

Drought Response Committee Conference Call

Date: December 10, 2025

Time: 10:00 a.m.

A Drought Response Committee Conference Call was conducted at 10:00 a.m., December 10, 2025. Notice of the date, time, and call-in information was posted and provided on the scdrought.com website.

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. Dr. Hope Mizzell (SCDNR) conducts the Drought Committee roll call.
 - i. There is a quorum in all DMAs.
 - ii. She does a roll call of state agency members and any additional attendees.
- c. Ken Rentiers (SCDNR) puts forth a motion to approve the minutes of the last meeting, which took place on October 28, 2025.
 - i. Clint Elliott, 1
 - ii. Scott Willett, 2nd
 - iii. Motion passes unanimously. Minutes have been approved.

II. PowerPoint Presentation

- a. Hope Mizzell (SCDNR) begins with the presentation.
 - i. DRC License Plates – Reviewed the process and paperwork. We will be sending an email with all information this week. Explained the license plate ranking list.
 - ii. Displays latest drought map from the latest meeting on October 28th
 - iii. 30-day, 60-day, 90-day rainfall: Very dry November, with some rain this past week, the 30-day map still shows dry conditions in SC. Preliminary data from NCEI - Driest November for Lexington, Richland, and Hampton Counties. 2nd driest for SC. 60-day precipitation map still shows the rain that fell during coastal low in October. 90-day percent of normal shows coastal low rainfall, but overall dry conditions. 27th driest fall for SC.
 - iv. PDSI – Pockets of dry conditions, but due to long time frame does not indicate dry conditions. The SPI graphic shows some short-term improvement since last meeting.

- v. Drought Monitor graphics shows the change throughout the past month. In the latest USDM data from December 2nd, there are many areas that are still very dry.
- vi. Tempest Data & Clemson – Variety across the state. (10/28-12/8)
- vii. Viewed the four DMA 30- and 60-day rainfall totals for each county – the lowest and highest total rainfall. 60-day rainfall totals still show the rainfall that came with the coastal low in October.

b. State Agency Reports

- i. SCDES (Alexis) – 14-day percentiles in the Upstate SC show the drier conditions. Streamflow tables indicate incipient and moderate conditions in the 14- and 28-day percentiles.
 - 1. Northeast DMA – Pee Dee River gages showing some very low percentiles and dryness.
 - 2. West DMA – Chattooga River at lowest streamflow. Some of the others show higher percentiles.
 - 3. Central DMA – Rocky Creek very low flow percentile and showing dryness.
 - 4. Southern DMA – Both gages in the Edisto River at median daily.
 - 5. Reservoirs – Duke Energy’s Keowee-Toxaway and Catawba-Wateree at stage 0. USACE Savannah District has declared stage 1 drought.
 - 6. Groundwater – Slower to respond, but state within normal stages and showing some dryness.
 - a. Northeast DMA – at normal levels, Central DMA – Greenville in upper portion of below normal levels, West DMA – Oconee and Jasper well are in upper portion of below normal levels, Southern DMA – at lower portions of normal levels.
- ii. Phil Fragapane (Duke Energy) – Catawba: Reservoir at LIP (Low Inflow Protocol) Stage 0. Keowee: Expect LIP stage 1 – reservoir storage, 4 months. To meet on Dec 16th – they will evaluate storage and streamflow and determine triggers.
- iii. Andy Johnson (SC Forestry Commission) – KBDI values have dropped. 166 for 510 acres burned (5-year average - 460 fires for 100 acres burned) wildfires in November. Four wildfires thus far in December. Most KBDI have dropped since Thanksgiving and are likely to remain relatively calm in

December. Need rainfall to prevent the activity in Southwestern SC. 90% wildfires in SC are human caused (careless debris burners).

iv. Jordan (EMD) – Wildfire, drought hazard/scenario for next full-scale exercise. Planned for late March 2026.

v. Sam Quinney (SCDA) – Monitoring drier conditions in the upstate.

c. PowerPoint Presentation

- i. Atlantic Hurricane Season – Wrapped up the hurricane season! One direct impact on the CONUS (Tropical Storm Chantal). No landfalling hurricanes in the US in 2025.
- ii. Not much rain is expected in the near term, weekly QPF shows less than 1" across the upstate.
- iii. 6–10-day outlook – Trending below normal temperatures with near to normal rainfall.
- iv. Seasonal outlook – D/J/F Temperatures higher likelihood for the warmer than normal temperatures, with trending drier conditions.
- v. Josh Palmer (NWS GSP) – Upstate showing decline in percent of normal precipitation. Several indications of dryness. Models indicate dry for much of the month of December.

III. Open Discussion and Vote

Hope Mizzell (SCDNR):

a. West DMA

- i. Preston - Upstate counties – majority not in drought. Conditions have gotten drier, but Oconee, Pickens, and Anderson are still not in drought.
- ii. Scott W. agrees with Preston that the rain helped, no drought in the northern part of the West DMA.
- iii. Mark W. - Abbeville and McCormick not needed either. Little rain helped.
- iv. Lynn M. – Rain helped, but not enough. Barnwell & Allendale still needs to remain in incipient drought. Aiken received more rain, but not sure if it is well enough to take out of incipient.
- v. Brian C. – Rain was nice, but not enough rain and believes that we need to bring Beaufort County into incipient.
- vi. Motion: Add Beaufort to incipient and maintain all other counties.

1. Preston Pierce, 1st.
2. Mark Warner, 2nd

vii. Motion passes unanimously.

b. Central DMA

- i. Fred C. – Chester County had very little rain and still holding deficit.
- ii. Jimmy B. agrees about Cherokee, York, and Chester Counties are holding onto incipient status. Still very dry. Negligible rain. Alan S. agrees and includes Dorchester in same conditions.
- iii. Ken T. - Talks about Greenville, Spartanburg, Laurens coming out of incipient drought. Water supply and demand are down at this time of the year.
- iv. Brad P. and Ken T. support taking Greenville, Spartanburg, and Laurens out of incipient. Feel that looking at conditions and water supply are down.
- v. Motion: Move Greenville, Spartanburg, and Laurens Counties back into normal status; the rest of the Central DMA stays as is.
 1. Ken Tuck, 1st
 2. Jimmy Bagley, 2nd

vi. Motion passes unanimously.

c. Southern DMA

- i. Jason T. – Things have improved across the entire DMA, but it has been a very dry fall. Charleston, Berkeley, Dorchester have improved and should remain normal. Questions about Bamberg, Colleton, and Orangeburg in incipient?
- ii. Eric O. – Rainfall was beneficial and did help Orangeburg with water supply but opens discussion about streams and agriculture.
- iii. Landrum W. – Agrees with Jason and Eric. Keep all at current status, but question's conditions in Colleton County. The counties further inland need more rain.
- iv. Eric O. and Jason T. can support bringing Colleton County into incipient with the need for rain and elevated fire risk.

v. Motion: Southern DMA stays same but add Colleton County to Incipient.

1. Jason Thompson, 1st

2. Landrum Weathers, 2nd

vi. Motion passes unanimously.

d. Northeast DMA

i. Joe G. – Lancaster County had some rain but does not feel there's been enough to take northeast counties out of incipient.

ii. Clint E. agrees with Joe G. to maintain counties as are – upper half in incipient and Pee Dee in normal. Rainfall has been pretty good thus far.

iii. Athena S. – Agrees to keep the counties in no drought and Pee Dee River conditions should not influence the decision due to impact from NC.

iv. Clint E. - Horry received enough rain to keep it out of drought. Supports keeping the DMA as is.

v. Motion: Keep all Northeastern DMA counties as are.

1. Clint Elliott, 1st
2. Athena Strickland, 2nd

vi. Motion passes unanimously.

IV. Closing Remarks

a. Hope (SCDNR) the discussion begins on next meeting date. January 21st or 28th? If longer, February 5th. January 28th is chosen.

b. Ken (SCDNR) puts forth a motion to adjourn:

1. Jason Thompson, 1st
2. Fred Castles, 2nd

c. Meeting is adjourned at 11:31a.m. on December 10, 2025.

Committee Members	Group	Attendance 12/10/2025
West DMA		
Reg Williams	Agriculture	
Cheryl Daniels	Commission of Public Works	X
Mark Warner	Counties	X
-	Domestic User	VACANT
David Evans	Industry	X
Lynn McEwen	Municipalities	X
Preston Pierce	Power Generation Facilities	X
J. Scott Willett	Private Water Supplier	X
Chris Rasco	Public Service District	
Rick Green	Regional Council of Gov.	X
Yvonne Kling	Soil and Water Conservation Dist.	
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	X
Alan Stuart	Power Generation Facilities	X
Brad C. Powers	Private Water Supplier	X
-	Public Service District	VACANT
Gregory Sprouse	Regional Council of Gov.	
John T. Rivers	Soil and Water Conservation Dist.	
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	X
-	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.	X
Nathan Ward	Special Purpose District	X
Southern DMA		
Landrum Weathers	Agriculture	X
Jason Thompson	Commission of Public Works	X
-	Counties	VACANT
Chris Wallace	Domestic User	
-	Industry	VACANT
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
Joe Koon	SC Dept. of Environ. Services	X
Andy Johnson	SC Forestry Commission	X
Sam Quinney	SC Department of Agriculture	X
Other Participants		
Hope Mizzell	SCDNR, LWC Division	X
Melissa Griffin	SCDNR, LWC Division	X
Jennifer Simmons	SCDNR, LWC Division	X
Frank Alsheimer	NWS Columbia	X
Alexis Modzelesky	SCDES	X

Josh Palmer	NWS Greenville/Spartanburg	X
Luke McDurmon	DES	X
Phil Fragapane	Duke Energy	X
Peter Balzani	DES	X
Shannon Whitehead	Mt. Pleasant Waterworks (EM)	X
Larry Harper	ACE Basin	X
Dwight Cauthen	SC Farm Bureau	X
Elliot Wickham	NIDIS	X
Scott Harder	DES	X
Paula Wright		X