

Making Decisions by Consensus

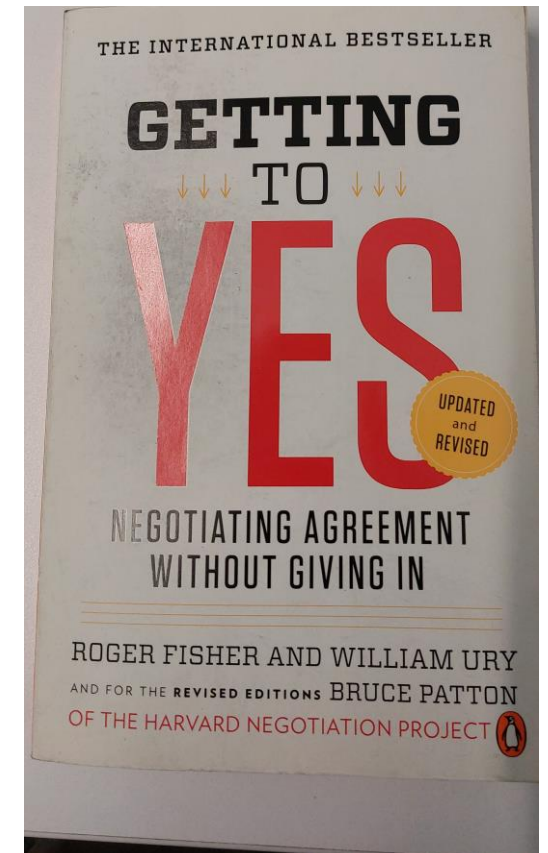
Pee Dee River Basin Council

March 26, 2024

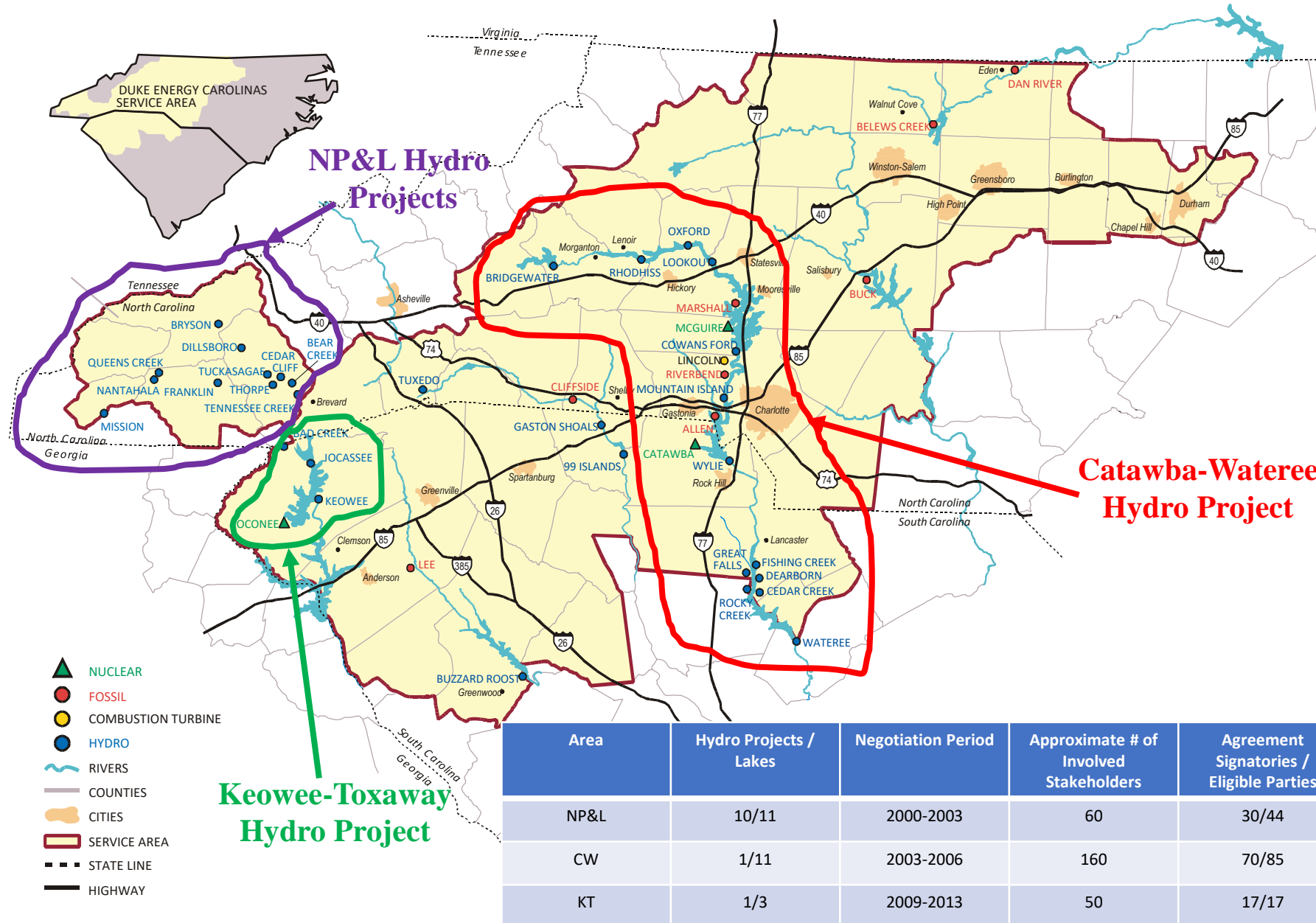
Presented by: Jeff Lineberger, PE

The Process Matters

- Goal – a timely outcome all parties can live with
- Consensus Rating Scale for Near-Final Draft
 - 1 – Full Endorsement
 - 2 – Endorsement with Minor Points of Contention
 - 3 – Endorsement with Major Points of Contention
 - 4 – Stand aside with Major Reservations (requires changes)
 - 5 - Withdrawal
- Final decision made by Majority Vote
- Understand, Negotiate, Measure, Adjust, Cut
- *Getting to Yes* by Fisher, Ury and Patton



Interest-Based Negotiation Applied to Water Resource Decisions



Observations

- 2-step, consensus-based process allows collaborative problem-solving
 - Prevents domination by the majority
 - Allows trust-building and info-sharing, especially under conditions of conflict
 - Consensus does not mean everyone will be equally happy
 - All accept that the decision is the best that could be made at the time.
- Best active listeners (not talkers) are most effective
- Talking about interests (not positions) first exposes common ground
- Ratings greater than 1 don't indicate failure
- Leave time to work on issues causing any 3's and 4's
- 5's want out----let them go
- In the end, you either can or can't live with the River Basin Plan
 - If you can live with it, then support it



Photo by Charles Corte - UPI

*"Alone we can do so little,
together we can do so much."*
Helen Keller