

Location:

February 28, 2023
9:00 AM – 12:00 PM
Pee Dee REC
Hybrid Meeting

Action Items:

1. **Pee Dee RBC members should begin considering surface water topics from the water modeling presentation – adding additional strategic nodes, simulated flow modeling relating to Minimum Recommended Instream Flows (MIFs), additional scenarios, potentially establishing a surface water condition, and potentially establishing reaches of interest in the Pee Dee River Basin.**

Major Decisions:

1. **Unanimous – The Pee Dee RBC voted to adopt the RBC bylaws as written in the Planning Framework. (July 2022)**
2. **Unanimous – The Pee Dee RBC voted to adopt the proposed Process Metrics as presented. (August 2022)**
3. **Unanimous – The Pee Dee RBC voted to adopt the Mission, Vision, and Goals of the Pee Dee RBC. (August 2022)**
4. **The Pee Dee RBC elected the Chair: Buddy Richardson and Vice Chair: Cara Schildtknecht (November 2022)**

Meeting:

- Review of Meeting Objectives
- Approval of Agenda
- Public and Agency Comment Periods
- Review of Unimpaired Flow, Current Water Use, and Fully Permitted and Registered Water Use Scenarios
- Drought Management Plans
- Water Conservation Practices by Sector
- Coastal County Water Supply Discussion
- Scenic Rivers
- Meeting Conclusion

Meeting Summary (February 28th)

JD Solomon, Pee Dee River Basin Council Facilitator, called the January 28th meeting of the Pee Dee RBC to order at 9:00 AM. The ninth meeting of the Pee Dee RBC was held in-person and virtually via the Zoom virtual meeting platform (hybrid). Including the Pee Dee RBC members and planning team, there were 40 people present at this RBC meeting in-person and online.

The meeting began with JD Solomon reviewing the agenda items for the meeting. The Pee Dee RBC approved the RBC meeting agenda and minutes and summary documents from the January 24th meeting. A public comment period was held with no comments. An agency public comment period was held with no comments received.

The first agenda item was a presentation from John Boyer, CDM Smith, entitled: *Pee Dee River Basin Surface Water Availability Modeling Results*. The Pee Dee RBC is currently in phase 2 of river basin planning and are tasked with evaluating current and future water availability issues. In phase 3, the RBC will develop and evaluate water management strategies. The scenarios John covered in the meeting were: current use, permitted and registered use, and unimpaired flow scenarios. John discussed the process of acquiring inflow data from NC and integrating that into SWAM for analysis. John presented information on the current use scenario and regulatory and physical shortages identified by running the model. Some, if not all, identified shortages may in fact not be real shortages due to impoundments which provide water storage for certain users. The permitted and registered scenario results showed additional physical shortages for users at headwaters or on minor tributaries. John then presented the data for simulated flows, difference in simulated flows for current use and unimpaired flow scenarios, and difference in simulated flows for current use and permitted and registered scenarios at strategic nodes. Current use and permitted and registered use scenarios were used to compare modeled reservoir storage levels. The RBC was tasked with certain surface water modeling considerations moving forward: adding additional strategic nodes, simulated flow modeling relating to Minimum Recommended Instream Flows (MIFs), additional scenarios, potentially establishing a surface water condition, and potentially establishing reaches of interest in the Pee Dee River Basin.

Matt Lindburg, Brown and Caldwell, was next on the agenda with a presentation entitled: *Drought Management Plans in the Pee Dee Basin*. Matt provided some context as to the importance of drought management plans. SWAM will evaluate the effectiveness of existing drought plans in mitigating shortages and the plans will also inform shortage mitigation strategies. Matt reminded the RBC of Elliot Wickham and Hope Mizzell's presentations from phase 1 regarding drought response in SC and the definition of drought and discussed various drought types (meteorological, ecological, hydrologic, agricultural, and socioeconomic). Matt reviewed the SC Drought Response Program, drought severity levels, and what drought management plans are and their contents. Matt then reviewed the entities included and not

included in the Pee Dee SWAM. The rest of the presentation focused on drought mitigation strategies and how they vary by severity, drought triggers, typical demand reduction strategies in different severity levels, and brief highlights of alternative water supply agreements.

JD facilitated discussion regarding water conservation practices and encouraged various water interests to talk about their sector practices. Agricultural users discussed the future of irrigation using variable rate center pivots and no-till practices. It was also noted that in times of drought, when other sectors are conserving water, agriculture needs to use water to supplement lacking precipitation. Industry has future goals of sustainable use and water conservation practices, but they are challenging to implement in reality. Water utilities briefly discussed automated water meters which are costly but can help reduce water use. Seemingly, many of the sectors are trying to achieve water demand reductions but many challenges exist to achieving desired results. Additionally, JD briefed the RBC regarding the coastal county water supply conversation held at Grand Strand Water and Sewer Authority. Due to model limitations regarding tidally influenced rivers and stream, many of the users in the Pee Dee Basin are not included in SWAM, but those water use sectors want to be included in the plan and have their story told.

Finally, Bill Marshall, SCDNR, finished off the meeting agenda with his presentation entitled: *SC Scenic Rivers: Pee Dee River Basin*. Bill began by highlighting the 30,000 miles of streams in SC. Bill then discussed the SC Scenic Rivers Act which included the provisions and directives of the Act, the purpose, approach, project areas, and current program results. The Scenic Rivers of the Pee Dee Basin included: the Lynches, Black, Little Pee Dee, and Great Pee Dee and Bill highlighted their outstanding river values and management plans. The Scenic River Management Plans included examples of streamflow recommendations for each of the rivers. Bill also presented a map of land conservation and their importance in river corridors. Finally, Bill discussed project-level actions and outcomes associated with the Scenic River Management Plans.

The meeting concluded as JD Solomon reminded the RBC of the next meeting of the Pee Dee RBC scheduled for March 28, 2023 at the Clemson Pee Dee REC.

The RBC meeting was adjourned.

The meeting concluded at 12:22 PM.

Summary: Tom Walker

Approved: 3/28/23