

## **Summary of Water Allocation Committee Meeting**

May 12, 2004, 10 A.M.  
Conference Room #3, 14<sup>th</sup> Floor, Archdale Building

### **Agenda**

#### **Action Items**

#### **I. House Bill 1215 Section 3: Water Conservation and Water Reuse Rules During Drought and Emergency Water Shortage Situations**

John Morris, Director of the Division of Water Resources (DWR) presented the draft rules governing water conservation and water reuse during droughts and water emergency situations. The rules were developed after meeting with representatives of the affected classes of water users. DWR requested the Water Allocation Committee's (WAC) permission to present the proposed permanent rules to the whole Environmental Management Commission at the July 13, 2004 meeting for the purpose of requesting permission to proceed with publication of the proposed rules and to conduct a public hearing.

Comments made by WAC members included the following:

- Would like to see an expansion of reporting requirements for all water users (not just community water systems).
- Data can be applied to get a more realistic picture of water use, quantity and availability throughout the state (NC) and in determining the effectiveness of conservation for protecting water source viability during water shortage emergencies.
- The proposed rules do not offer any guidelines for classifying water users.
- We (EMC) do not get many opportunities to actually oversee how water use is managed, so we should take full advantage of this situation with a more stringent rule.
- The proposed rules do not offer minimum water use reduction standards to implement in response to a water shortage.
- The rules should require annual usage reporting to generate data for an annual report on the state of NC's water availability and critical needs to establish a baseline from which to draw a conservation conclusion.

#### **Conclusions**

- The Committee will meet with DWR staff and water use representatives in June to work on rule language in an attempt to stay on schedule for its submission to the EMC.
- The future meeting will include briefings to the WAC on the type of water quantity data being collected and reporting methods.

## **Information Items**

### **I. Capacity Use Investigation for Bladen County**

Nat Wilson of DWR presented an update on the capacity use investigation requested by the WAC in December 2002. In the July 2004 meeting of the WAC, a more detailed report of the study with recommendations will be presented.

The report will include identification of trends in the use of ground water in the Southern Coastal Plain and resulting declines in ground water levels. It will also include the DWR's development of the area's hydrogeologic framework and drilling and monitoring well activities. A solution will be proposed to the Upper Cape Fear aquifer overuse problem, different from the solution the EMC adopted for the Central Coastal Plain.

### **II. Interbasin Transfers**

Phil Fragapane of DWR informed the Committee on three current matters regarding interbasin transfer certification.

#### **1. Charlotte-Mecklenburg Utilities**

The Environmental Management Commission (EMC) approved the certificate on March 14, 2002 with conditions. Condition #3 placed a "...moratorium on the installation of new interbasin transfer (IBT) water lines...into the Goose Creek subbasin...until the impacts of additional urban growth on the (Carolina heelsplitter) are fully evaluated." Charlotte-Mecklenburg Utilities (CMU) is now petitioning the moratorium be lifted.

CMU has drafted proposed mitigation measures in the Mint Hill Water Quality Design Manual. These measures, among other things, include ordinances that set minimum buffer width requirements on streams in the Mecklenburg County portions of the Goose Creek watershed. The Wildlife Resources Commission (WRC), NC Natural Heritage Program (NHP), and US Fish and Wildlife Service have reviewed the proposed measures, but do not agree with the proposed buffer widths.

Next Step: With or without full concurrence of the agencies, it is possible CMU will request the Water Allocation Committee (WAC) decide in July whether the petition may be presented to the EMC for a decision.

#### **2. Concord-Kannapolis**

Proposed Transfer: 24 MGD from Catawba River Basin to Rocky River Basin

Status: Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) submitted to support petition for IBT in December 2003 for Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) agency review. WRC and NHP commented. Issues include secondary and cumulative impacts of the transfer, and impacts on a number of federal species of concern and state endangered species potentially affected by the transfer.

Next Action: The petitioner is currently addressing issues raised in review and plans to resubmit the EIS for DENR review.

### **3. Kerr Lake Regional Water System (KLRWS)**

Proposed Transfer: Undetermined quantity from Roanoke River Basin to Tar and Neuse River Basins

Status: KLRWS has begun petition process. The State Clearinghouse is currently reviewing draft environmental assessment scope.

### **III. Drought Assessment**

Tom Fransen of DWR presented current and forecasted drought conditions. On May 4, portions of the State are were classified as abnormally dry, and a small portion in the south central part of the State was classified as under moderate drought. Forecasts predict below normal surface water levels in most of the state from May-June 2004.

Also presented was the Experimental NC Hydrologic/Water Supply Drought Assessment, a collaboration of several agencies to monitor drought conditions.