

Location:

July 7, 2022

10:00 AM – 12:00 PM

Zoom meeting

Action Items:

1. **DNR to work on exploring Savannah upper and lower basin definition for upcoming RBC processes.**
2. **DHEC to provide updates to PPAC regarding EPA letter and DHEC response decision.**

Meeting:

New Business

- Budget Update
- River Basin Planning Process Discussion Topics
- EPA determination of new Water Quality Standards under the Surface Water Withdrawal, Permitting, Use and Reporting Act

Meeting Summary (July 7th)

The Deputy Director of the Land, Water and Conservation Division of the Department of Natural Resources, Ken Rentiers, called the July 7th quarterly meeting of the PPAC to order at 10:00 AM. The quarterly meeting of the South Carolina PPAC was held via Zoom meetings application. The PPAC held a public comment period with no public comment received. Approval of minutes and summary documents from the May 11th meeting were unanimous as was approval of the July 7th meeting agenda.

The meeting began with a welcome from Ken Rentiers. Ken provided a few comments on the budget. SCDNR-LWCD received \$3.5 million to continue river basin planning efforts. While the full funding request was not funded, the funding appropriated does keep the process moving forward. A full fund request of \$5.5 million has been requested for the next budget cycle to complete the first round of basin planning activities. LWCD also received \$360,000 for monitoring network expansion for the SCDNR surface and groundwater monitoring network and an additional FTE hydrologist position to assist with planning efforts.

Scott Harder, SCDNR Hydrology Section Chief, updated the PPAC on the budget regarding planning activities as requested in several meetings by PPAC members. Scott also updated the PPAC on the progress in each of the concurrent basin planning processes (Edisto, Broad, and Pee Dee). Next, the PPAC discussed the possibility of redefining the planning basins in the Savannah and Salkehatchie basins dividing up the Savannah river basin into two planning basins (Upper and Lower) and including the Salkehatchie in the Lower Savannah planning process. The PPAC discussed the possibility of this modification but also the challenges facing planning activities in the Savannah basin with the Army Corps of Engineers operating reservoirs in the Upper Savannah. The PPAC recommended moving

forward with exploring the possibility of the location of division of the Savannah into Upper and Lower sections and additional groundwork engaging the USACE, SEPA, and Georgia EPD ahead of formally opening planning activities in the Savannah. The PPAC then had some additional discussion regarding planning activities in the Savannah versus completing the Catawba, Saluda, and Santee basins concurrently with the Broad.

Rob Devlin, Assistant Bureau Chief of SCDHEC's Bureau of Water, updated the PPAC on a letter received from the EPA regarding an assessment of Water Quality Standards (WQS) derived from the SC Surface Water Withdrawal Permitting, Use and Reporting Act and subsequent regulations. The EPA letter decided that new WQS did result from the state legislation and regulations and that they were inconsistent with Clean Water Act standards. This impacts Federal permitting processes but does not impact State permitting processes. SCDHEC is still weighing its options and considering their response and will update the PPAC as soon as possible regarding a decision in response to the EPA letter.

Ken Rentiers concluded the meeting at 11:40 AM.

The next quarterly meeting of the PPAC is currently scheduled for October 6, 2022.

Summary: Tom Walker

Approved: 10/6/22