

## **Drought Response Committee Conference Call**

**Date: August 20, 2025**

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

A Drought Response Committee Conference Call was conducted at 10:00 p.m., August 20, 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. Ken (SCDNR) makes notice that this meeting is being recorded.
- b. Hope Mizzell (SCDNR) conducts the Drought Committee roll call.
  - i. There is not enough for a quorum in the Southern Drought Management Area (DMA). All other DMAs have enough members present for a vote.
  - ii. She does a roll call of state agency members.
  - iii. No media on the call.
- c. Ken (SCDNR) puts forth a motion to approve the minutes from the last meeting, which took place on August 4<sup>th</sup>.
  - i. Joe Ghent, 1<sup>st</sup>
  - ii. Alan Watkins, 2<sup>nd</sup>
  - iii. Motion passes unanimously. Minutes have been approved.

### **II. PowerPoint Presentation**

- a. Hope (SCDNR) begins with the presentation.
  - i. There was plentiful rainfall across the state over the last 30- & 60-day time frame. In the 60-day graphics, upstate and coastal South Carolina was the wettest portion with 10-15" + of rain in the 60-day precipitation totals. Not much of state is showing below normal precipitation. Few isolated pockets showing up as just below normal and trending dry.
  - ii. 30-day SPI – most of state showing normal.
  - iii. Previous USDM graphics from the last 6 weeks show slow return to drought free across SC.
  - iv. Clemson Tempest – Showing variation, but widespread rainfall across the state since the last meeting, August 4<sup>th</sup>.

- v. 30 Day CoCoRaHS – West DMA has received 5 to 12” rain across the region, with a few high rainfall totals. Central DMA – City of Spartanburg received 10”, but most of the county received at least 5”. Southern DMA – Slightly drier, but still up to 10” across some counties. Northern DMA – 5 to 10” across the region, with some locations approaching 15”.

b. State Agency Reports

- i. Alexis Modzelesky (DES) – Streamflow shows a lot of rain events across the state, with many locations at above normal to high across the state, especially central portion.
  - 1. Regulatory standards. 14-day and 28-day percentiles show no drought.
  - 2. Gauges show rain and a lot of wetness, with high percentiles. Look good across all DMAs.
  - 3. Reservoirs – all lakes within normal conditions statewide. Hartwell is projecting lower inflows, but not reaching level 1 drought.
  - 4. Groundwater showing recharge and looks good statewide.
  - 5. Most state wells within normal range, but Greenville well starting to dip just below normal level.
- ii. Darryl Jones (SC Forestry Commission) - presented KBDI. Looks well statewide. Santee and Witherbee show indices in moderate drought, but take these high values with a grain of salt with no fire problems at this time. Latest activity were only 2 fires and one acre in total. Very good for South Carolina.
- iii. Additional Input from State Agencies
  - 1. EMD – Full scale scenario planning for next year (drought and wildfire conditions will be involved)
  - 2. DES – No issues.
  - 3. SC Dept of Agriculture – Wet conditions are leading to some issues with corn harvest. Nothing to report on drought impact.
  - 4. Hope displays weekly reports – going from one extreme to the next (wet) hurting some crops
  - 5. She asks if any other state agencies have reports. None to report.

c. PowerPoint Presentation

- i. Hope (SCDNR) presents the short- and long- term forecasts.

1. Hurricane Erin will have coastal, marine impacts, but no direct landfalling impact to South Carolina.
2. NHC Seven Day Tropical Event Outlook – Shows potential for two other tropical events in future. Continuing to monitor model forecasts.
3. Seven Day Precipitation – Heavy 2-5” +, with potential for isolated pockets of more, in our future across much of the state.
4. CPC 6-10 Day – Below normal temps, near normal/just above normal precipitation.
5. CPC 3 Month – The seasonal 3-month outlook continues to present the outlook for above normal precipitation with above normal temperatures.
6. Frank Alsheimer (NWS) – Upcoming rainfall pockets associated Hurricane Erin are possible. Approaching cold front with heavier rain this weekend. First half of next week looks cooler and drier. No hazardous weather in the outlook.

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

Hope (SCDNR)

#### **a. Northeast DMA**

- i. Joe Ghent 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. Joe Ghent, 1<sup>st</sup>.
  2. Lindsay Privette, 2<sup>nd</sup>
- iii. Motion passes unanimously.

#### **b. West DMA**

- i. Preston Pierce believes that all data supports that there are no drought conditions and area remains under normal conditions. Everyone agrees, and a motion is put in place.
- ii. Motion: All counties remain in a normal drought declaration.
  1. Preston Pierce, 1<sup>st</sup>
  2. Mark Warner, 2<sup>nd</sup>
- iii. Motion passes unanimously.

c. Southern 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 Southern DMA should go into drought status.
- iii. Motion: No changes made due to lack of present members for a quorum.

d. Central DMA

- i. Ken Tuck – Following the meeting on August 4<sup>th</sup>, Ken said they received very beneficial rain, especially where it was dry and needed. As of August 14, all reservoirs were refilled and in good condition with no drought conditions. Rainfall and cooler weather have been helpful. Ken proposed that they were no longer in incipient drought conditions. Everyone agrees, and a motion is put in place.
- ii. Motion: All counties move to, or remain, in normal drought declaration. Spartanburg returns to normal.
  1. Ken Tuck, 1<sup>st</sup>
  2. Alan Stuart, 2<sup>nd</sup>
- iii. Motion passes unanimously.

**IV. Closing Remarks**

- a. Hope (SCDNR) suggests dates for a future meeting. The next meeting may take place September 24<sup>th</sup>.
- b. Ken (SCDNR) puts forth a motion to adjourn:
  - i. Scott Willett, 1<sup>st</sup>
  - ii. Peggy Swearingen, 2<sup>nd</sup>
- c. Meeting is adjourned at 10:41 a.m. on August 20th.

Committee Members	Group	Attendance 08/20/2025
West DMA		
Reg Williams	Agriculture	
Cheryl Daniels	Commission of Public Works	
Mark Warner	Counties	<b>X</b>
	Domestic User	VACANT

David Evans	Industry	<b>X</b>
Lynn McEwen	Municipalities	
Preston Pierce	Power Generation Facilities	<b>X</b>
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.	
Brian Chemsak	Special Purpose District	<b>X</b>
<b>Central DMA</b>		
John Irwin	Agriculture	<b>X</b>
Ken Tuck	Commission of Public Works	<b>X</b>
Peggy Swearingen	Counties	<b>X</b>
Christy Jones	Domestic User	<b>X</b>
Ed Holder	Industry	
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.	
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.	<b>X</b>

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	
Jason Thompson	Commission of Public Works	<b>X</b>
	Counties	VACANT
Chris Wallace	Domestic User	
	Industry	VACANT
Eric Odom	Municipalities	<b>X</b>
Matt McCants	Power Generation Facilities	<b>X</b>
	Private Water Supplier	VACANT
Russell Cornette	Public Service District	
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.	<b>X</b>
Alexis Modzelesky	SC Dept. of Environ. Services	<b>X</b>
Joe Koon	SC Dept. of Environ. Services	<b>X</b>
Daryl Jones	SC Forestry Commission	<b>X</b>
Sam Quinney	SC Department of Agriculture	<b>X</b>
Hope Mizzell	SCDNR, LWC Division	<b>X</b>
Melissa Griffin	SCDNR, LWC Division	
Jennifer Simmons	SCDNR, LWC Division	<b>X</b>
Frank Alsheimer	NWS Columbia	<b>X</b>
Scott Harder	SCDES	
Cheyenne Twilley	SCDNR	