

## **Drought Response Committee Conference Call**

**Date: October 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2024**

**Time: 11:00 a.m.**

A Drought Response Committee Conference Call was conducted at 11:00 a.m., October 3, 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) opens the meeting. He announces that the meeting is being recorded.
- b. Ken (SCDNR) reads the Freedom of Information Statement.
- c. Ken (SCDNR) asked for a moment of silence to honor those affected by Hurricane Helene.
- d. Hope (SCDNR) does a roll call and checks each DMA for a quorum.
  - i. If there is not a quorum, a vote would not be able to be cast.
  - ii. Every DMA has a quorum.
- e. Ken (SCDNR) states that we have a quorum.
- f. Motion to approve minutes**
  - i. Ken (SCDNR) offers a motion to approve the minutes from the last meeting.
    1. Motion carried
- g. Hope (SCDNR) let the DRC know that Elliot will be moving to NOAA. She congratulated him on this next big chapter, and he will be greatly missed. Ken (SCDNR) also took the time to commend Elliot for his hard work.
- h. Hope (SCDNR) shared a brief update on the license tags for DMA.
- i. Hope (SCDNR) introduces the agenda for today.
- j. Hope (SCDNR) shares the [scdrought.com](http://scdrought.com) website.

### **II. PowerPoint Presentation**

- a. Hope (SCDNR) shares the drought status as of the last meeting.
- b. Hope (SCDNR) Discusses:
  - i. The 60-day Percent of Normal (8/4-10/2)
    1. She notes that the rainfall is normal.
  - ii. The 30-day Percent of Normal (9/3-10/2)
    1. She notes that the rainfall is mostly normal, and notes heavy rainfall due to Hurricane Helene.
  - iii. The 30-day Precipitation Clemson Tempest Station Data as of 10/2
    1. She notes that these are automated stations.
  - iv. The 30-day SPI graph. (9/23-10/23)

- v. Helene Rainfall Graphic
  - 1. She notes the rainfall totals during the hurricane, the upstate received the most.
  - 2. She also notes the rainfall totals from past hurricanes to compare totals. (1956-2024)
  - 3. She notes that Hurricane Debby and Helene were both in 2024 and are both high-ranking in rainfall totals.
- vi. The CoCoRaHS data for the West DMA from the last meeting (9/24) until now.
- vii. The CoCoRaHS data for the Central DMA from the last meeting (9/24) until now.
- viii. The CoCoRaHS data for the Southern DMA from the last meeting (9/24) until now.
- ix. The CoCoRaHS data for the Northeast DMA from the last meeting (9/24) until now.
- c. Hope (SCDNR) discusses the U.S. Drought Monitor, valid as of October 3<sup>rd</sup>
  - i. She notes the drastic changes from July to October, showing how we went from extreme drought to being drought-free.
  - ii. There was a three-level downgrade of drought due to Helene rainfall.
- d. Hope (SCDNR) Current Crop Moisture Index (CMI)
- e. Hope (SCDNR) discusses the Current Palmer Drought Severity Index (PDSI).
- f. Scott Harder, SC Department of Environmental Services (SCDES), discusses the 14-day average Streamflow graph.
  - i. He notes the dramatic change of streamflow from the last meeting compared to now.
  - ii. The Black River Sub Basin is the only one with still low numbers.
- g. Scott Harder (SCDES) discusses the Regulatory Standards Streamflow graph.
  - i. He notes that it shows no drought.
- h. Scott Harder (SCDES) discusses the Streamflow table.
  - i. He notes that it shows no drought, but the Black River Sub Basin does indicate drought conditions.
- i. Scott Harder (SCDES) discusses the streamflow in each DMA.
  - i. The Northeast DMA.
    - 1. The levels are well above normal.
  - ii. The West DMA.
    - 1. The levels are well above normal.
  - iii. The Central DMA.
    - 1. The levels are well above normal.
  - iv. The Southern DMA
    - 1. The levels are well above normal.

- j. Scott Harder (SCDES) displays the Lake and Reservoir Levels across the state as of October 2<sup>nd</sup>
  - i. He notes that many lake levels have risen due to Hurricane Helene. Many lakes are moving out of drought status.
  - ii. He notes the projections for Lake Hartwell; they are projecting the levels to go up and be stable for the coming months.
- k. Scott Harder (SCDES) then shows the groundwater levels across the state.
  - i. He notes that the state shows normal and above-normal areas.
- l. Scott Harder (SCDES) discusses the groundwater levels in Each DMA
  - i. Northeast DMA:
    - 1. He notes that levels remain elevated and above normal.
  - ii. Central DMA:
    - 1. He notes that Laurens County is responding well, but Greenville County showed a lag time in levels due to changes in climate conditions.
  - iii. West DMA:
    - 1. He notes they are under normal conditions.
  - iv. Southern DMA:
    - 1. He notes they are under normal conditions.
- m. Sam Quinney mentioned that though he had to leave early, he was prepared to move all counties to normal status.

### **III. State Agency Reports**

- a. Tommy Mills, who is filling in for Darryl Jones, SC Forestry Commission (SCFC), discusses the KBDI Station Values
  - i. Earlier this week, there was a burn ban due to Helene, but as of this morning, several counties had the ban lifted.
- b. Joe Koon (SCDES) states there are no water supply issues now.

### **IV. Short- and Long- Term Forecasts**

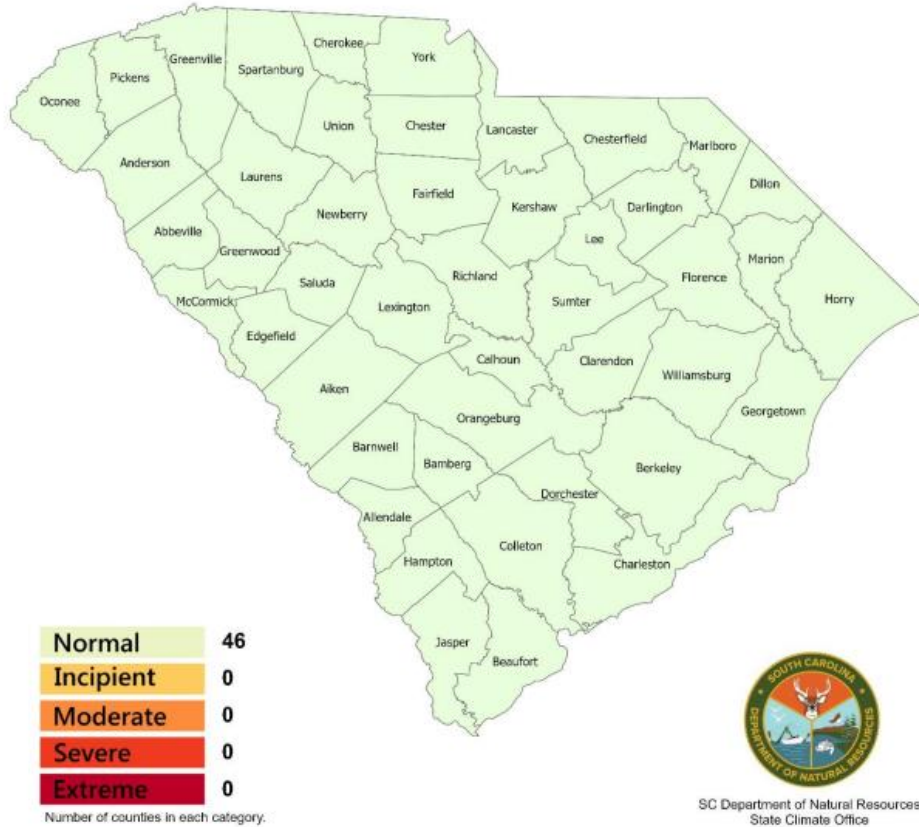
- a. Hope (SCDNR) discusses:
  - i. The 7-day precipitation forecast.
    - 1. Dry forecast statewide. This is a good thing, considering the heavy rainfall from Hurricane Helene.
  - ii. The 6–10-day temperature outlook.
    - 1. Temperatures will be below normal and dryer in upstate and normal for the rest of the state.
  - iii. The CPC 3-month outlook.
    - 1. Equal chances. October and November normally are our driest months, and it looks like that will happen again.
  - iv. The Drought Outlook provided by NOAA.
    - 1. Drought removal is likely to happen.

## V. Open Discussion and Vote

- a. Hope (SCDNR) opens the floor to open discussion. No discussion was made.
- b. West DMA
  - i. Motion:
    1. Officially called by Ken Rentiers (SCDNR)
    2. Motion: Return all West DMA counties to Normal.
    3. Preston Pierce, DMA Power Generation Facilities, 1<sup>st</sup>
    4. Scott Willett, Private Water Supplier, 2<sup>nd</sup>
    5. Members of the West DMA unanimously agreed on the motion.
- c. Central DMA
  - i. Motion:
    1. Officially called by Ken Rentiers (SCDNR)
    2. Motion: Return all Central DMA counties to Normal.
    3. Peggy Swearingen, Counties, 1<sup>st</sup>
    4. Brad Powers, Private Water Supplier, 2<sup>nd</sup>
    5. Members of the Central DMA unanimously agreed on the motion.
- d. Southern DMA starts
  - i. Motion
    1. Officially called by Ken Rentiers (SCDNR)
    2. Motion: Return all Southern DMA counties to Normal.
    3. Eric Odom, Municipalities, 1<sup>st</sup>
    4. Jason Thompson, Commission of Public Works, 2<sup>nd</sup>
    5. Members of the Southern DMA unanimously agreed on the motion.
- e. Northeastern DMA
  - i. Motion:
    1. Officially called by Ken Rentiers (SCDNR)
    2. Motion: Return all Northeastern DMA counties to Normal.
    3. Karolan Ohanesian, Domestic User, 1<sup>st</sup>
    4. Athena Strickland, Industry, 2<sup>nd</sup>
    5. Members of the Northeastern DMA unanimously agreed on the motion.
- f. Future Drought Response Committee Meetings
  - i. Hope appreciates everyone's dedication over the last few months dealing with drought in the state. Still, she would like to propose continuing their monthly meetings. She also proposed the idea of doing additional trainings in those meetings.
  - ii. The next proposed date would be November 6<sup>th</sup>, but that is subject to change.
  - iii. Motion to Adjourn:

1. Officially Called by Ken Rentiers (SCDNR)
2. Eric Odom, Municipalities, 1<sup>st</sup>
3. Karolan Ohanesian, Domestic User, 2<sup>nd</sup>
- iv. Meeting has been adjourned.

### Drought Status: 10-03-2024



**Media contact: Stephen Fastenau, Office of External Affairs, 803-240-4385,  
[fastenaus@dnr.sc.gov](mailto:fastenaus@dnr.sc.gov).**

<b>Committee Members</b>	<b>Group</b>	<b>Attendance 10/3/2024</b>
<b>West DMA</b>		
Reg Williams	Agriculture	
Cheryl Daniels	Commission of Public Works	
Mark Warner	Counties	
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>XX</b>
Chris Rasco	Public Service District	<b>X</b>
Rick Green	Regional Council of Gov.	
Yvonne Kling	Soil and Water Conservation Dist.	
Brian Chemsak	Special Purpose District	<b>X</b>
<b>Central DMA</b>		
John Irwin	Agriculture	
Ken Tuck	Commission of Public Works	
Peggy Swearingen	Counties	
Christy Jones	Domestic User	<b>X</b>
Ed Holder	Industry	<b>X</b>
James G. Bagley	Municipalities	
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.	<b>X</b>

Fred Castles	Special Purpose District	
<b>Northeast DMA</b>		
Caleb Miller	Agriculture	
	Commission of Public Works	VACANT
Karolan Ohanesian	Domestic User	<b>X</b>
Athena Strickland	Industry	<b>X</b>
Clint Elliott	Municipality	<b>X</b>
	Power Generation Facilities	VACANT
	Private Water Supplier	VACANT
Alan Watkins	Counties	<b>X</b>
Elbert Warren	Public Service District	
Lindsay Privette	Regional Council of Gov.	<b>x</b>
Joe Ghent	Soil and Water Conservation Dist.	
Nathan Ward	Special Purpose District	Appointment Pend. <b>X</b>
<b>Southern DMA</b>		
	Agriculture	VACANT
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	<b>X</b>
	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>
Jordan Baker	SCDNR	<b>X</b>
Scott Harder	SCDES	<b>X</b>
Alexis Modzelesky	SCDES	<b>X</b>
Michael Wright	SC Farm Bureau	
Lynn Dunn	Duke Energy	
Denise Bunte-Bisnett	Santee-Cooper	
Brandon Lambert	FSA	
Glenn Thomas	FSA	
Brice Shuler	FSA	
Bobby Jo		
The Seneca Journal		