

## **Drought Response Committee Conference Call**

**Date: September 25th, 2024**

**Time: 10:00 a.m.**

A Drought Response Committee Conference Call was conducted at 10:00 a.m., September 25<sup>th</sup>, 2024. Notice of the date, time and call-in information was posted and provided on the [scdrought.com](http://scdrought.com) website. Chairman Ken Rentiers, Deputy Director of SC Department of Natural Resources (SCDNR) - Land, Water and Conservation Division presided at the meeting.

### **I. Introduction**

- a. Ken Rentiers, SCDNR, introduces the meeting. He reads the Freedom of Information Statement. He then:
  - i. He states that this meeting is being recorded
  - ii. Thanks Cody Simpson from the Governor's Office for attending the call.
- b. Ken (SCDNR) checks to make sure we have a quorum.
- c. Hope Mizzell (SCDNR) calls roll.
  - i. She double checks to see if we have enough participants for a quorum.
- d. Ken (SCDNR) states that we have a quorum.
- e. **Motion to approve minutes**
  - i. Ken (SCDNR) calls for a motion to approve the minutes from the last meeting.
    1. Preston Pierce, West DMA Power Generation Facilities, 1<sup>st</sup>
    2. Scott Willett, West DMA Private Water Supplier, 2<sup>nd</sup>
  - ii. Minutes from the September 4<sup>th</sup>, 2024 meeting are approved.
- f. Ken (SCDNR) asks for input from the committee members on whether it is a good idea to postpone the meeting until next week or continue with a full meeting today, given the rain forecast from Hurricane Helene.
- g. Jimmy Bagley, Central DMA Municipalities, states the upcoming storm would help the drought in the Western area of the state. The river levels are low and the land is dry, but the rain from this system could help things. He agrees that it would be worth postponing the meeting.
  - i. Preston Pierce, West DMA Power Generation Facilities, agrees.
  - ii. Chris Rasco, West DMA Public Service District, also agrees.
- h. Hope (SCDNR) states that area received some rain last night. She displays the graphic depicting the rainfall from 9/24, showing the CoCoRaHS rainfall totals in the Upstate.
  - i. She then discusses the forecast rainfall totals for the 7 days.
  - ii. She asks to hear from committee members before any vote of postponement in areas that have not received rain yet and those who are not forecast to get as much rain as the Northern portion of South Carolina.

1. The current forecast for the Midlands and Pee Dee regions shows lower totals, and those areas have been dry. The areas that have been in incipient and moderate drought conditions are forecast to receive 3 inches or more from this event.
- i. David Evans, West DMA Industry, asks when the next meeting would be if the current meeting was to be postponed.
- j. Hope (SCDNR) responds that we could meet again next Thursday (October 3<sup>rd</sup>), whether we postpone the meeting or if we proceed with the meeting today (given how much rain the state will get from this event).
- k. David Evans, West DMA Industry, asks to hear from committee members along the coastal areas.
1. Jason Thompson Southern DMA Commission of Public Works, states that the coastal area will likely only receive 1 to 2 inches. But given that over the last 3-months rainfall totals have been generally reliant on tropical storms for precipitation, it's been pretty dry. During the last call, conditions were dry. He was fine with postponing the meeting for a week, but given the forecast, it would not make substantial changes in dry conditions. Regardless of where we continue the meeting today or postpone to next week, there is a lot of data indicating the need to go to incipient drought status across the southern DMA. He is interested in what the other members from the Southern DMA are thinking.
- m. Hope (SCDNR) states that Marion Rizer, Southern DMA Soil and Water Conservation District, state through email that conditions in some of the Southern DMA counties are experiencing incipient level dryness, but it would be good to postpone the call given the forecast.
- n. Joe Ghent, Northeast DMA Soil and Water Conservation District says Lancaster, Kershaw, and Chesterfield counties are in decent shape from rain over the past few weeks.
- o. Alan Watkins, Northeast DMA Counties, says Lee County is currently dry, as Lee County missed the rain that came through with Potential Tropical Cyclone #8 (PTC8). He is not opposed to waiting another week. Some areas may need to be moved to incipient drought status as well.
- p. Hope (SCDNR) states that whether we postpone or go through with the meeting today, it is based on what the committee decides. However, it was worth making a decision for the entire committee, rather than postponing the decision for some DMAs and continuing today's meeting with other DMAs.
- q. Landrum Weathers, Southern DMA Agriculture, agrees with Jason Thompson (Southern DMA) and his assessment of current conditions and the amount rainfall that the Southern DMA has received. Looking at the current forecast, an inch or two of rain is not going to make much of a difference for the current rainfall deficits. Regardless of if we postpone or not, he does not feel that conditions are

not going to change that much. He stated that he wants the committee to take a snapshot of the current conditions, specifically for current agricultural conditions across the state. If the committee wants to postpone, he okay with that, but his opinion is that the committee to look to capture current conditions.

- r. Hope (SCDNR) recognizes that this is a tough decision to make given the current dry conditions and the wide range of rainfall from the current forecast.
- s. some areas will receive a ton of rain, and others will receive very little rain.
- t. Ken (SCDNR) asks if anyone is adamantly opposed to postponing the meeting.
  - i. No members indicate adamant opposition.
- u. Hope, SCDNR, asks for input from the state agency members.
- v. Sam Quinney (SC Department of Agriculture (SCDA)) agrees with Landrum Weathers and Jason Thompson (both Southern DMA). While the West DMA is currently the driest area in the state, the forecast does indicate that this DMA will receive the most rainfall. Since it is a forecast and not a guarantee, he thinks it would be best to capture current conditions rather than postponing a week.
- w. Darryl Jones (SC Forestry Commission (SCFC)) says that the committee could continue the meeting today to discuss conditions but given the forecast, much of the data will be subject to change. From a forestry perspective, this rainfall will take us from a place of concern to little concern, especially if the forecast verifies in the mountains and piedmont areas. He expresses that he is fine postponing or continuing the meeting.
- x. Joe Koon (SC Department of Environmental Services (SCDES)) says it is reasonable to postpone the meeting by a week. While the concerns of the Southern and Coastal areas are legitimate, looking at conditions from a whole-state perspective, it would be reasonable to postpone one week to assess conditions after the rainfall happens.
- y. Hope (SCDNR) asks Ken if we should call for a vote.
- z. Ken, SCDNR, states we should take a vote to either postpone until next Thursday or continue this meeting.

aa. **Motion**

- i. Ken (SCDNR) calls for a motion to postpone the meeting until next Thursday (October 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2024).
  - 1. Preston Pierce, West DMA Power Generation Facilities, 1<sup>st</sup>
  - 2. John Irwin, Central DMA Agriculture, 2<sup>nd</sup>
- ii. The motion passes unanimously.
- iii. The meeting is postponed until next Thursday, October 3<sup>rd</sup> at 11:00am.

bb. Hope (SCDNR) gives an update on the license plates process.

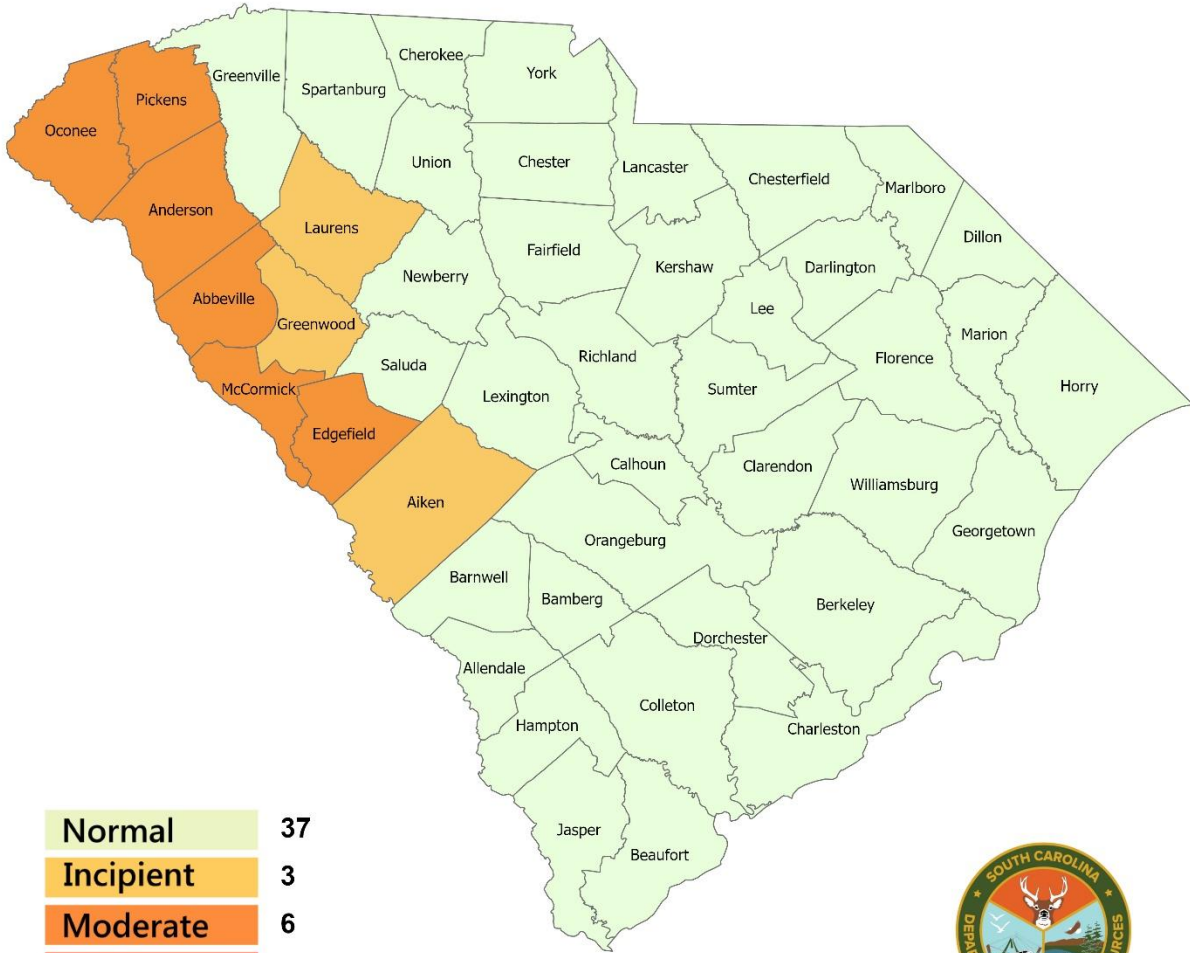
cc. **Motion to Adjourn**

- i. Ken (SCDNR) calls for a motion to adjourn.
  - 1. Alan Stuart, Central DMA Power Generation Facilities, 1<sup>st</sup>

2. Joe Ghent, Northeast DMA Soil and Water Conservation District,  
2<sup>nd</sup>

dd. The motion passes unanimously. The meeting is adjourned.

### Drought Status: 09-25-2024



Normal	37
Incipient	3
Moderate	6
Severe	0
Extreme	0

Number of counties in each category.



SC Department of Natural Resources  
State Climate Office

<b>Committee Members</b>	<b>Group</b>	<b>Attendance 9/25/2024</b>
<b>West DMA</b>		
Reg Williams	Agriculture	
Cheryl Daniels	Commission of Public Works	<b>X</b>
Mark Warner	Counties	<b>X</b>
Eric Carrier	Domestic User	
David Evans	Industry	<b>X</b>
Lynn McEwen	Municipalities	Appointment Pend.
Preston Pierce	Power Generation Facilities	<b>X</b>
J. Scott Willett	Private Water Supplier	<b>X</b>
Chris Rasco	Public Service District	<b>X</b>
Rick Green	Regional Council of Gov.	
Yvonne Kling	Soil and Water Conservation Dist.	<b>X</b>
Brian Chemsak	Special Purpose District	<b>X</b>
<b>Central DMA</b>		
John Irwin	Agriculture	<b>X</b>
Ken Tuck	Commission of Public Works	
Peggy Swearingen	Counties	<b>X</b>
Christy Jones	Domestic User	
Ed Holder	Industry	
James G. Bagley	Municipalities	<b>X</b>
Alan Stuart	Power Generation Facilities	<b>X</b>
Brad C. Powers	Private Water Supplier	<b>X</b>
	Public Service District	VACANT
Gregory Sprouse	Regional Council of Gov.	<b>X</b>
John T. Rivers	Soil and Water Conservation Dist.	
Fred Castles	Special Purpose District	

<b>Northeast DMA</b>		
Caleb Miller	Agriculture	
	Commission of Public Works	VACANT
Karolan Ohanesian	Domestic User	
Athena Strickland	Industry	<b>X</b>
Clint Elliott	Municipality	
	Power Generation Facilities	VACANT
	Private Water Supplier	VACANT
Alan Watkins	Counties	<b>X</b>
Elbert Warren	Public Service District	<b>X</b>
Lindsay Privette	Regional Council of Gov.	
Joe Ghent	Soil and Water Conservation Dist.	<b>X</b>
Nathan Ward	Special Purpose District	Appointment Pend.
<b>Southern DMA</b>		
Landrum Weathers	Agriculture	<b>X</b>
Jason Thompson	Commission of Public Works	<b>X</b>
Larry Harper	Counties	Appointment Pend.
Chris Wallace	Domestic User	Appointment Pend.
Chris Muckenfuss	Industry	Appointment Pend.
Eric Odom	Municipalities	<b>X</b>
Matt McCants	Power Generation Facilities	
	Private Water Supplier	VACANT
Russell Cornette	Public Service District	Appointment Pend.
Ronald E. Mitchum	Regional Council of Gov.	

Marion L. Rizer	Soil and Water Conservation Dist.	
	Special Purpose District	VACANT
<b>State Agency Members</b>		
Ken Rentiers	SCDNR, LWC Division	<b>X</b>
Dave Thachik	SC Emergency Management Divis.	
Joe Koon	SC Dept. of Environ. Services	<b>X</b>
Darryl Jones	SC Forestry Commission	<b>X</b>
Sam Quinney	SC Department of Agriculture	<b>X</b>
<b>Other Participants</b>		
Hope Mizzell	SCDNR	<b>X</b>
Elliot Wickham	SCDNR	<b>X</b>
Alyssa Paguaga	SCDNR	<b>X</b>
Scott Harder	SCDES	<b>X</b>
Cody Simpson	SC Governor's Office	<b>X</b>
Kailyn Wrihten	FSA	<b>X</b>
Glenn Thomas	FSA	<b>X</b>