

CATAWBA-WATEREE DROUGHT MANAGEMENT ADVISORY GROUP

News Release

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Drought Management Advisory Group Continues Mandatory One-Day Watering, Conservation

The Catawba-Wateree Drought Management Advisory Group (CW-DMAG) today recommended its members continue with the current mandatory outdoor water use limit that allows a maximum of one-day-a-week watering and with encouraging conservation. The Group noted that, while heavy localized rains have fallen in some areas, the Catawba-Wateree Basin remains in a Stage 3 drought. Local water suppliers will provide additional guidance on restrictions for their jurisdictions as appropriate.

“Recent isolated storms have provided some runoff of rain in small areas but most drought indicators remain steady at Stage 3,” said Ed Bruce, CW-DMAG coordinator. “We’ve been able to keep the lake levels near their Target levels, but other indicators show no sign of improvement.”

Natural evaporation from the reservoirs and transpiration from the area’s trees and plants have contributed to keeping some drought indicators at levels similar to last month.

“Water use restrictions and conservation are the only way we’ll be able to continue providing water for essential use during this extended drought,” said Tom Couch, City of Camden Public Works Director. “We need the continued cooperation of all water users in the basin.”

The CW-DMAG will continue to review the drought conditions and re-evaluate its recommendations at its next meeting in late August.

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 parts of the basin in an “Extreme” drought, just one level better than its worst drought designation. Some areas in the northern and western parts of the basin continue to be listed in an “Exceptional” drought, the worst designation.

The long-term trends for groundwater levels continue to decline and are still well below normal for this time of year.

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

The reservoir storage index has declined slightly to just below the normal level for this time of year.

Rainfall: To date 2008’s rainfall (including recent rainfall) has been about nine inches below normal. It would appear that July rainfall has improved from June though still below long term average for the month.

National Weather Service is predicting a normal probability for average rainfall over the next couple of weeks. However, this appears to be significantly influenced by the higher expectation of tropical storms. August is likely to be below average without tropical activity.

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.

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