Water Management Strategies Breakout Group Discussion

Agenda Item 6

Discussion Guide

1. What existing water management strategies are already used in the Upper Savannah River basin? Consider and group these strategies by water use sector and whether they are:
    a. Supply-side strategies
    b. Demand-side strategies
    c. Low flow management strategies

2. How effective are the existing strategies? Think in terms of their ability to reduce demands, increase supply availability, and prevent shortages.

3. Do you think strategies that are already in-place can be expanded or improved?

4. What types of strategies are likely to be relevant in the Upper Savannah River Basin to reduce or eliminate projected shortages, increase available supply, minimize low flows, and help improve the flow regime for aquatic organisms and recreation? Which strategies should we evaluate using the surface water model?

Group Reports – Q1: Existing Strategies in the Basin

- Water system loss review (e.g., Greenville has dedicated staff)
- Drought management plans (up-to-date/current)
- Golf courses and industry are mindful about water use for irrigation and recreation
- Supply side, impoundments and reservoirs
- Regionalization around a larger source (e.g., Pickens and Easley Central WD)
- Low-flow management strategies – a lot of it is voluntary. Not a lot of enforced actions.
- Water loss programs
- Management of lakes by USACE is effective; improvements considered.

Group Reports – Q2: Effectiveness of Existing Strategies

- We haven't run out of water, so something is working

Group Reports – Q3: Can Existing Strategies be Expanded

- Rebates/incentives to save water
- Although we are blessed with a lot of water, we need to be proactive. Communication message should not be that we have all our water problems solved. Perception matters.
- Educational programs/conservation – getting future generations to be proactive. Look at critical intakes downstream, in case flow releases are reduced
- Work with USACE to consider adjustments to their Drought Plan. For example, start conservation earlier. Also, current plan shows dropping level in winter in Level 2 or 3.
- There are differences in cost to maintain water systems, esp. on distribution side. Hard to improve distribution side to achieve better efficiency. Need to adjust grants to allow smaller systems to keep up, especially considering inflation
- Ag – Conservation irrigation, covering cropping, expansion of easements
- Ag – NRCS provides funding and education.

Group Reports – Q4: What Strategies are Relevant in the Upper Savannah basin and Should be Further Evaluated? (page 1 of 2)

- Not encourage tie-in of private wells
- Interbasin transfer regs that reflect forecasted needs of the basin
- Is there a way to keep more of the water that is withdrawn in the US basin, in the basin (limit or reduce interbasin transfers?)
- Increase water monitoring – make sure data is publicly available
- Drought management plan that align with each other and/or have realistic triggers and reductions
- Industry – have water reuse incentives and water loss controls
- Alternative energy sources (e.g., solar, natural gas, which don't use as much water)
- WaterSmart and EnergySmart appliances
- Sediment management above reservoirs
- Coordination between basin councils in SC and GA

Group Reports – Q4: What Strategies are Relevant in the Upper Savannah basin and Should be Further Evaluated? (page 1 of 2)

- ASR? Stream bank recovery/infiltration?
- Water Reuse? Could it work in upstate?
- Stormwater capture and infiltration?
- Building codes? Do they protect?
- Public education campaigns? Who's doing what and what messages? Common messaging. Comprehensive and holistic approach.