

Catawba-Wateree Drought Management Advisory Group

Meeting Summary

January 15, 2008

CMU's Lee S. Dukes Water Treatment Plant

Member Organizations Present:

Bowater

Charlotte Mecklenburg Utilities

Chester Metropolitan District

City of Belmont

City of Camden

City of Gastonia

City of Hickory

City of Lenoir

City of Morganton

City of Mooresville

City of Mount Holly

City of Newton

City of Rock Hill

City of Valdese

Duke Energy Carolinas

International Paper

Invista

Lancaster County Sewer & Water

District

Lincoln County

Lugoff-Elgin Water Authority

NCDENR-PWSS

NCDWR

Town of Granite Falls

Union-Lancaster Catawba River Water

Treatment Plant

USGS

York County

Other Organizations Present:

City of Fort Mill

HDR Engineering

Kearns & West, Inc.

University of South Carolina

Introductions, Agenda Review, and Announcements

1. Ken Kearns opened the meeting with introductions and reviewed the agenda.

LIP Trigger Update

2. Ed Bruce showed a chart of the Catawba-Wateree Storage Index (SI) and noted that the SI is almost at a Stage 1 level. However, the Basin is still in Stage 3 because all of the drought triggers must return to Stage 3 or lower before there is a change in Stage. The streamflow and drought monitor triggers are still in Stage 4.

Duke Operations and Meteorological Update

3. George Galleher provided an update on area meteorology predictions and Duke's hydro operations. The area's total rainfall for 2007 was 27.86 inches, which is about 18 inches behind the long-time average. 2007 was the driest year on record in North Carolina and third driest for South Carolina. Some rain and soil moisture improvement has led to an improvement in lake levels. Lake James has gained nearly four feet; Lake Norman has increased several inches; Lake Wylie has gained more than a foot, and Lake Wateree is now close to 97 feet. The change in groundwater can be attributed to trees no longer pulling the water out of the ground. In addition, the much lower natural evaporation has contributed the improved lake levels.

Water-Use Restrictions Analysis and Results

4. Kevin Mosteller shared an analysis of the 2006 and 2007 withdrawal and return information collected from the water suppliers and Duke. This data showed the impact of the water-use restrictions on net outflow. The group discussed how much water was conserved due to the water-use restrictions and how to best show that. The group agreed that looking at the data from August 2007 to October 2007 shows the effect of the water-restrictions because the weather conditions were fairly consistent through these months. The group also agreed that the data show, in multiple ways, water use was reduced between 25 and 30 percent during the Stage 2 and Stage 3 implementation. However, the best way to analyze the true amount of savings is to predict what the use would have been had water-use restrictions not been in place. Mosteller will collect data and provide the group with a prediction of what water use would have been if water-use restrictions were not in place.
5. Maeneen Klein and Steve Gilbert shared per-customer water-use results. Gilbert's data compared residential water-use numbers for 2007 to past five years. This allowed him to calculate a reduction percentage that accounted for growth over that period. Klein's data showed the reduction of water use per residential account, which also better adjusts for the region's growth. Mosteller noted that he will share with the group a case study that addresses different ways to measure the effectiveness of water-use restrictions.

Guidelines for Basinwide Coordination of Water-Use Restrictions for Each LIP Stage

6. Kearns reviewed the drought actions discussed at the last meeting, and the group continued to develop and refine actions that the group jointly feels are appropriate to the LIP Stages. The group agreed to form a subcommittee to develop better information how much water is used and/or conserved for each use category in the LIP restrictions. The group agreed that messages and materials should be developed to inform customers that another dry year is expected and that big landscaping jobs should wait until 2009.

Communicating/Implementing the Coordinated Water-Use Restriction

7. Klein showed drought-related advertising materials that will kick off a CMU January campaign developed to encourage customers to conserve water. Barry Gullet noted that these materials are also available for use by the DMAG members that might want to use the content with their own logo.

Conclusion

8. The next DMAG meeting will take place at 10:00 AM on Wednesday, February 13th at the Lee S. Dukes Water Treatment Plant in Huntersville.

Kearns adjourned the meeting.