

Location:

August 17, 2022
9:00 AM – 2:00 PM
Clemson Edisto REC
Hybrid Meeting

Action Items:

1. Send Edisto river basin plan chapter comments and/or edits to John Boyer.

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 July 20th Minutes and Summary Documents
- Public and Agency Comment Periods
- Old business/New business Discussion
- Update of Edisto River Basin Plan Chapters
- Review of July Meeting
- Review and Discuss Draft of Chapter 9
- Review and Discuss Draft of Chapter 10
- Review and Selection of Proposed Progress Metrics
- Planning for Upcoming Public Meetings
- Upcoming Schedule

Meeting Summary (August 17th)

The Edisto RBC Chair, Hank Stallworth, called the August 17th meeting of the Edisto RBC to order at 9:00 AM. The twenty-sixth 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 July 20th 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 discussion focused on a recent article posted in the Post and Courier and discussion regarding a formal response from the Edisto RBC. Some of the Edisto RBC members volunteered to work on creating a draft response for the rest of the Council to consider. 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 a review and discussion of policy, legislative, and regulatory recommendations as discussed in the previous meeting to include in the Edisto river basin plan. John Boyer distributed a survey to all RBC members and received responses to understand the level of support for the recommendations. The recommendations discussed were: surface water regulations and using 80% of median annual daily flows instead of mean to determine safe yield at a withdrawal point, surface water regulations and using median annual daily flows instead of mean annual daily flows to determine minimum instream flows at a withdrawal point, reasonable use criteria and whether it should be applied to all water use requests, periodically reviewing a user's actual water use and needs and accounting for growth to prevent locking up water, and all water users being subject to the same rules. Edisto RBC members provided feedback in the meeting and will be able to provide feedback on the draft river basin plan before voting on the finalized draft plan.

The next agenda item was a review and discussion of the proposed implementation plan as discussed in the previous meeting. Discussion focused on the presentation of the information and possible ways to make it more visually digestible. Other brief discussion focused on the EQIP USDA program and potential sources of funding through the Inflation Reduction Act.

Next on the agenda was review and selection of proposed progress metrics as discussed at the previous meeting. John Boyer reviewed the list of proposed progress metrics and solicited feedback from the RBC members. The first progress metric seeks to reduce demand to conserve water resources and Metric 1a received some feedback regarding municipal demand. The sixth progress metric seeks to effectively communicate RBC findings and recommendations and Metric 6a received discussion on measuring SCDNR Edisto planning website visits and possible development of a specific metric. Other Metrics: 1b, 2a, 3a, 3b, 4a, 5a, 5b, 5c, 6b, 7a, 7b, 8a, and 8b received no suggestions.

Finally, the RBC meeting moved to discussion of the upcoming public meetings to present the draft Edisto river basin plan and finalized river basin plan to the public. For the first public meeting several members of the Edisto RBC will briefly present specific parts of the plan and there will be an opportunity for questions and comments on the draft plan by the public. The second meeting will present the finalized plan to the public.

The meeting concluded with John Boyer discussing the final schedule for the Edisto river basin planning process. There will be no RBC meeting in September. The Edisto RBC will meet in October to test consensus on the plan and to prepare for the first public meeting in November. The Edisto RBC will meet in December to review public comments and then will hold the second public meeting in January. The RBC meeting was adjourned.

The meeting concluded at 12:27 PM.

Summary: Tom Walker

Approved: 11/16/22