

Location:

October 5, 2023

10:00 AM – 12:00 PM

Virtual

Action Items:

1. **PPAC members to consider if they would like to continue serving on the PPAC as it moves to DES on July 1, 2024.**
2. **PPAC members to review and provide feedback on Lower Savannah-Salkehatchie RBC applicants as necessary.**
3. **DHEC to distribute the updated redlined version of the SC Surface Water Act and to coordinate a stakeholder meeting.**

Meeting:

New Business

- Welcome and Budget Update
- Government Restructuring/ DES Update
- Statewide River Basin Planning Updates
- Edisto PPAC-RBC Member Comments on Edisto River Basin Plan
- Lower Savannah – Salkehatchie RBC Application Review
- Conclusion

Meeting Summary (October 5th)

The Deputy Director of the Land, Water and Conservation Division of the Department of Natural Resources, Ken Rentiers, called the October 5th quarterly meeting of the PPAC to order at 10:05 AM. The quarterly meeting of the South Carolina PPAC was held via Zoom meetings application. The PPAC held a public comment period with no public comment received. Approval of minutes and summary documents from the April 6th meeting were unanimous as was approval of the October 5th meeting agenda.

The meeting began with a welcome from Ken Rentiers. Ken welcomed all on the call and appreciated everyone attending. Budget update included the \$5.8 million request of which \$3 million was funded. Those funds should get the first round of river basin plans completed. The new Department of Environmental Services (DES) will request the remaining \$2.8 million in future budget requests. Rob Devlin, DHEC, echoed the comment and reiterated the intent to align proposals with DNR's budget request and work towards a successful transition of water planning to the new DES.

Rob Devlin then discussed the current process with the SC Department of Administration to structure the new DES agency which includes DHEC and DNR's Hydrology Section and Aquatic Nuisance program.

The restructuring process is ongoing until the new agency begins July 1, 2024. Rob expressed his thoughts about the PPAC and hoped the PPAC would stay together under the new DES.

Scott updated the PPAC on the ongoing State Water Planning process which included updates on the Edisto final plan, Broad draft plan, Pee Dee, Saluda, Upper Savannah, Lower Savannah-Salkehatchie, Santee, and Catawba planning processes. The Edisto plan has been completed with implementation efforts to begin Fall of 2023. The Broad draft plan will be presented at public meeting #3 in Spartanburg at the end of November. The Pee Dee (16 meetings), Saluda (7 meetings), Upper Savannah (2 meetings), are making progress and are on or ahead of schedule. The updated State Water Plan would be prepared from 2025-2026. The Lower Savannah-Salkehatchie RBC process would begin in November or December. Comments from PPAC members who voted against the Edisto Plan was on the agenda, but the members were not present for the discussion.

Rob Devlin led discussion about the redlined Surface Water Act which was distributed in March following meetings with PPAC members in January and February of 2023 and years of stakeholder comments. An updated version will be distributed to the PPAC members for review and comment. A technical stakeholder meeting will follow distribution of the updated redlined Surface Water Act concepts files. The meeting will be held in December to allow PPAC members to review the files ahead of the meeting.

The Lower Savannah-Salkehatchie application process was completed and the PPAC weighed in on the LSSRBC applicants. Scott Harder led the discussion which summarized all applicants and the PPAC will provide additional feedback as necessary on the applicants.

Ken Rentiers concluded the meeting at 11:08 AM.

The next quarterly meeting of the PPAC is currently scheduled for January 4, 2024.

Summary: Tom Walker

Approved: 4/30/24