SC DEPARTMENT *of*
ENVIRONMENTAL
SERVICES

Upstate IRC Informational Meeting

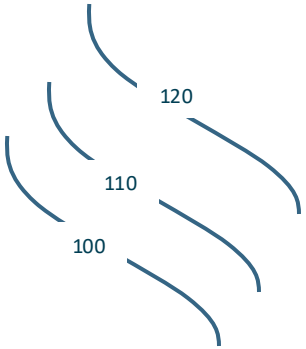
September 23, 2026



Agenda

- Welcome and Updates
- IRC structure and RBC Coordinator Introduction
- Funding Overview
- Implementation Summary
- Funding Structure Discussion
- Branding and Outreach Materials
- Next Steps

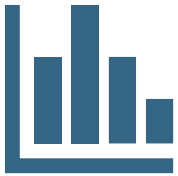
DES Updates



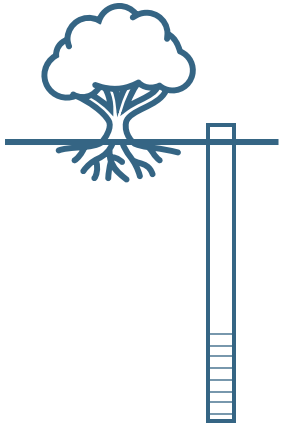
Potentiometric Maps for Floridan, Gordon, McQueen Branch and Crouch Branch aquifers completed



2025 Water Use Report in draft



Capacity Use Area Reports for Lowcountry and Santee-Lynches CUAs in draft



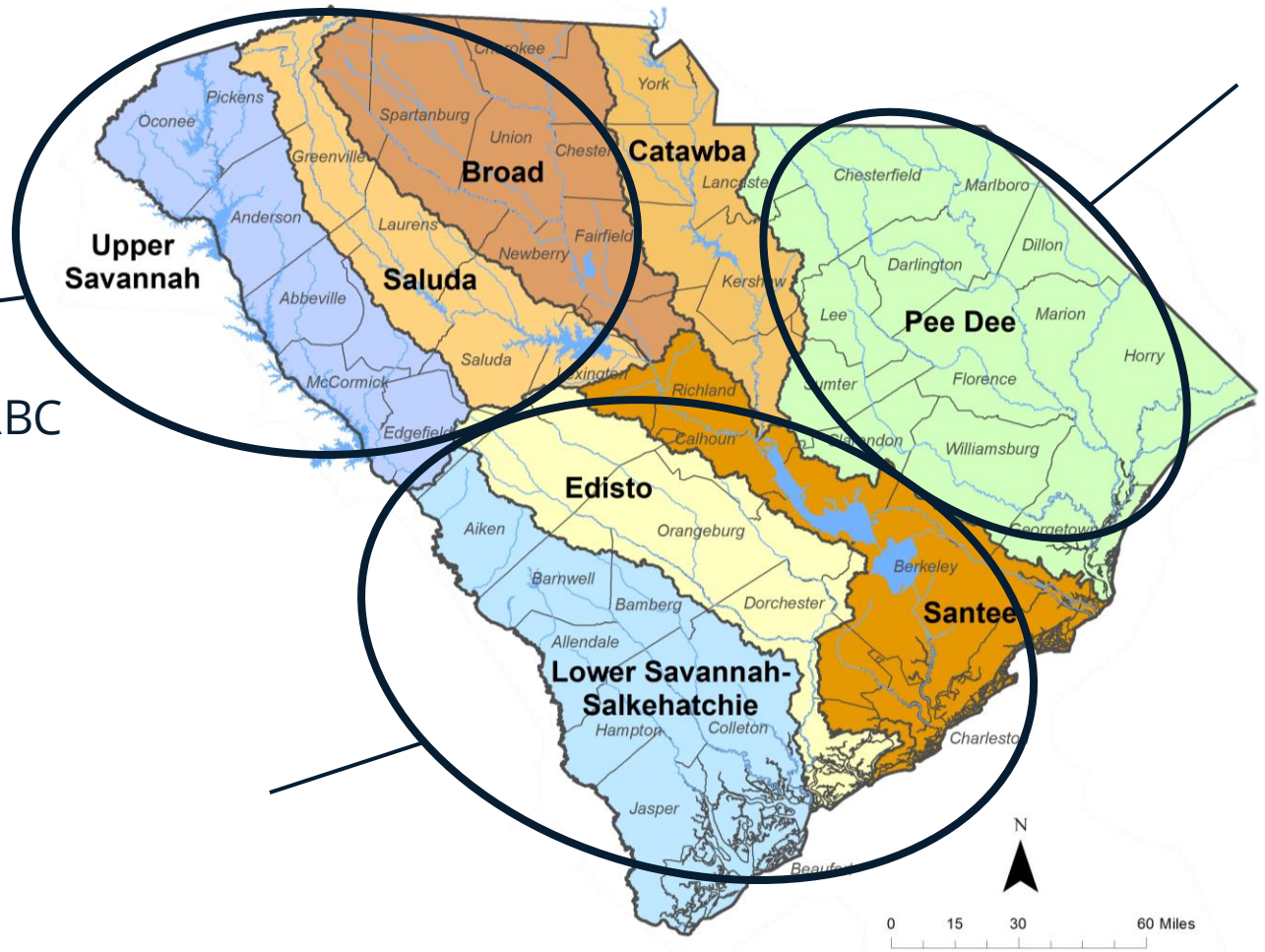
2019-2026 Groundwater Monitoring Network Status Report in progress

Inter-basin River Councils (IRCs) and RBC Coordinators

Inter-basin River Councils (IRCs)

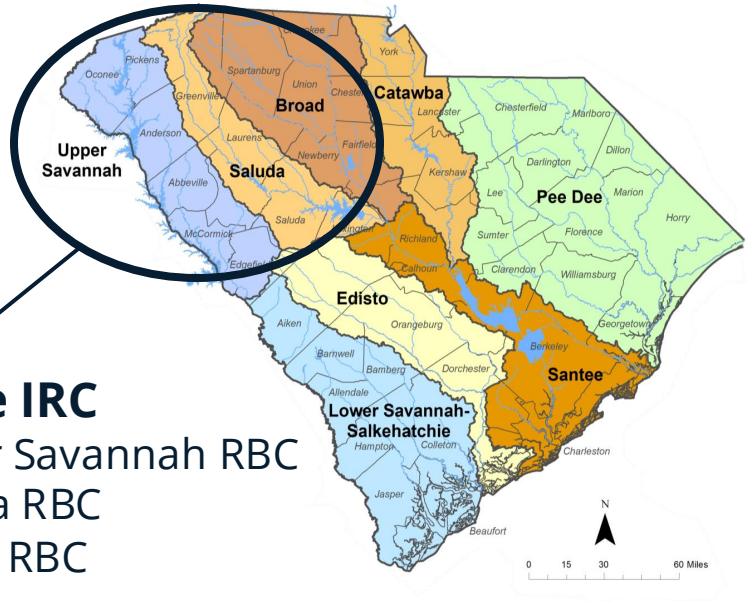
Upstate IRC
- Upper Savannah RBC
- Saluda RBC
- Broad RBC

Pee Dee RBC



Lowcountry IRC
- Edisto RBC
- Santee RBC
- Lower Savannah-Salkehatchie RBC

RBC Coordinators



Upstate IRC

- Upper Savannah RBC
- Saluda RBC
- Broad RBC

Upper Savannah
Lead: Scott Harder
scott.harder@des.sc.gov
803-728-5095

Secondary: Peter Balzani
peter.balzani@des.sc.gov
803-898-5609

Broad
Lead: Alexis Modzelesky
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Secondary: Scott Harder
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Saluda
Lead: Peter Balzani
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803-898-5609

Secondary: Scott Harder
scott.harder@des.sc.gov
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WaterSC Updates

SC DEPARTMENT of ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES | waterSC

- WaterSC meeting quarterly
  - September meeting occurred 9/17/26 and December meeting planned 12/17/26
  - RBC chairs invited
- Educating WaterSC on DES water quality/water quantity programs
- Funding information presented at the June WaterSC meeting

Funding Overview
Implementation Summary
Funding Structure

Available Funds Overview

Recurring Funds for Hydrology Program

- ~$2,000,000 recurring funds annually
- ~$1,000,000 committed to USGS stream gage maintenance and SW & GW monitoring
- ~$1,000,000 for Hydrology Section staff and routine program activities including groundwater well installation

Proviso Funds for Water Planning

- ~$8,000,000 overall current balance across six individual proviso funds
- Pending FY27 budget request to allow spending for general water planning activities from each individual proviso

Proviso Fund Expenditures FY25-FY26

FY25: $1,897,893

- Five basins meeting monthly and two completing their plans
- WaterSC meeting monthly
- State Water Plan development with contractor support began in December 2024 and continued through the FY

FY26: ~$955,622

- Three basins meeting monthly and three basins completing their plans
- State Water Plan development with contractor continued through December 2025
- WaterSC meeting monthly through December 2025 and quarterly in 2026

Potential Use of Proviso Funds

Implementing Next Steps and Considerations

Continued Planning and Coordination

Enhancing Data Collection and Models

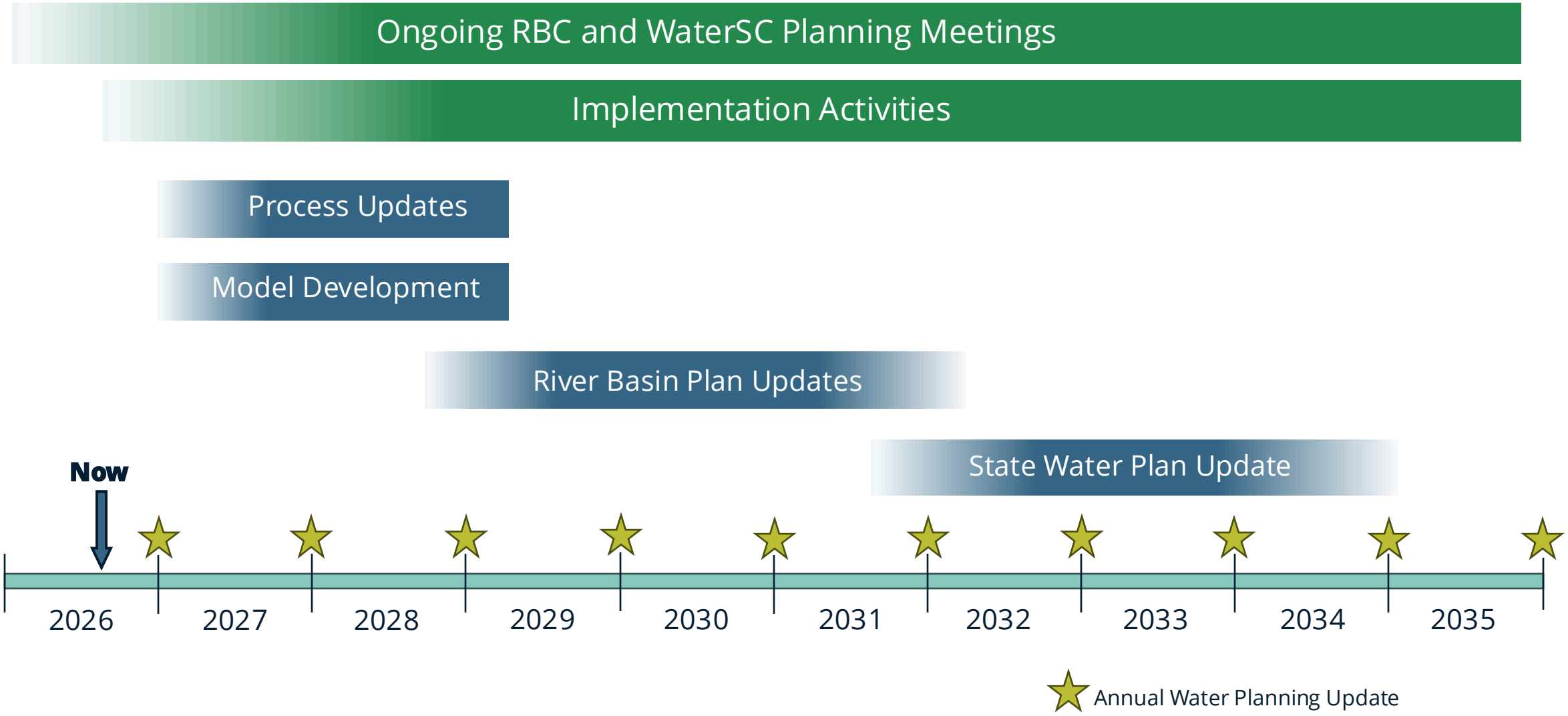
Updating Water Plans

Other Implementation

Next Steps and Considerations

Next Steps		Considerations		
Continuous Water Planning	Intentional Education and Outreach	**Enhanced Data Collection and Modeling**	**Other Planning Considerations**	**Funding for River Basin Plan Implementation**
RBCs and Inter-Basin Councils	Education and Outreach Plan and Goals	Expand Monitoring Networks	Hydrologic Variability	Federal Funding
WaterSC Continuation	State Water Plan Awareness	Expand Ecological Flow Relationships	Water Reuse	Private Funding
State Water Summit	Public Outreach	Other Models	Water Quality	State/Grant Funding
Updates of River Basin Plans and State Water Plan	Legislative Outreach			

Potential Timeline



Continued Planning and Coordination

- Continued water planning meetings, interstate meetings, and education/outreach: **$1,000,000 over two years**

Action	Explanation	Cost
Water planning meetings	Quarterly RBC and WaterSC meetings, annual Technical Workshop and Water Summit with contractor support	$500,000 per year
Education and outreach	SCDES development of branded materials and coordination with RBCs and WaterSC	$0
Interstate coordination	Routine coordination with planning councils and state staff of NC and GA	$0

Enhance Data Collection and Models & Incorporate Water Quality

- New models and expanded monitoring networks: **$2,000,000 over two years**

Action	Explanation	Cost
Supplemental Model(s)	Model(s) to supplement SWAM in forecasting water quantity, quality, climate variability, ecological flow relationships, etc.	$1,500,000
Expand and Enhance Monitoring Network	New groundwater monitoring wells, enhancement of saltwater intrusion monitoring, stream gaging, etc.	$500,000

Updating Water Plans

- Update of the State Water Plan and the River Basin Plans: **$3,000,000 as needed**

Action	Explanation	Cost
Updated SW models and tech support	Updating and running 7 SWAM models	$1,500,000
Facilitation and authorship	Contracted facilitation and authorship of river basin plans	$1,500,000

Total Potential Costs

- Implementation of the State Water Plan, continued water planning meetings, incorporation of water quality and supplemental models, and updating the plans: **$6,000,000**

Item	Cost
Continued planning and coordination for two years	$1,000,000
Enhancing data collection and models for two years	$2,000,000
Plan updates as needed	$3,000,000

Potential Available Funds for Other Implementation

- Allocated funds are aligned with implementation objectives:
  - Continued Planning
  - Supplemental models
  - Expanded monitoring networks
  - Plan updates
- Remaining funds could be used for other implementation projects

Item	Cost
Currently available funds	$8,000,000
Potentially allocated funds	$6,000,000
Potentially available funds	**$2,000,000**

Summary of Basin Plan Implementation Topics

Topic	Description
Water Conservation	Leak detection, best management practices, education
Sedimentation Studies	Land use impacts, riparian buffers, mitigation costs
Supplemental Models and Data	Rain runoff model, aquifer chloride levels, future hydrologic variability
Additional Monitoring	Groundwater monitoring wells, stream gages
Education and Outreach	Communicate findings, talking points, new programs
Private Wells	Studies of extent and potential impacts on surface water
Water Quality	Assimilative capacity, watershed plans
Flow – Ecology Relationships	Collect more data, expand analysis

Summary of Upper Savannah RBC Implementation Topics

Topic	Description	Citation
Water Conservation	Reduce demand to conserve water resources - **contractor could help coordinate and lead these efforts**	Table 10-1, pages 10-2 and 10-3, Objectives 1A,B
Sedimentation Studies	**Evaluate the impact of future land use changes on water resources quantity and streamflow characteristics.** Identify and prioritize properties for conservation to protect quantity and quality of water.	Table 10-1, page 10-5, Objective 3B
	Identify the financial impacts of increased sedimentation on reservoirs and water resources and communicate the results to local governments…policies and controls that reduce sediment generation and transport.	Table 10-1, page 10-5, Objective 3C
	Studies to better identify sources of sediment load to reservoirs	Table 10-1, page 10-7, Objective 4A-2

Summary of Upper Savannah Implementation Topics

Topic	Description	Citation
Private Well Impacts	**A study to understand the extent and potential impacts** of private and community/commercial wells, and to what extent they may reduce surface water availability, especially during droughts.	Section 9.2 page 9-5
Flow-Ecology Relationships	Continue discussion of data needs for flow-ecology relationships. Work with Saluda RBC to continue discussions with USGS and Clemson about the need for additional data in the Blue Ridge – **contractor may be needed for data collection.**	Page 10-7, Table 10-1, Objective 3E

Summary of Saluda RBC Implementation Topics

Topic	Description	Citation
Sedimentation Studies	**Conduct studies** to better identify sediment loading sources and the financial costs associated with mitigating those sources to our reservoirs and waterways.	Table 10-2, page 10-10, Objective 3J
Supplemental Models and Data	**Update models** to consider future uncertainties (changing weather patterns, population growth, water use scenarios, etc.).	Table 10-2, page 10-7, Objective 3B
Private Wells	**Assess the potential impacts** of private and community/commercial wells, and how they may affect surface water (especially during droughts) and/or better characterize growth potential in future planning phases.	Table 10-2, page 10-7, Objective 3A

Summary of Saluda RBC Implementation Topics

Topic	Description	Citation
Education and Outreach	**SCDES with support from contractor,** creates an online library/catalog of technical information to support RBCs	Page 10-8, table 10-2, objective 3E
Flow – Ecology Relationships	**State agencies and partners** expand analysis and understanding of flow-ecology relationships	Table 10-2, page 10-9, Objective 3I
Water Conservation	Reduce demand to conserve water resources - **contractor could help coordinate and lead these efforts**	Table 10-2, pages 10-2 and 10-3, Objectives 1A,B, C

Summary of Broad RBC Implementation Topics

Topic	Description	Citation
Water Conservation	**Educate** public on water as a resource. **Assess** water supply infrastructure leaks.	Page 10-3, Table 10-2, Objectives 1A and 1B
Land Use and Sedimentation	**Research** how changes in land use impact water quality and quantity. **Research** financial impacts of increased sedimentation on reservoirs/water resources and **communicate** impacts to local governments.	Page 10-8, Table 10-2, Objective 5B and 5C
Data	**Analyze** tree ring data to address future hydrologic variability and drought; **Investigate** low-tech, process-based approaches to stream restoration	Page 10-10, Table 10-2, Objective 5G and 5H
Water Quality, Flow, and Assimilative Capacity	**Identify** areas where low inflows may reduce the assimilative capacity of streams and **determine** strategies to mitigate areas of concern.	Page 10-9, Table 10-2, Objective 5F

SCDES Direct Procurement

RBCs or WaterSC propose implementation projects to pursue and submit project proposals

SCDES will evaluate and score the proposals based on established criteria

For the selected projects, SCDES will procure contractors and oversee the scope of work

Potential Criteria for Implementation Projects

- Consistent with a River Basin Plan implementation recommendation
- Basin-scale or multi-basin-scale projects
- Demonstrated benefits to water availability in basin
- A pilot study
- Measurable goals and progress

Example: Projects Eligible for Georgia Seed Grant

- Undertaking **specific implementation** activities
- Providing **technical assistance** for the implementation of Regional Water Plan management practices
- **Preparing and distributing technical guidance** that address management practices in two or more water planning regions
- Undertaking programs to **address critical information and/or data needs**
- Tracking and **analyzing available monitoring data and reporting** on water resource conditions









Additional Funding Options

RBCs are encouraged to seek and stack additional funding for projects



Possible funding opportunities may include:



- Federal funding through the USDA, FEMA, EPA, etc.
- Other state agencies, e.g. SCOR
- State Revolving Fund
- Community Development Block Grants
- 319 grants
- Private grants, such as Google Water Stewardship Projects

Items to Discuss

- What shape should the funding take? Cost-share process?
- Who can apply and be awarded funds? RBCs? Public entities?
- What criteria should be considered to prioritize proposals?
- What should be the scope of the funding? Matching funds? Maximum cap?

Branding and Outreach Materials

New Brand Materials for WaterSC and RBCs

Brand materials help establish a familiar identity, enhance recognition and build trust and credibility.





New Brand Materials for 8 River Basin Councils (RBCs)

New branded assets include:

- Meeting agendas
- Letterhead
- Social media graphic templates
- PPT templates

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New Brand Materials for RBCs

Social media graphic templates







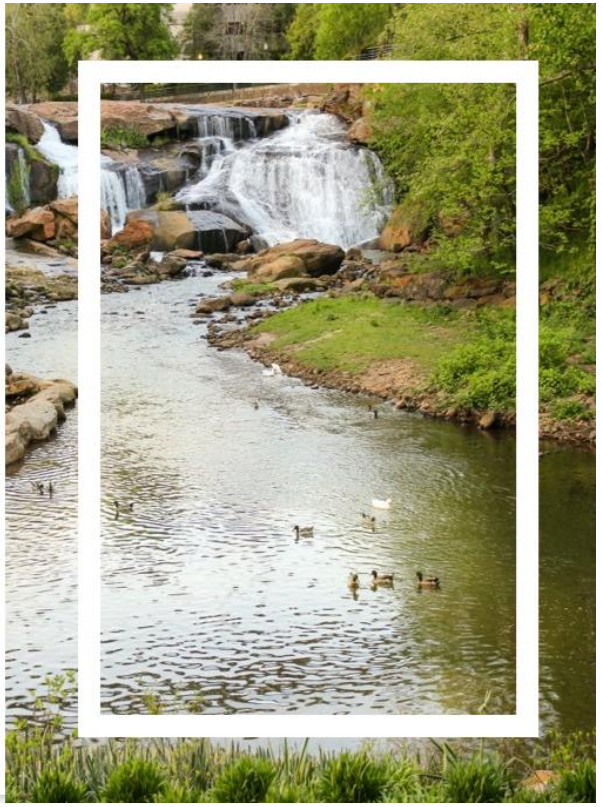


New Brand Materials for RBCs

SC DEPARTMENT of ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES | SALUDA River Basin Council

Presentation Title Goes Here

dd/mm/yyyy



Meeting Agenda

SC DEPARTMENT of ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES | LOWER SAVANNAH-SALKEHATCHIE River Basin Council

Location: **Name of Location**
Time: **00:00a.m. - 00:00p.m.** | Date: **mm/dd/yyyy**
Facilitator(s): *FirstName LastName, FirstName LastName*

AGENDA ITEMS:

Start Time	Description
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D-26-0014

Next Steps

Next Steps

1. Lowcountry IRC meeting this week
2. Review RBC Implementation Plan Chapter 10
3. SCDES will send out a survey
4. Meet virtually again to discuss survey results and implementation
5. Meet routinely in 2027

Upcoming WaterSC Meeting Topics

September 17th Topics

- Current Drought Development and Status
- Hydrology Impacts from Current Drought
- Private Well Overview and Drought Impacts
- Groundwater Trends and Evaluations

December 17th Potential Topics

- Review Annual Water Planning Update
- Guidance Document Update
- Water Quality Standards
- 303(d) and Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL)
- Stormwater
- Drought Policy

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Get in touch

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