

## **Drought Response Committee Conference Call**

**Date: June 24, 2025**

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

A Drought Response Committee Conference Call was conducted at 10:00 a.m., June 24, 2025. 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 and reads the agenda.
  - i. Members of the South Carolina State Climatology Office announced that this meeting will be the last with their research intern, Alyssa Paguaga, who is moving on to pursue her master's degree. They send their congratulations and wish her well.
  - ii. Ken (SCDNR) makes notice that this meeting is being recorded.
- b. Hope Mizzell (SCDNR) does the Drought Committee roll call.
  - i. There is not enough for a quorum in the Central Drought Management Area (DMA). All other DMAs have enough members present for a vote.
  - ii. She also does a roll call of state agency members.
- c. Hope (SCDNR) puts forth a motion to approve the minutes from the last meeting, which took place on May 22<sup>nd</sup>.
  - i. Scott Willett, 1<sup>st</sup>
  - ii. Jason Thompson, 2<sup>nd</sup>
  - iii. Motion passes unanimously. Minutes have been approved.

### **II. PowerPoint Presentation**

- a. Hope (SCDNR) begins the presentation.
  - i. Overall, the state has had a lot of rain over the last 30 days, but in some areas, there was too much rain. Some locations had rainfall that averaged 6-8 inches above normal.
  - ii. Over the last 60 days, most of the state has received above average rainfall. Throughout the last 90 days, precipitation is also around average.
  - iii. According to PDSI and CMI maps, conditions are looking normal to above normal, throughout the state.
  - iv. Given the 30-day SPI map, there are a few locations that are showing incipient drought, but most locations are around normal.

- v. As of last week, per the U.S. Drought Monitor (USDM), the entire state of South Carolina is drought-free for the first time since October 2024.
- vi. Hope (SCDNR) displays the Tempest Data from Clemson.
- vii. She then shows the CoCoRAHS totals for each of the drought management areas.
  - 1. The rainfall varies by county, but most locations are at normal or above average precipitation throughout the last 30 and 60 days.

b. State Agency Reports

- i. Alexis Modzelesky (DES) begins her slides with streamflow percentiles. Nearly the entire state's streamflow levels are normal. There is no drought indicated via the streamflow.
  - 1. Most locations are looking great, especially given this time of year.
  - 2. Lake levels are normal.
  - 3. Most groundwater levels are within the normal range.
- ii. Hope (SCDNR) shows the KBDI values from the SC Forestry Commission. They are not concerned about fire activity at this time.
- iii. She also displays weekly reports from the USDA over the last two weeks.
- iv. She asks if any other state agencies have reports, which Sam Quinney from the SC Department of Agriculture says they are closely monitoring recent rising temperatures and decreased rainfall.

c. PowerPoint Presentation

- i. Hope (SCDNR) presents the short- and long- term forecasts. The state is expected to receive more rainfall.
  - 1. Per NOAA, they are calling for above normal temperatures, but a higher likelihood of precipitation through the next 6- to 10- days. The 3-month outlook is an extension of the current predictions.
  - 2. Frank Alsheimer from the NWS office in Columbia says we are entering a typical summer pattern, where some areas may receive a lot of rain at once, but other areas may not receive any at all. Temperatures are on the rise across the state. He also comments on the NOAA Long-Term Outlooks, which include the possibility of increasing tropical activity in late summer.

### **III. Open Discussion and Vote**

- a. Hope (SCDNR) discusses the potential of pushing forward the next drought committee meeting so long as conditions remain stable. Meetings can take place as needed with ideally no less than two weeks notice.
- b. West DMA
  - i. Scott Willett believes they should remain under normal conditions across the area. Everyone agrees, and a motion is put in place.
  - ii. Motion: All counties remain in a normal drought declaration.
    - 1. Scott Willett, 1<sup>st</sup>
    - 2. Mark Warner, 2<sup>nd</sup>
  - iii. Motion passes unanimously.
- c. Southern DMA
  - i. Jason Thompson says they have received a lot of rain in the Charleston area, with some areas reaching flood-stage levels. He supports a vote to move the area back to a normal declaration.
    - 1. Russell Cornette agrees.
  - ii. Landrum Weathers says most of the area received rain, but there are some areas that did not receive as much. They should keep an eye on future conditions given the rising temperatures.
  - iii. Motion: All counties move to or remain in a normal drought declaration.
    - 1. Jason Thompson, 1<sup>st</sup>
    - 2. Eric Odom, 2<sup>nd</sup>
  - iv. Motion passes unanimously.
- d. Northeast DMA
  - i. Clint Elliott believes the area has received enough rain to move back to a normal drought declaration. They can revisit in the future if needed.
    - 1. Karolan Ohanesian agrees.
  - ii. Joe Ghent believes they are getting drier, but for the time being, they can move to or remain at normal.
  - iii. Motion: All counties move to or remain in a normal drought declaration.
    - 1. Clint Elliott, 1<sup>st</sup>
    - 2. Karolan Ohanesian, 2<sup>nd</sup>
- e. Central DMA

- i. There are not enough present members for a quorum, but a discussion can still take place.
- ii. Hope (SCDNR) does not want to keep Georgetown County in drought, although a vote cannot take place. She invites a possibility of hosting a meeting with just the Central DMA members.
- iii. Fred Castles would also like a meeting, but he is comfortable with the current declaration.
  1. Ken Tuck agrees, but he is keeping an eye on the Landrum facility due to lowering water levels. They are hoping for some more rain.
  2. Ed Holder agrees. Christy Jones does not see any signs of drought within the Midlands.
- iv. The Central DMA convened at 4:45 pm on June 24. A quorum was reached and members voted that all counties would move to or remain in no drought.

#### IV. Closing Remarks

- a. Hope (SCDNR) suggests dates for a future meeting. The next meeting may take place on Wednesday, July 23<sup>rd</sup> or Tuesday, August 5<sup>th</sup>.
- b. Ken (SCDNR) puts forth a motion to adjourn:
  - i. Clint Elliott, 1<sup>st</sup>
  - ii. Karolan Ohanesian, 2<sup>nd</sup>
- c. Meeting is adjourned.

Committee Members	Group	Attendance 06/24/2025
<b>West DMA</b>		
Reg Williams	Agriculture	
Cheryl Daniels	Commission of Public Works	<b>X</b>
Mark Warner	Counties	<b>X</b>
	Domestic User	VACANT
David Evans	Industry	
Lynn McEwen	Municipalities	<b>X</b>
Preston Pierce	Power Generation Facilities	
J. Scott Willett	Private Water Supplier	<b>X</b>
Chris Rasco	Public Service District	

Rick Green	Regional Council of Gov.	<b>X</b>
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	
Ken Tuck	Commission of Public Works	<b>X</b>
Peggy Swearingen	Counties	
Christy Jones	Domestic User	<b>X</b>
Ed Holder	Industry	<b>X</b>
James G. Bagley	Municipalities	<b>X</b>
Alan Stuart	Power Generation Facilities	
Brad C. Powers	Private Water Supplier	<b>X</b>
	Public Service District	VACANT
Gregory Sprouse	Regional Council of Gov.	
John T. Rivers	Soil and Water Conservation Dist.	
Fred Castles	Special Purpose District	<b>X</b>
<b>Northeast DMA</b>		
Caleb Miller	Agriculture	
	Commission of Public Works	VACANT
Karolan Ohanesian	Domestic User	<b>X</b>
Athena Strickland	Industry	
Clint Elliott	Municipality	<b>X</b>
	Power Generation Facilities	VACANT
	Private Water Supplier	VACANT
Alan Watkins	Counties	
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	<b>X</b>
<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	
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	<b>X</b>
Ronald E. Mitchum	Regional Council of Gov.	
Marion L. Rizer	Soil and Water Conservation Dist.	<b>X</b>
	Special Purpose District	VACANT
<b>State Agency Members</b>		
Ken Rentiers	SCDNR, LWC Division	<b>X</b>
Jordan Van Delden	SC Emergency Management Divis.	
Alexis Modzelesky	SC Dept. of Environ. Services	<b>X</b>
Darryl Joness	SC Forestry Commission	
Sam Quinney	SC Department of Agriculture	<b>X</b>
<b>Other Participants</b>		
Hope Mizzell	SCDNR, LWC Division	<b>X</b>
Melissa Griffin	SCDNR, LWC Division	<b>X</b>
Alyssa Paguaga	SCDNR, LWC Division	<b>X</b>
Frank Alsheimer	NWS Columbia	<b>X</b>
Scott Harder	SCDES	<b>X</b>
Cheyenne Twilley	SCDNR	<b>X</b>