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CATAWBA-WATEREE DROUGHT MANAGEMENT ADVISORY GROUP

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Drought Management Advisory Group Maintains Current Water Use Restrictions

The Catawba-Wateree Drought Management Advisory Group (CW-DMAG) today recommended its members continue with the present restrictions that limit outdoor water uses to one day per week. The Catawba-Wateree Basin remains in a Stage 3 drought. Local water suppliers will provide additional guidance on restrictions for their jurisdictions as appropriate.

"This week's rain helped, but 2008 rainfall is still below normal and most indicators of the drought's severity are still at Stage 3," said Ed Bruce, CW-DMAG coordinator. "We've been able to keep the lakes up because of a combination of customer water conservation and the elimination of hydro generation except to provide enough water for downstream users."

"Starting the summer already in Stage 3 water use restrictions has helped keep water use down", said Jimmy Bagley, Rock Hill's utility director. "Until we get a lot more rain, we need the continued cooperation of all water users in the basin during this extended drought."

The CW-DMAG will review the drought conditions and its recommendations again in late July.

Drought and Weather Indicators

In arriving at its recommendation, the CW-DMAG reviewed the area's major drought indicators along with the National Weather Service's predictions of future weather trends.

The U.S. Drought Monitor map continues to show the area mostly in an "Extreme" drought, just one level better than its worst drought designation, but some areas in the upper basin are now listed in an "Exceptional" drought, the worst designation.

The long-term trends for groundwater levels have continued to decrease, and levels are still well below normal for this time of year.

The six-month average of area stream flows has peaked near 46 percent of normal, keeping it in Stage 3.

The reservoir storage index has generally continued to decline though it has shown a positive response from the recent rainfall.

Rainfall - To date 2008's (and considering the recent rainfall) rainfall has been about eight inches below normal.

National Weather Service is predicting a normal probability for average rainfall over the next couple of weeks.

The Catawba-Wateree Drought Management Advisory Group (CW-DMAG) was formed to regularly review the drought status and to recommend and coordinate needed actions for the Groups' members. It also reviews the Low Inflow Protocol (LIP) and recommends possible improvements to Duke Energy. Normally scheduled to meet once a year, the CW-DMAG since late summer 2007 has received weekly drought status reports and has met as a group at least monthly. CW-DMAG members include the area's public water suppliers and several large industrial users that withdraw water from the Basin, NC and SC agencies, the US Geological Survey, and Duke Energy. The CW-DMAG and the Low Inflow Protocol (LIP) are outcomes of Duke Energy's relicensing process for the Catawba-Wateree Hydro Project. The LIP will become part of Duke Energy's New License for the Project to be issued by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission.