KEOWEE-TOXAWAY DROUGHT MANAGEMENT ADVISORY GROUP
CONFERENCE CALL SUMMARY

Wednesday, December 10, 2014

Organizations Present
Anderson Regional Joint Water System, SC
Beaufort Jasper Water & Sewer Authority, SC
City of Seneca, SC
Duke Energy
Georgia EPD
Greenville Water, SC
HDR
Kearns & West
SC Dept. of Health & Environmental Control
SC Dept. of Natural Resources

Attendance Roll and Agenda Review
1. Ed Bruce of Duke Energy took attendance and reviewed the agenda.

Low Inflow Protocol (LIP) Status
2. Bruce gave an update on the overall status of the LIP triggers as of November 30, 2014. Between the end of October and the end of November, storage levels at the Duke Energy and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) reservoirs have stabilized. The Streamflow Trigger remained in Stage 0 from the previous month. The U.S. Drought Monitor is in Stage 0, Groundwater levels dropped slightly from the previous month. Overall, the Keowee-Toxaway (KT) Project remains in Stage 1.

3. Bruce provided greater detail on each trigger, including a slide showing the slight rise projected in Hartwell’s storage. The USACE reservoirs must reach two feet above their Level 1 trigger point to return to normal conditions. Without a very significant rainfall event, which is not predicted, USACE will likely remain in Level 1 for some time.

4. The rolling four-month average streamflow for the three streamflow gages tracked for the LIP is below the historical long-term average for the same four-month period.

5. The U.S. Drought Monitor map showed considerable improvement since the previous KT-DMAG call on November 10th for South Carolina and Georgia, except in the middle portion of the Savannah River Basin.

6. Bruce showed the four-year record for the groundwater gage in Oconee County. Groundwater levels for this gage are at the long-term monthly average.

7. Based on historical calculations, Oconee Nuclear Station’s (ONS) consumptive use in December is approximately 22 mgd. Cumulative surface evaporation for all of Duke Energy’s reservoirs in December is 27.9 mgd. The surface evaporation rates are unlikely to increase significantly before March.

8. Bruce reviewed Keowee’s releases to Hartwell during the previous month, which reflect provisions of the New Operating Agreement. There haven’t been any required releases in the previous four weeks. There have been releases for testing Keowee Hydro Station, as it is the back-up power supply for ONS.

9. It was reported that the South Carolina Drought Response Committee had a conference call on November 20th, and after significant discussion, the drought designation for all counties in the State were changed to Incipient Drought.
conditions. The U.S. Drought Monitor weighed heavily in this decision. The Committee will probably have another call in January.

10. KC Price, Greenville Water, gave an update on water levels and withdrawals from the Table Rock and North Saluda reservoirs and Stovall and Atkins treatment plants on Lake Keowee. Table Rock is 1.65 feet below full pond, and North Saluda 1.45 feet below, which is typical for the time of year. Their average production in December is 48.1 million gallons/day for all water treatment plants.

11. Bob Faires of the City of Seneca reported that, as of the end of November, rainfall at their intake was 1.7 inches below average and their production was about six million gallons/day.

12. Bruce discussed the possibility the Keowee-Toxaway LIP may return to Stage 0 at the beginning of January. To recover to a lower stage, the USACE storage would need to recover to the trigger entry point for that drought stage/level only. This nearly occurred at the beginning of December except for Thurmond’s levels, which lagged behind. Bruce anticipates Hartwell and Thurmond will reach and exceed their entry trigger levels for Level 1 by early January. However, he reminded the group that when the LIP returns to Stage 0, USACE will not necessary return to normal conditions due to the 2-foot buffer.

13. Kearns asked about the drought levels in parts of Georgia abutting the Savannah. Nap Caldwell suggested they are likely similar to the US Drought Monitor levels in the Savannah River Basin.

Update on Meteorology and Keowee-Toxaway Project Operations

14. George Galleher of Duke Energy summarized recent precipitation patterns and predictions. Keowee’s rainfall was about eight inches below the long-term average through November – similar to Greenville Water’s readings. The seven-day forecast was dry, and the 8-14 day outlook and December outlook are for equal chances of wet, dry, or normal conditions. However, Duke Energy’s forecasts are for wetter-than average-conditions for December through February. Approximately two-thirds of the State is predicted to be cooler than normal for December through February. Galleher reported soil moisture as drier than average as of December 8th and forecasted the soil to become wetter by the end of the month, and dry again toward the end of February.

15. Galleher encouraged continued water conservation, and Bruce stated they would notify the group in early January as to whether the KT Project was changing LIP Stage.

16. Caldwell added that in Georgia, water consumption has continued to decrease. He noted a recent article published in the Wall Street Journal of potential interest to the group, describing Germany’s struggle with its sanitary sewer systems as a result of a lack of water flow from such highly successful water conservation.