

waterSC

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SC DEPARTMENT of
**ENVIRONMENTAL
SERVICES**



SOUTH CAROLINA DEPT. OF
COMMERCE



SOUTH CAROLINA
DEPARTMENT OF
PARKS, RECREATION
& TOURISM



WaterSC Guiding Principles

- "Water is a *shared resource* with *shared responsibility*"
- A *collaborative approach* to develop and implement a *science-based actionable plan*
- A plan that *balances economic, environmental and community needs*
- A plan that secures *reliable and resilient* water resources for the *future*

“In this room, we are asked to consider first what is best for the resource, then what is best for the state and then what is best for each of us and our sector we represent.” Charles Wingard



WaterSC Meeting Topics (October 2024 to June 2025)

State of Surface
Water

State of
Groundwater

Water
Management: ASR
& Conjunctive Use

Water
Management:
Water Reuse

Water Efficiency
and Conservation

Water
Management: IBT

Multi-state
Considerations

Connections with
COGs & RBCs

Water Planning
Framework &
Recommendations

The State Water
Plan

WaterSC Fall Working Sessions

- August 4-5, 2025 Retreat in Greenville, SC
- September 25 & October 8 Working Sessions
- Designed to revisit topics and develop recommendations to incorporate into the State Water Plan



Topic: Continued Support of Water Planning

- The State of South Carolina should continue this working group beyond the State Water Plan updating process and should continue to support **ongoing state water planning**.
- SCDES should request and encourage the Legislature to continue **funding** for state water planning activities, including planning, administration, data collection and research and grants for implementation of water projects.
- SCDES should also pursue additional funding sources or opportunities from both **public and private sectors**.

Topic: Interstate/Multi-state Water Management Strategies

- The State of South Carolina should increase coordination with **Georgia and North Carolina** on inter-state water management strategies and shared water resources.

Topic: Needs for Education & Outreach

- Develop and implement an intentional **Education and Outreach** Communication Plan on efficiency of water usage throughout the State.

Topic: Strengthen the Drought Response Program

- In recognizing the importance of **preparing for drought**, SCDNR should understand improvements and actions that could be taken under the existing statutory and regulatory authority. This may lead to consideration of potential regulatory recommended changes, if needed.
 - These include the review of Drought Response Committee structure and membership for adequate representation; recommended actions to make drought response more effective, including triggers, indicators and actions; and providing support to assist in updating and implementing the required/local water system Drought Response Plans to be more effective.

Topic: Water Reuse

- Support **beneficial water reuse** and robustly pursue the concept where feasible and appropriate.

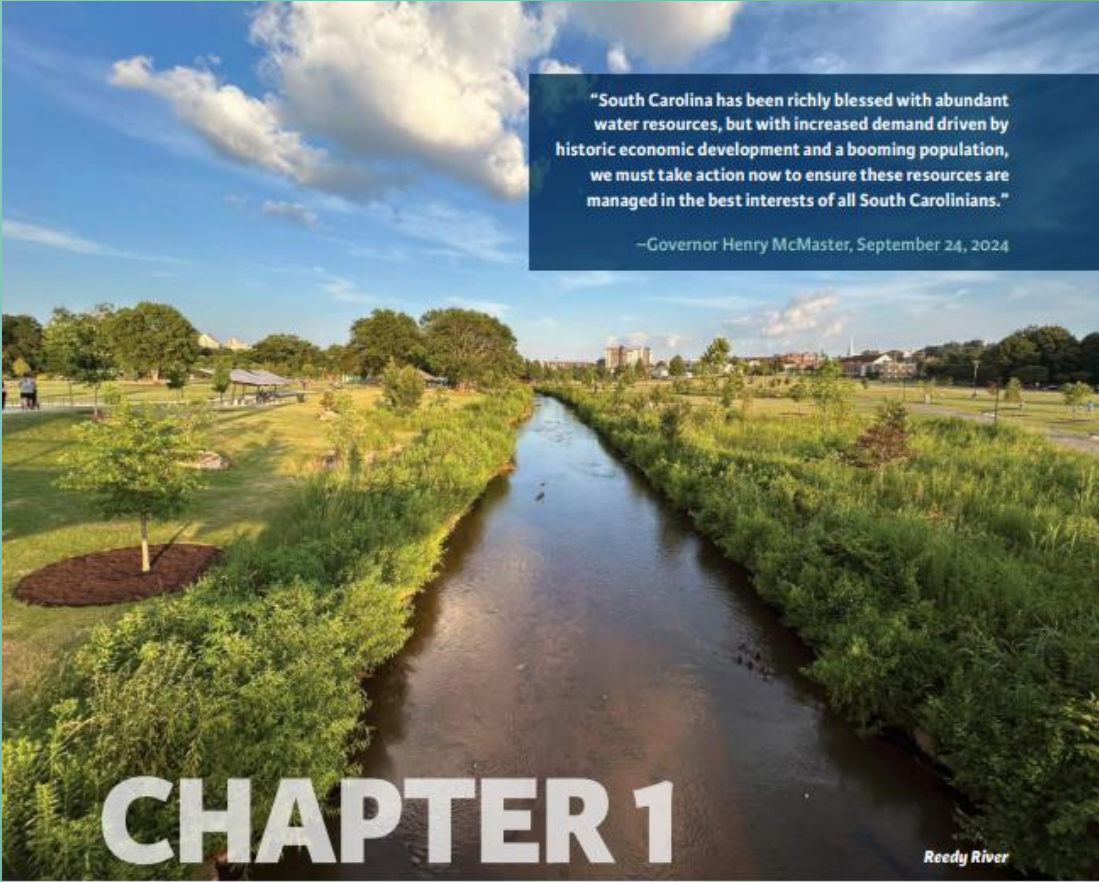
Topic: Nexus of Water Quality and Water Quantity

- Recognize the essential connections between **water quality** and water quantity for making better decisions for the future of water planning in our state.

Topic: Water Permitting

- The State of South Carolina has the obligation to ensure waters of the state are used responsibly and the health of these waters is adequately maintained for residents. To the extent SCDES has the authority to apply judgement, it should utilize this authority and where it does not, SCDES should seek legislative authority to fulfill this responsibility, including a periodic review of water permits and registrations.

An Updated State Water Plan



"South Carolina has been richly blessed with abundant water resources, but with increased demand driven by historic economic development and a booming population, we must take action now to ensure these resources are managed in the best interests of all South Carolinians."

—Governor Henry McMaster, September 24, 2024

CHAPTER 1

Reedy River

Introduction

1.1 BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES

The South Carolina Water Resources Planning and Coordination Act requires the South Carolina Department of Environmental Services (SCDES) to develop a comprehensive water resources policy for the state. Prior to the creation of SCDES in 2024, the water planning activities for the state were the responsibility of the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources (SCDNR). SCDNR developed the first state water plan—the *South Carolina Water Plan*—in 1998. In 2004, the plan was updated following what is recognized as one of the worst multi-year droughts on record, which ended in 2002.

Motivations for This 2025 Plan: In a state that has historically been considered to have abundant water, the plan update emerged from these key motivations to support a healthy and prosperous state through a changing future:

- **Support Responsible Population Growth:** South Carolina is one of the fastest growing states in the country, and water demand is increasing.

- Public Notice of full draft plan
- Opportunities for public comment
 - Online form
 - Informal group gatherings
 - Listening Session November 20
- Finalize and publish the plan in December 2025
- Living document

Draft Chapters Shared

- Chapter 1: Introduction
- Chapter 2: SC Water Resources and Management
- Chapter 3: Drought and Drought Response
- Chapter 4: Current and Future Water Demand
- Chapter 5: Water Availability Assessment
- Chapter 6: Water Management Strategies

Chapter 7: Stakeholder Recommendations

- Recommendations from the RBCs
 - Planning Process
 - Technical
 - Policy
- WaterSC Recommendations

Chapter 8: Future Planning Steps and Considerations

- Water Policy Overview
- Interstate Planning and Coordination
- Continuous Water Planning
- Intentional Education and Outreach
- Enhanced Data Collection and Modeling
- Other Considerations
 - Hydrologic Variability
 - Recycled Water
 - Water Quality Considerations

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