

**Location:**

November 15, 2022

9:00 AM – 1:00 PM

Pee Dee REC

Hybrid Meeting

**Action Items:**

1. **Pee Dee RBC members should choose an alternate to serve in their absence at RBC meetings. Alternates should represent the same interest sector as the RBC member.**

**Major Decisions:**

1. **Unanimous – The Pee Dee RBC voted to adopt the RBC bylaws as written in the Planning Framework. (July 2022)**
2. **Unanimous – The Pee Dee RBC voted to adopt the proposed Process Metrics as presented. (August 2022)**
3. **Unanimous – The Pee Dee RBC voted to adopt the Mission, Vision, and Goals of the Pee Dee RBC. (August 2022)**
4. **The Pee Dee RBC elected the Chair: Buddy Richardson and Vice Chair: Cara Schildtknecht (November 2022)**

**Meeting:**

- Review of Meeting Objectives
- Approval of Agenda
- Public and Agency Comment Periods
- Aquatic Freshwater Resources of the Pee Dee Basin
- Aquatic Saltwater Resources of the Pee Dee Basin
- Flow-Ecology Relationships
- Application of Flow-Ecology Relationships in the Pee Dee Basin
- Water Demand Projection Methodology
- Draft Water Demand Projections Pee Dee Basin
- Discussion of Chair and Vice Chair Selection
- Meeting Conclusion

**Meeting Summary (November 15<sup>th</sup>)**

JD Solomon, Pee Dee River Basin Council Facilitator, called the November 15<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Pee Dee RBC to order at 9:02 AM. The sixth meeting of the Pee Dee RBC was held in-person and

virtually via the Zoom virtual meeting platform. Including the Pee Dee RBC members and planning team, there were 42 people present at this RBC meeting in-person and online.

The meeting began with JD Solomon reviewing the agenda items for the meeting. The Pee Dee RBC approved the RBC meeting agenda and edited minutes and summary documents from the October 25<sup>th</sup> meeting. A public comment period was held with no comments received but Faith Truesdale of SC Farm Bureau introduced herself to the Pee Dee RBC and she represents the agricultural sector. An agency public comment period was held with no comments received.

The first agenda item was a presentation by Jason Marsik, SCDNR, entitled: *Aquatic Resources of the Pee Dee Basin*. There are 8,075 freshwater stream run miles in the Pee Dee drainage which includes the Pee Dee, Lynches, Waccamaw, and Black River systems with 102 native fish species and 10 introduced fish species. Jason introduced and discussed studies relating to the Pee Dee basin including the Pee Dee river fish community study, striped bass study, and robust redhorse restoration work, multi-state sturgeon study by Bill Post, SC stream assessment and small rivers and small river assessment by Kevin Kubach. Additional highlights included discussion on recreational fisheries, commercial fisheries, freshwater mussels, freshwater crayfish, and a genetic study of invasive crayfish. One final point in the presentation related to the SCDNR instream flow policy based on a biological justification to support fish and other aquatic wildlife.

The next presentation was by Joey Ballenger, SCDNR, entitled: *Aquatic Saltwater Resources of the Pee Dee Basin*. Joey introduced the SCDNR Marine Resources Research Institute and the Institute's mission related to coastal resource data collection and dissemination to inform policy and management decision-making. Highlights of the presentation included: estuarine finfish research section, crustacean & mollusk research section, and the environmental research section. The estuarine finfish research section of the presentation focused on species monitoring using surveys. The crustacean & mollusk research section of the presentation focused on the oyster demographics project. The environmental research section of the presentation focused on the SC Estuarine and Coastal Assessment Program (SCECAP).

After a break, the meeting continued with more presentations. The next presentations were from Luke Bower, USGS, entitled: *Flow-Ecology Relationships Parts 1 and 2*. Part one of the flow-ecology presentations focused on bio-assessment which uses aquatic organisms to learn about river health. The approach was broken down into four stages: 1. identify which environmental attribute you want to evaluate, 2. hypothesize relationships between organisms and environmental attributes, 3. identify key relationships between organisms and environment, and 4. use those results to inform management. After introducing bio-assessment, Luke presented the second part of the presentations which focused on quantifying

the relationships between key flow metrics and biotic response to better inform water flow standards throughout SC and to provide an additional tool in the water management toolbelt in SC. Luke introduced the Ecological Limits of Hydrologic Alteration (ELOHA) approach which guided the research and allowed the research team to: 1. build a hydrologic foundation of streamflow and biological data, 2. classify natural river types, 3. determine flow-ecology relationships associated within each river type, and 4. recommend water flow standards to achieve river condition goals.

The next agenda item was a presentation and proposal from Pee Dee RBC member, Eric Krueger, TNC, entitled: *Application of Flow-Ecology Relationships in the Pee Dee Basin*. Other river basin councils have requested basin-specific information using the flow-ecology study. Eric used the Edisto River example to frame the proposal for the Pee Dee River Basin. The team incorporated four flow-ecology metrics as performance measures of the Edisto River water use scenario which were mean daily flow, base flow, duration of low flow, and timing of low flow. Those were chosen based on relevance to water withdrawal and drought management, strength of relationship, distribution: all stream classes and basin area represented, and it is readily calculable in SWAM. There will be more to come related to flow-ecology and the RBC will decide whether or not to include this information into the decision-making process.

The next agenda item featured two presentations from Alex Pellet, SCDNR, entitled: *Water Demand Projection Methodology* and *Draft Water Demand Projections in the Pee Dee Basin*. Alex introduced the concept of projecting water demand 50 years into the future. Primarily projections are an extrapolation of a trend, are based on hypothetical scenarios, the timeline can extend beyond the limits of effective forecasting, and aims to be informative. Alex guided the RBC through the methodology development from 2016-2018 and the related published reports. Highlights of the first presentation included: equations to define the terms, mass balance illustration, detailed model, statistical modeling and projections, and drivers of water demand associated with each water use sector. Alex then presented a few draft examples of water demand projections in the Pee Dee River Basin: mining, golf, public supply, and then comments regarding manufacturing, agricultural irrigation, and thermoelectric water demand projections which were forthcoming. There will be more to come related to water demand projections in upcoming meetings.

The meeting concluded with JD Solomon discussing the election of the Pee Dee RBC Chair and Vice Chair positions. Current nominees for Pee Dee RBC Chair (and Vice Chair) entering the meeting were (alphabetical): Bob Perry, Buddy Richardson, and Cara Schildtknecht. Bob Perry removed his name from consideration based on other professional commitments. The two candidates for Chair were Buddy Richardson and Cara Schildtknecht. After brief comments regarding their interest in serving in these roles, a vote was held, and Buddy Richardson was

elected Chair of the Pee Dee RBC by a margin of 13-2. After the election of the Chair position, there was a nomination for Vice Chair in addition to Cara Schildtknecht, Walt Beard. A vote was held to elect the Vice Chair position and Cara Schildtknecht was elected Vice Chair by a margin of 8-7.

The next regular meeting of the Pee Dee RBC will be at the Clemson Pee Dee REC on December 13<sup>th</sup>. The RBC meeting was adjourned.

The meeting concluded at 1:02 PM.

Summary: Tom Walker

Approved: 12/13/2022