

October 20th, 2021, 9:00 AM – 1:00 PM
Meeting No. 16
Clemson Edisto REC
Blackville, SC

Edisto River Basin Council

October 20, 2021 Meeting Minutes

Members Present: Hank Stallworth (Chair), Landrum Weathers (Vice Chair), Laura Bagwell, Hugo Krispyn, Jason Thompson, Kirk Bell, Jerry Waters, Alan Mehrzad, Brandon Stutts, David Bishop, Eric Odom, Will Williams, Jeremy Walther & Joel Duke

Members Present Online: John Bass, JJ Jowers, Mark Aakhus, Amanda Sievers & Alex Tolbert

Members Absent: Alta Mae Marvin (Jonathan Burroughs, alternate, present), Trey McMillan, John Haralson & Danny Burbage

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

Others Present Online: 28

Total Attendance: 56

1. Call the Meeting to Order (Hank Stallworth, RBC Chair) 9:00–9:10
 - a. Review of Meeting Objectives
Hank called the meeting to order at 9:05 AM.
 - b. Approval of Agenda
The meeting agenda was adjusted through a motion and approved by the Edisto RBC.

The Edisto RBC Chairman, Hank Stallworth, called the 16th meeting of the Edisto RBC held on October 20, 2021, to order at 9:05 AM. The meeting was held in-person at the Clemson Edisto Research and Education Center (REC) in Blackville, SC and via Zoom virtual meeting platform. A total of 56 people, including the Edisto RBC members and planning team were present at this RBC meeting in-person and online. The meeting began with the Edisto RBC Chairman welcomed the meeting attendees and noted the meeting objectives: to learn about groundwater management strategies of DHEC capacity use areas in the Edisto river basin; review water management strategies; compare surface water scenario flows to calculated 20/30/40 flows; discuss and consider surface water subcommittee recommendations. Thereafter, the Chairman invited the members of the RBC to consider a revision of the agenda to include a presentation on the Permit Review Process as required by the Surface Water Act. The Edisto RBC members approved the revision of the agenda to include the additional item introduced by the Chairman. The Chairman proceeded to charge the member of the Edisto RBC that with the good quality of knowledge afforded the members from presentations made in the Edisto RBC meetings, it was time to consider putting management strategies in place to achieve the objectives of the Edisto

RBC. Consequently, the Chairman called on all members of the Edisto RBC to listen, respect and work with each other for the success of the team.

John Boyer noted that a discussion about preliminary runs of the USGS groundwater model was stepped down till next meeting in November 2021 to allow for a complete model result. The meeting proceeded with a presentation on the Permit Review Process and operations of the Surface Water Regulation Stakeholder Workgroup.

- 2. Surface Water Regulation Stakeholder Workgroup (Rob Devlin, SCDHEC) 9:15–9:45**
Leading the presentation of Permit Review Process and Surface Water Regulation Stakeholder Group, Rob Devlin guided the members of the Edisto RBC through the review process and the expectations from the exercise. He noted that one of the objectives of the process is to correct the unintended consequences of the implemented regulation since the last review and to adopt new knowledge available that could help achieve policy objectives. Some of the key issues in the current permitting process include the long duration allowed by South Carolina compared to other states and permits can be renewed for the same quantity or higher. Other issues include existing withdrawers, currently accounting for 94% of permits, are not subject to both the 20-30-40 minimum instream flow (MIF) and public notice requirements. He went further to inform the members of the Edisto RBC the requirements for new withdrawers and agricultural withdrawers. Ultimately the policy objective is to maximize resource availability, promote sustainability, and serve as a regulatory framework to support basin planning and stakeholder engagement. In conclusion, Rob answered questions and invited the members of the Edisto RBC to take advantage of the call for stakeholder input on the regulation review process to share their opinion and informed the house of the future meetings of the workgroup in 2021 (October 21, November 18, and December 9).
- 3. Groundwater Management Strategies of the Trident, Low Country and Western Capacity Use Areas (Leigh Ann Monroe, SCDHEC) 9:45–10:15**
Giving an overview of the Edisto Basin Groundwater Management Plans (GWMP), Leigh Anne Monroe stated that the GWMP has been written for Western, Lowcountry and the Trident. While evaluations for Lowcountry and Trident have been drafted, the evaluation for Western will be done in 2023 which is the year before permit renewals. She noted the strategies for the GWMP to include reduction of groundwater withdrawals in areas of concentrated pumping; review permit applications based on demonstrated reasonable use; establish a comprehensive groundwater monitoring program; establish a conservation education plan for the general public and existing groundwater withdrawers; regulate, plan and issue permits in accordance with GWMP. She briefed the members on indices observed and used to develop strategies such as historic use across sectors and population. She concluded by answering questions allaying the fears of some member on the efficacy of the management strategies and noting some actions aimed at achieving them. The actions include decreasing water use in aquifers, use of Aquifer Storage and Recovery (ASR) wells, and conducting infrastructure audits.
- 4. Overview of Water Management Strategies (John Boyer, CDM Smith) 10:15–10:45**
John Boyer introduced the next item on the agenda: overview of water management strategies. Hugo informed the members of the Edisto RBC about reports of unusual flow activity coming from the South fork of the Edisto and invited anyone with information on the phenomenon to inform the Edisto RBC. Continuing with his presentation, John Boyer defined surface water management strategy and groundwater management strategy and provided a broad overview

of water management strategies. He presented examples from water supply and demand sides practices and summarized opportunities in the Edisto Basin. He outlined the evaluation criteria for water management strategies to include effectiveness; reliability; permitting/regulatory (including potential inter-basin impacts; environmental impacts, socioeconomic impacts, water quality impacts; and constructability). Continuing in the presentation, John Boyer summarized existing management practices in place in the Edisto River basin starting with the City of Aiken’s Masons Branch Reservoir supply side strategy. Other practices presented were the City of Orangeburg’s two ASR wells and interconnection with Lake Marion Regional water supply side strategy, Walther farms supply and demand strategies, and Dominion Energy’s Cope Station conjunctive use combining demand and supply side strategies. Finally, John Boyer noted that there are Drought Management Plans in place in Aiken, Batesburg-Leesville, Charleston Water system, and Orangeburg, and gave an example of a drought phase trigger and water use reduction goals for each phase (For example the water use reduction goal for a moderate drought phase is 15%, 20% for a severe case, and 25% for an extreme phase.) He invited the members to suggest management practices for consideration in future meetings especially in relation to surface and ground water management. He also invited the members to review previous work done by CDM Smith for the state of Colorado in management practices with a view to adapting it to South Carolina.

Break 10:45–11:00

5. Surface Water Discussion and Working Lunch (John Boyer, CDM Smith) 11:00–12:45

a. Comparison of Scenario Flows to Calculated 20/30/40 Flows
 The next section of John Boyer’s presentation focused on continuing the discussion on surface water. John Boyer led the discussion on calculating minimum instream flows based on the South Carolina Water Withdrawal, Permitting, Use, and Reporting Act. Using results from nine strategic nodes he described how valuable the results are for planning and implementing a management strategy of the Edisto RBC.

b. Surface Water Subcommittee Recommendations and Discussion
 The final presentation was the Surface Withdrawal and Surface Condition Subcommittee Report by Jason Thompson. He noted the subcommittee’s short-term goals of considering current and future operational resiliency, surface conditions, and low flow management strategy. He briefed the house that the subcommittee two meetings were candid and productive but that the group need more time to fully model the surface conditions and low flow management strategy. The focus of the subcommittee’s discussions was on issues around operational resiliency and surface condition, with a view to ensuring that the management strategies align with technical, financial, and regulatory resources and achieve the goals set out in the water planning framework. Jason Thompson presented models to describe the assumptions the subcommittee is using to work on management strategies.

6. Upcoming RBC Agenda and Schedule (John Boyer) 12:45–12:50

Finally, John Boyer informed the members of the Edisto RBC that the next RBC meeting will be held on November 17, 2021, and will cover discussions on Groundwater Scenario results, effectiveness of low flow strategy, effectiveness of existing management practices and/or

drought management plan water use reduction goals, and identification and discussion of other possible water management strategies for evaluation.

7. Meeting Conclusion (Hank Stallworth, RBC Chair)

12:50–1:00

Meeting Concluded: 1:12 PM

Minutes: Chikezie Isiguzo and Tom Walker

Approved: November 17, 2021

RBC ZOOM Chat:

09:01:48 From Thomas Walker to Everyone:

hey everyone, we'll be getting started a little late but will start soon

09:02:18 From John to Everyone:

ok online

09:38:12 From Bradley Craig to Everyone:

the summary is up on the website now

09:49:13 From John to Everyone:

great idea John

09:51:36 From John to Thomas Walker(Direct Message):

I would like to recommend what john suggested for a vote

09:52:00 From Thomas Walker to John(Direct Message):

ok, I will get it in here in a minute

10:02:00 From Fred Palm to Everyone:

Provide majority and dissenting reasons.

10:11:16 From Fred Palm to Everyone:

Stay focused on the agenda and please do not run the risk of weakening the excellent credibility of the work thus far.

10:13:43 From Thomas Walker to Everyone:

john do you want to modify or keep the motion?

10:50:41 From Thomas Walker to Everyone:

15 minute break

12:39:27 From Eric Krueger to Everyone:

A public comment if I may: Jeremy's approach is what we do now when pressure is low; Jason's approach is what we do when drought hits before we get our readiness measures in place, or drought hits and is more severe than what we could've predicted. It's both / and

12:41:07 From Thomas Walker to Everyone:

i will ask if you can unmute in a minute eric

12:44:54 From Thomas Walker to Everyone:

thanks eric

12:59:52 From Thomas Walker to Everyone:

our traveling mic is having tech difficulties online here sorry