

Drought Response Committee Conference Call

Date: August 4, 2025

Time: 2:00 p.m.

A Drought Response Committee Conference Call was conducted at 2:00 p.m., August 4, 2025. Notice of the date, time, and call-in information was posted and provided on the 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. Ken (SCDNR) makes notice that this meeting is being recorded.
- b. Hope Mizzell (SCDNR) conducts the Drought Committee roll call.
 - i. Hope introduces new Water Resources Climatologist Jennifer Simmons.
 - ii. There is not enough for a quorum in the Northwest and Southern Drought Management Area (DMA). All other DMAs have enough members present for a vote.
 - iii. She does a roll call of state agency members.
 - iv. No media on the call.
- c. Ken (SCDNR) puts forth a motion to approve the minutes from the last meeting, which took place on June 24th.
 - i. Daryl Jones, 1st
 - ii. Mark Warner, 2nd
 - iii. Motion passes unanimously. Minutes have been approved.

II. PowerPoint Presentation

- a. Hope (SCDNR) begins with the presentation.
 - i. Drought free last June!
 - ii. Summer heat and highest temperature in Columbia at USC 107 degrees (July 27, 2025). NWS GSP broke their record for consecutive days ≥ 90 .
 - iii. Overall, the state has had a lot of rain over the last week.
 - iv. Over the last 60 days, precipitation has improved slightly in the Upstate. Summer rainfall has been scattered and varied throughout the state. Throughout the last 90 days, precipitation is near to above normal throughout much of the state.

- v. According to PDSI and CMI maps, conditions are not showing much drought in the state especially due to recent rainfall this weekend.
- vi. Given the 30-day SPI map, there are a few locations with some incipient drought primarily in the Upstate.
- vii. As for the US Drought Monitor (USDM), D0 and D1 were added to the Upstate in July. Recent rain should improve the USDM status over the next few weeks.
- viii. Hope (SCDNR) displays the Tempest Data from Clemson. Midlands showing the most rain with 5-8" over 30 day period. Many conditions have changed over the past few days due to the rainfall over the weekend.
- ix. She shows the CoCoRaHS totals for each of the drought management areas.
 - 1. The rainfall varies by county, but most locations 5-10". Very scattered across the counties and throughout the DMAs. A lot of variability throughout individual counties.

b. State Agency Reports

- i. Alexis Modzelesky (DES) begins her slides with 14-Day average streamflow percentiles. Nearly the entire state's streamflow levels are normal, except for some dry areas in the upstate. However, improvement is expected after the weekend's rainfall (graphics in the slides are from August 1). There is no drought indicated via the streamflow.
 - 1. Most locations look great, especially given this time of year.
 - 2. More rain throughout this week should continue to improve conditions.
 - 3. Overall, lake levels are at target levels. If inflow continues below normal, Lake Hartwell may reach Level 1 drought in 10 weeks.
 - 4. Groundwater levels are mostly normal to well above normal with a slight decline in some wells in Northern DMA and West DMA.
- ii. Darryl Jones (SC Forestry Commission) presented KDI. Rainfall has lowered KBDI values. High humidity and rainfall have decreased the number of fires.
- iii. Additional Input from State Agencies
 - 1. SC Dept of Environmental Services – No issues

2. SC Dept of Agriculture monitoring drier conditions across the Upstate.
3. Hope displays weekly reports from the USDA over the last two weeks.
4. She asks if any other state agencies have reports.

c. PowerPoint Presentation

- i. Hope (SCDNR) presents the short- and long- term forecasts. The state is expected to receive rainfall across the entire state - ½” to up to 3”, with higher totals possible in localized areas.
 1. Per NHC, monitoring tropical feature off the coast of SC/GA. Regardless of final feature, this may bring precipitation to portions of the state. Tropics are becoming active.
 2. normal temperatures and above normal precipitation (6-10 day outlook). 3 Month CPC outlook – above normal temperatures and above normal rainfall. Seasonal drought outlook showing no drought.
 3. Frank Alsheimer (NWS Columbia) says sea service temperatures are above normal. Higher likelihood rainfall will be above normal in August.

III. Open Discussion and Vote

- a. Hope (SCDNR) – No drought status statewide. The question is has the State received enough rain to remain in no drought status?

b. West DMA

- i. Mark Warner– No reason to make changes.
- ii. Preston Pierce – Normal status with recent rain and rain in the forecast. Agrees no reason for change in drought.
- iii. Bryan Chemsak – Above normal rain has been received in the lower portions of the basin.
- iv. Motion: All counties remain in a normal, no drought declaration.
 1. Preston Pierce, 1st
 2. Mark Warner, 2nd
- v. Motion passes unanimously. No drought status for entire West DMA.

c. Southern DMA

- i. There are not enough members present for a quorum, but a discussion can still take place.
- ii. Rus Cornette and other Southern DMA members agree that the rainfall and other indicators suggest that we remain in no drought.

- iii. Motion: No changes made to drought status due to lack of members present for a quorum.

d. Northeast DMA

- i. There are not enough members present for a quorum, but a discussion can still take place.
- ii. Members agree that there are no indicators that any areas within the Northeast DMA should go into drought status.
- iii. Motion: No changes made due to lack of present members for a quorum.

e. Central DMA

- i. Jon Irwin: Needs to stay where we are with no drought. Rainfall has helped and it has helped agricultural conditions.
- ii. Ken Tuck: Even with increased precipitation expected this week, drier than normal conditions in July coupled with the heat wave, resulted in increased water demand and significant evaporation from Lake Bowen, Spartanburg's largest drinking water supply reservoir. He requested the Committee upgrade Spartanburg to incipient drought to raise awareness of drought conditions and potential impacts if we return to a period of below normal rainfall and above normal temperatures.
- iii. Brad Powers: Northern part of Greenville – showers have been spotty in Northern Greenville.
- iv. Fred Castles: 4-5" of rain this past month. Concerned that there is no ponding in fields, it wouldn't take much to dry out.
- v. Motion: Motion made to move Spartanburg County into incipient drought status. All other counties remain in no drought status
 - 1. Ken Tuck, 1st
 - 2. Brad Powers, 2nd
- vi. Motion passes unanimously.

IV. Closing Remarks

- a. Hope (SCDNR) suggests dates for a future meeting. The next meeting will take place on August 20th at 10 a.m.
- b. Ken (SCDNR) puts forth a motion to adjourn:
 - i. Mark Warner, 1st
 - ii. Jon Irwin, 2nd
- c. Meeting is adjourned at 3:07 p.m. on August 4th.

Committee Members	Group	Attendance 08/04/2025
West DMA		
Reg Williams	Agriculture	
Cheryl Daniels	Commission of Public Works	X
Mark Warner	Counties	X
	Domestic User	VACANT
David Evans	Industry	
Lynn McEwen	Municipalities	X
Preston Pierce	Power Generation Facilities	X
J. Scott Willett	Private Water Supplier	
Chris Rasco	Public Service District	
Rick Green	Regional Council of Gov.	X
Yvonne Kling	Soil and Water Conservation Dist.	X
Brian Chemsak	Special Purpose District	X
Central DMA		
John Irwin	Agriculture	X
Ken Tuck	Commission of Public Works	X
Peggy Swearingen	Counties	
Christy Jones	Domestic User	X
Ed Holder	Industry	X
James G. Bagley	Municipalities	
Alan Stuart	Power Generation Facilities	X
Brad C. Powers	Private Water Supplier	X
	Public Service District	VACANT
Gregory Sprouse	Regional Council of Gov.	X
John T. Rivers	Soil and Water Conservation Dist.	X
Fred Castles	Special Purpose District	X
Northeast DMA		
Caleb Miller	Agriculture	
	Commission of Public Works	VACANT
Karolan Ohanesian	Domestic User	
Athena Strickland	Industry	X

Clint Elliott	Municipality	
	Power Generation Facilities	VACANT
	Private Water Supplier	VACANT
Alan Watkins	Counties	
Elbert Warren	Public Service District	X
Lindsay Privette	Regional Council of Gov.	X
Joe Ghent	Soil and Water Conservation Dist.	
Nathan Ward	Special Purpose District	X
Southern DMA		
Landrum Weathers	Agriculture	
Jason Thompson	Commission of Public Works	
Larry Harper	Counties	
Chris Wallace	Domestic User	
Chris Muckenfuss	Industry	
Eric Odom	Municipalities	X
Matt McCants	Power Generation Facilities	X
	Private Water Supplier	VACANT
Russell Cornette	Public Service District	X
Ronald E. Mitchum	Regional Council of Gov.	
Marion L. Rizer	Soil and Water Conservation Dist.	
	Special Purpose District	VACANT
State Agency Members		
Ken Rentiers	SCDNR, LWC Division	X
Jordan Van Delden	SC Emergency Management Divis.	X
Alexis Modzelesky	SC Dept. of Environ. Services	X
Joe Koon	SC Dept. of Environ. Services	X
Daryl Jones	SC Forestry Commission	X
Sam Quinney	SC Department of Agriculture	X
Hope Mizzell	SCDNR, LWC Division	X
Melissa Griffin	SCDNR, LWC Division	X
Jennifer Simmons	SCDNR, LWC Division	X
Frank Alsheimer	NWS Columbia	X

Scott Harder	SCDES	
Cheyenne Twilley	SCDNR	