

Location:

September 20, 2023

10:00 AM – 12:00 PM

Dominion Energy Lake Murray Facility and RBC Field Trip

Hybrid Meeting

Action Items:

1. **Share the Oak Ridge Lab paper discussed during the Flow-ecology presentation**
2. **Potentially add State Wildlife Action Plan to the parking lot**
3. **CDM Smith to add Bush River strategic node in SWAM**

Decisions:

1. **Saluda RBC Vision Statement: A resilient and sustainably managed Saluda River Basin that balances human and ecological needs. (May 2023)**
2. **Saluda RBC Goals: 1. To perform a review and update of the plan every 5 years at a minimum or sooner should a significant event occur requiring plan update, 2. Develop and implement an education and communication plan to promote the strategies, policies, and recommendations developed for the Saluda River Basin, and 3. Apply science-based resource management and conservation strategies that consider resource availability and allocation. (May 2023)**
3. **The Saluda RBC elected KC Price as Chair and Katherine Amidon as Vice Chair. (June 2023)**
4. **Formation of a Public Supply Water Demand projections subcommittee. (July 2023)**

Meeting:

- Review of Meeting Objectives
- Approval of Agenda, Minutes, and Summary
- Public and Agency Comment Period
- August RBC Meeting Review
- Phase 1 RBC Survey Results and Review of Process Metrics
- Recommendations for Assessing Flow-Ecological Health Relationships in the Broad Basin
- Surface Water Availability Modeling – Results of Initial Planning Scenarios

- Upcoming Meeting Schedule
- Tour of Saluda Hydro Facility and Lake Murray Dam

Meeting Summary (September 20th)

The Saluda RBC Chair, KC Price, called the September 20th meeting of the Saluda RBC to order at 10:00 AM. The seventh meeting of the Saluda RBC was held in-person and virtually via the Zoom virtual meeting platform. Including the Saluda RBC members and planning team, there were 47 people present at this RBC meeting in-person and online. KC discussed the agenda items for the meeting. The Saluda RBC approved the RBC meeting agenda as well as the previous RBC meeting minutes and summary documents. KC and Katherine discussed the parking lot items for future discussion. A public comment period was held with no formal comments received. An agency comment period was held with no comments received. John Boyer reviewed the August meeting highlights.

John Boyer presented the Phase 1 RBC survey results from 15 members of the Saluda RBC. The majority of RBC members who responded to the survey indicated that they felt they had an adequate understanding of how data, models, and other tools will be used to assess water availability, identify shortages, and explore surface water issues and concerns during phase 2 of the planning process. Suggestions were presented which addressed the question of improving the meetings and process. Additionally, other thoughts, concerns, or feedback were presented on the Saluda River basin planning process. Other field trip ideas were presented by responses generated from the survey. John concluded this portion of the meeting revisiting the Process Metrics.

Next, Joe Mruzek and Brandon Peoples presented the flow-ecology relationships work to the RBC. Joe covered the biotic index, ecoregions, stream classes, flow-ecology relationships background information and how the working group uses the relationships, how this work is incorporated into future planning scenarios, the steps for how this work will unfold, and the key to understanding the results. Brandon Peoples discussed fish species richness, SWAP-listed fishes in the Saluda, the flow chart for the process, an example of flow in the Reedy River, and Brandon contextualized what the info is and isn't in this study. The working group's next steps are to select locations and look at the statistical relationships and find meaningful relationships for management in the Saluda river basin to present to the RBC.

For the next agenda item, John Boyer presented SWAM results of the initial planning scenarios. John reminded the RBC members of the goals of phases 2 and 3 related to current and future water availability issues and the development and evaluation of water management strategies. The scenarios presented at the meeting included two of the base scenarios (Current Use and Permitted and Registered Use) and an additional scenario (Unimpaired Flow (UIF)). The

preliminary Current Use scenario results indicated physical shortages for four users although those shortages might not be accurate due to impoundments. The preliminary Permitted and Registered scenario results indicated shortages for fifteen users. John highlighted the strategic nodes in the model and presented hydrologic performance measures at those strategic nodes which included the difference in simulated flows for Current Use and UIF scenarios. John then presented reservoir storage results for six reservoirs in the Saluda basin. The next steps for surface water modeling included: continuing to review preliminary modeling scenario results, incorporating moderate and high demand projections, selecting locations to apply the flow-ecology metrics, and other actions as identified by the RBC.

John reviewed the upcoming meeting schedule, SWAM training, field trip, and topics. The field trip to the Dominion hydro facility and Lake Murray dam followed the RBC meeting after a brief presentation from Amy Bresnahan (Dominion Energy). The RBC meeting was adjourned. The next Saluda RBC meeting will be held October 18, 2023.

The meeting concluded at 12:26 PM.

Summary: Tom Walker

Approved: 10/18/23