them to learn as much as possible.

**2. REVIEW OF THE MEETING OBJECTIVES AND APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

JD Solomon, the Pee Dee RBC Facilitator, reviewed the meeting objectives inviting the RBC members provide any edits and to motion for approval of the agenda. The agenda was approved with no amendments. He introduced Brooke Czwartacki as the primary contact for the RBC for SCDNR. He also introduced Kirk Westphal, a co-facilitator, who was attending the meeting online.

**3. RBC AND PLANNING TEAM INTRODUCTIONS**

The members of the RBC introduced themselves and the interest groups they represent. Also, the planning team introduced themselves and their organizations. The primary contact for the RBC members is Brooke Czwartacki, SCDNR.

The RBC members in attendance included:

Frances McClary from Williamsburg County whose main interest is the Black River water system.

Jason Gamble is a fifth-generation farmer from Clarendon County and representing irrigation farming.

Walt Beard from the City of Sumter (Water and Wastewater Utilities) calls Sumter home and loves the area.

John Crutchfield from Duke Energy and admires the scenic Pee Dee river system.

Bill Wiegand III from Conway, SC (Horry County) with interests in real estate and joined the RBC because of the scenic Waccamaw River and the need to respect and maintain it – asserting that it needs to be controlled and working with two senators in advocating for a flood diversion canal on the Waccamaw river.

John Rivers is an irrigated farmer from Sumter and loves the area.

Michael Hemingway, Utilities Director from the City of Florence enjoys the wildlife and the scenery.

Brandon Durant with American Forest Management - deeply rooted in the basin with various properties and family interests in the area including Williamsburg County and Florence.

Eric Krueger from the Nature Conservancy working out of Aiken, SC. The Nature Conservancy owns and manages and has purchased and transferred conservation properties in the basin and personally loves the habitat of the basin.

Jeff Steinmetz, Director of Freshwater Ecology Center at Francis Marion University, loves the basin's biodiversity.

Cricket Adams from Georgetown, retired Highway Patrol and Security work, been on every river in the Pee Dee basin hunting and fishing, but loves the current location, Black River the most.

Ben Petrone from Clio, Marlboro County and is currently the Mayor. Loves the beauty, history, and peace of the area.

Doug Newton, enjoying the first year of retirement, with a heart for the watershed and wildlife, loves the idea of keeping the soil where it is supposed to be and not letting it get into the river.

Michael Bankert from the Legends Golf Course and Superintendent for three years in Myrtle Beach loves the place.

Megan Hyman is an environmental engineer from International Paper in Georgetown. Appreciates the importance of water to business and the recreational aspects of the river system.

Buddy Richardson II represents the at large interest group and is a landowner of 3 miles of Pee Dee riverfront and is a real estate appraiser for the USDA farm service agency in the Southeastern United States.

Everett Allen is from the Pawleys Island area of the Waccamaw River, close to where the Pee Dee River joins the Waccamaw river. Spent the last 30 years selling building materials and witnessing the adverse effects of the building developments in the channel and would love to be part of the solution.

Lindsay Privette lives in Darlington County and have economic development and local government interests in the basin.

Hughes Page is from Pee Dee Land Trust and born and raised in Marion and hold private conservation easements for land owners.

The members that joined online included:

Christy Everett with Grand Strand Sewer and Water Authority, a major water provider in Horry County. Interest is in the tributaries, all the river systems, and 2 surface water intake structures (Bull Creek and off Intercoastal waterway). Being part of the RBC is important as it is essential to the business operation to deliver quality drinking water and provide quality service.

Bob Perry is a Senior Strategist at Water and Land Solutions and lives in Columbia. Over 39 years of working experience on natural resources and ecological restoration. From his experience working in the lower end of the basin, understands quite well the significant flooding challenges associated with the river and storms and looks forward to working in the RBC and assisting in the planning process.

Cliff Chamblee is a Senior Environmental Engineer at Sonoco Products Company and is very interested in making sure that Black Creek continues to have plenty of water.

Charlie Gray represents South Carolina Rural Water and is interested in protecting resources, not just in the Pee Dee area but statewide, and looks forward to working with all the members of the RBC.

Cara Schildtknecht, the Waccamaw Riverkeeper of the Winyah Rivers Alliance represents all the rivers that flow into Winyah Bay and is focused on everyone having access to fishable, swimmable and drinkable water. She is happy to work with other members of the RBC.

Jeff Parkey is Regional Planning Director at the Santee Lynches Regional Council of Governments. He works on land use planning, environmental planning, and economic development issues for the local governments in our region -- Kershaw, Lee, Sumter, and Clarendon counties. Portions of the counties he serves to lie in the Pee Dee basin. He appreciates the opportunity to be involved in this effort. Also, his doctoral work at Clemson dealt with managing shared natural resources. He looks forward to working with the group.

**4. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

- a. Public comments: There were no public comments.
- b. Agency comments: Two DHEC members of staff in attendance, introduced themselves.

**5. OVERVIEW OF RIVER BASIN LEARNING, THE PLANNING FRAMEWORK, AND EXAMPLES**

Scott Harder (Hydrology Section Chief, SCDNR), Brooke Czwartacki (Hydrologist, SCDNR), and JD Solomon (Facilitator).

Brooke Czwartacki introduced herself and her role as the SCDNR point of contact; Scott Harder also introduced himself as Hydrology Section Chief.

Scott Harder introduced the members to state water planning and the five-step process – 1. Surface Water Assessments; 2. Groundwater Assessment; 3. Water Demand Projections; 4. River Basin Plans; and 5. State Water Plans. He explained Planning Process Advisory Committee's (PPAC) role to oversee the process and introduced the planning framework. He elaborated on what a river basin plan is expected to achieve and the main features of a river basin plan. Features of the RBP, a 50-year planning horizon of both surface and groundwater and with emphasis on drought conditions.

Brooke Czwartacki continued with an explanation of the RBC membership structure and water interest sector distribution. She noted the lifecycle of the Committee and confirmed that surface water includes withdrawal from rivers. The RBC members were invited to request presentations on any specific area of interest pertaining to the planning process.

The RBC can coordinate with other planning groups and there will be opportunities for participation in public meetings. She directed the members to the SCDNR website for more information. JD Solomon noted the diversity of the basin and invited the committee to appreciate the scope of the planning effort and work towards reaching a consensus.

Answering the question on energy use in the model, Brooke and Scott explained that energy use is mainly non-consumptive and returns the majority of withdrawn water to the system, but some is lost to evaporation. Scott informed the meeting that the planning committee has arranged for a presentation by Alex Pellet on water demand and water use when most of the questions will be answered.

## **6. REVIEW OF RBC BYLAWS**

JD Solomon reviewed the RBC Bylaws. He noted that the RBC is not a rule-maker authority, but with its planning efforts could influence the state legislative rule-makers. Responding to a question about the RBC mission statement, the facilitator guided the members through sections of the Framework that explained the RBC purpose and its scope. He noted that the scope was limited to South Carolina and to water quantity. However, in framing the problem for the Pee Dee River Basin, there may be areas of co-benefits and co-concerns and there will be coordination with groups in NC (e.g., Yadkin-Pee Dee Water Management Group) and other agencies. Scott noted that someone from NC was attending the RBC meeting virtually.

Other areas of the RBC Bylaws emphasized by JD Solomon include: 1) Consensus; Majority – most decisions will be by simple majority; 2) Super majority; 3) Planning Horizon; Roles and responsibilities of the RBC; 4) Attendance and Conduct; 5) Chair and Vice-Chair; 6) RBC meetings (fourth Tuesday of the month or as agreed by the members); 7) Special meetings; 8) Amending and Signing the bylaws (to be done at subsequent meeting); 9) Terms of office (2, 3, or 4 years); and 9) formation of subcommittees – (Scott – found a subcommittee on groundwater helpful in other Basins).

JD Solomon also noted that there will be a synthesis document of all meeting decisions, minutes of meetings, and links to recorded meetings posted on the SCDNR Hydrology website.

- a. Assign Term Lengths:

All the RBC members were assigned staggered term lengths ranging from 2 years to 4 years through a random number picking process:

S/N	Name	Term (Years)
1	Everett Allen	4
2.	Michael Bankert	2
3.	Walter Beard	3
4.	Cliff Chamblee	3
5.	John Crutchfield	2
6.	Brandon Durant	4
7.	Christy Everett	3
8.	Jason Gamble	3
9.	Charlie Gray	4
10.	Cricket Adams	4
11.	Michael Hemingway	4
12.	Megan Hyman	2
13.	Eric Krueger	3
14.	Frances McClary	3
15.	Doug Newton	3
16.	Hughes Page	3
17.	Jeff Parkey	2
18.	Bob Perry	3
19.	Benjamin Petrone	3
20.	Lindsay Privette	2
21	Buddy Richardson II	4
22.	John Rivers	2
23.	Cara Schildtknecht	2
24.	Jeff Steinmetz	4
25.	Cynthia Walters	2
26.	Bill Wiegand III	4

b. Determine when Chair and Vice-Chair will be selected.

JD Solomon referred to examples from the Edisto and Broad rivers cases and informed the RBC of the need to allow members to get to know each other and understand the process before choosing a Chair and Vice-Chair for the RBC. However, he pointed out the importance of RBC leadership and the need for the Pee Dee RBC to have good leadership.

## 7. Future RBC Meetings

The next two RBC meetings will hold in the same venue 2200 Pocket Road Florence, SC at 9 am and will maintain a Hybrid format.

July 2022 meeting will be held on July 26<sup>th</sup>.

## **8. BASIN PRIORITIES – Break-out session:**

The RBC broke out into four groups. Each group was invited to discuss: 1. one thing learned from Scott and Brooke’s presentation, 2. one thing of concern from the presentations, 3. any experience of running out of water, and 4. some topic of interest for the RBC and planning process. The issues and questions noted during the session include:

- i. How we will coordinate with NC and collaborate with NC and how will that affect the process?
- ii. Should we be concerned about the association between water quality and quantity?
- iii. Will Agricultural water interests be displaced by other interests? What is withdrawn and recharge, and how does it affect availability?
- iv. Would the RBC be able to focus on drought and flood concerns?
- v. What is the impact of saltwater intrusion on surface water and ground water?
- vi. Water use
- vii. Restricting farmers, recreation.
- viii. Growth management.
- ix. How to include North Carolina (NC) because of shared interest, drought plans, and how NC demand and actions affect SC water supply (Moratorium).
- x. Flood concerns.

The appendix and RBC chat includes group breakout talking points (Appendix; RBC Chat).

## **9. CONCLUSION**

The members of the RBC commended the break-out session and the opportunity it gave them to get to know each other. They expressed a desire to serve diligently on the RBC. The facilitator enjoined the members to trust and respect the process as it is designed to enable a good basin planning outcome. Each member was given the opportunity to pick up a copy of the Framework and encouraged to study the document for future meetings. The members were encouraged to share publicly available information about the basin to their network including on social media.

## **10. UPCOMING MEETING AND SCHEDULE**

The next meeting will hold on July 26<sup>th</sup>, 2022 and the committee will review and sign the bylaws.

Minutes by: Chikezie Isiguzo and Tom Walker

Approved: 7/26/22

### **RBC Chat:**

09:28:58 From Thomas Walker to Everyone:

any public comments?

09:41:21 From Aubrey Lofton to Everyone:

I'm Aubrey Lofton and listening in as a representative of the Yadkin Pee Dee Water Management Group.

09:41:36 From Thomas Walker to Everyone:

thank you for being here today

10:15:40 From Jeff Parkey to Everyone:

Hello and sorry for the delay. Jeff Parkey, planning director with Santee Lynches Council of Governments. I work on land use planning, environmental planning, and economic development issues for the local governments in our region -- Kershaw, Lee, Sumter, and Clarendon counties. Portions of the counties we serve lie in the Pee Dee basin, so we appreciate the opportunity to be involved in this effort. Also, my doctoral work at Clemson dealt with managing shared natural resources. Thanks and look forward to working with the group.

10:27:30 From Thomas Walker to Everyone:

thanks Jeff. 10 minute break

10:42:29 From Thomas Walker to Everyone:

going to restart here in a minute or so

11:27:57 From Charlie Gray to Everyone:

I've lost audio. Anyone else?

11:31:14 From Thomas Walker to Everyone:

I am going to work with RBC members online

11:31:43 From Thomas Walker to Everyone:

Christy, Charlie, Cliff, Bob, Jeff, and Cara

11:31:58 From Charlie Gray to Everyone:

I lost audio right when you were saying the objectives. I logged off and back on just now.

11:32:19 From Thomas Walker to Everyone:

one thing you learned from brooke or scott that might be of interest for discussion

11:32:33 From Thomas Walker to Everyone:

first question from JD

11:32:45 From Thomas Walker to Everyone:

go ahead and type it in here

**Breakout Discussion Question 1:**

11:33:12 From Charlie Gray to Everyone:

Increase in GW usage over the past ten years was really interesting when compared to the surface water usage.

11:33:21 From Thomas Walker to Everyone:

great one

11:33:38 From Cliff Chamblee to Everyone:

The team has a budget and can approve projects?

11:34:13 From Thomas Walker to Everyone:

can you clarify that question some for me

11:34:56 From Cliff Chamblee to Everyone:

In the bylaws, that was one thing that was listed as needing a majority to decide

11:35:43 From Thomas Walker to Everyone:

ok thanks, any other things you learned from the PPTS/discussion?

11:35:57 From Thomas Walker to Everyone:

we can move to question 2 if not

11:36:34 From Thomas Walker to Everyone:

ok, question 2 is one thing you are concerned about from the PPTS/discussion thus far or generally

11:37:29 From Thomas Walker to Everyone:

any concerns?

**Breakout Discussion Question 2:**

11:37:33 From Cara Schildtknecht to Everyone:

I'm concerned with coastal folks (and I'm one of them) being able to move away from the focus on flooding. I realize it's a big issue that has taken over most of our lives, but I hope we can stay focused

11:37:37 From Bob Perry, Senior Strategist, Water & Land Solutions to Everyone:

Uncertainty and emerging new realities.

11:37:43 From Cliff Chamblee to Everyone:

My concern is that what is happening during the next two years will really impact the plan. If it stays dry, the plan might be too conservative. If we get floods, the plan might not be conservative enough.

11:37:58 From Thomas Walker to Everyone:

great comments thank you

11:38:07 From Thomas Walker to Everyone:

anyone else?

11:38:37 From Thomas Walker to Everyone:

I will read all of this in the meeting for our report out or if one of the members wants to be the speaker, we can do that as well

11:39:05 From Thomas Walker to Everyone:

question 3 - have you ever run out of water. personally or by sector/interest category

11:40:01 From Thomas Walker to Everyone:

ever gotten close?

**Breakout Discussion Question 3:**

11:40:08 From Cara Schildtknecht to Everyone:

I have not in SC. I lived in Ghana and our power was all hydropower. When there wasn't enough flow, both water and electricity were cut off to sectors of the country. It was really eye opening.

11:40:08 From Cliff Chamblee to Everyone:

Lived on well water as a kid, the well went dry and we went to an uncles house for baths - my mother is still not over it...

11:40:46 From Bob Perry, Senior Strategist, Water & Land Solutions to Everyone:

Absolutely. Ran out of freshwater several times during my long tenure on the coast as the downstream drought flow allowed brackish and salt water to move upstream.

11:40:50 From Cara Schildtknecht to Everyone:

I've also had the well issue in WV. That's no fun and I feel for you, Cliff. And your mother.

11:41:21 From Thomas Walker to Everyone:

thank you

11:41:32 From Charlie Gray to Everyone:

No, we haven't run out of water. We withdraw from the head of the aquifer and are blessed to do so, but I'm concerned about the consequences of our withdrawals to the folks withdrawing from the same aquifer downstream from us.

11:41:58 From Thomas Walker to Everyone:

ok last question - question 4 - potential topics for the PD RBC process you might like to see/hear

**Breakout Discussion Question 4:**

11:42:39 From Cara Schildtknecht to Everyone:

Impacts of salt water intrusion on SW and GW

11:42:51 From Charlie Gray to Everyone:

I'd like to hear what other states have done that have been successful in this process.

11:43:12 From Thomas Walker to Everyone:

both good topics

11:43:17 From Thomas Walker to Everyone:

any others

11:43:26 From Bob Perry, Senior Strategist, Water & Land Solutions to Everyone:

With the diverse background of the group it might be good to discuss principles of adaptive management and how they might apply to sound water management over the long haul.

11:43:39 From Thomas Walker to Everyone:

certainly

11:43:40 From Cara Schildtknecht to Everyone:

Good idea, Charlie! I'd like to hear from the Edisto RBC too

11:44:01 From Thomas Walker to Everyone:

we can probably arrange a visit from Hank, Edisto Chair

11:44:06 From Cliff Chamblee to Everyone:

looking at how other places have water consumption rates so much lower than SC. How market forces can be used if the value of water is accrued correctly.

11:44:12 From Thomas Walker to Everyone:

we are getting very close to finalizing the plan there

11:44:31 From Thomas Walker to Everyone:

thanks cliff

11:44:47 From Christy Everett to Everyone:

sorry guys - I was interrupted. here are a few thoughts.

11:45:15 From Thomas Walker to Everyone:

no problem

11:45:26 From Christy Everett to Everyone:

I was curious about the level amount of SW withdrawal. We are certainly seeing an increase in the Horry County area.

11:45:50 From Thomas Walker to Everyone:

would anyone like to be spokesperson for the group or I can go over the comments for the group

11:46:24 From Christy Everett to Everyone:

We are blessed to have an abundant amount of surface water to withdrawal but are controlled by the FERC licenses in NC from the electric companies. These external factors could impact.

11:46:49 From Christy Everett to Everyone:

We have not had a shortage of water or no water in our area. again, blessed with source water.

11:46:58 From Cliff Chamblee to Everyone:

I am good if you want to be the spokesperson Thomas

11:47:23 From Thomas Walker to Everyone:

ok, will be happy to

11:47:49 From Thomas Walker to Everyone:

once we restart I will turn the mic back on

11:47:57 From Thomas Walker to Everyone:

should be here in a few minutes

11:48:01 From Thomas Walker to Everyone:

thank you all

11:48:24 From Bob Perry, Senior Strategist, Water & Land Solutions to Everyone:

I'd like for us to consider the long-term benefits of riparian corridor landscape-level land

protection for the benefit of water quality.

11:49:53 From Thomas Walker to Everyone:

Ok, I will try and synthesize all of this but it will be in the minutes as well

12:02:16 From Kirk Westphal to Everyone:

Tom, to address one of the requests for discussion topics: Matt Lindburg, on our Brown and Caldwell Team, would be happy to chat with this group at some point about how other states and their RBCs have worked and made progress. Specifically, he can share many lessons learned from Colorado and their 8 RBCs (very similar to South Carolina).

12:02:30 From Thomas Walker to Everyone:

excellent, thanks Kirk

12:06:44 From Thomas Walker to Everyone:

feel free to unmute

12:15:58 From Thomas Walker to Everyone:

thanks everyone

## **Appendix:**

### **Group Discussion Notes:**

1. Groundwater use chart + increase, water demand and uses, groundwater use recharge, hydro models.
2. Competition of users and potentials for prioritization, population growth vs loss of agricultural land, population density, will we look at specific industries and how they impact other basins?, impacts across basin boundaries
3. Yes, groundwater wells, surface water restrictions due to drought
4. Groundwater monitoring for industries, NC discharges, salinity of groundwater due to infiltration, flooding impacts (SCOR)

### **Group Discussion Notes:**

1. 17,000 square miles, 8 planning regions in the state, planning has been going on for a while, groundwater withdrawals
2. Growth and water use, restrict the small farmers, growth management and land conservation, don't want to have a drought, include NC in planning
3. Run out of water? Yes
4. SC Drought plans, water quality, SCOR