

**Land, Water & Conservation Division
Advisory Committee Minutes
Dennis Building, Room 335
Columbia, South Carolina
Thursday, February 5, 2009**

Present

William Simpson	Lynn Youmans
Chairman McShane	Charles Broadwell
Lewis Walker	Dean Moss
Nadim Aziz	Larry Nates
Patricia Hartung	Tom Garrison
Marvin Davant	James McLeod
Webb Smathers	

Staff:

Steve de Kozlowski	Ken Rentiers
Hope Mizzell	Marc Cribb
Barry Beasley	Chris Page
Dorothy Phillips	Michael Hook

Call to Order/Welcome: The February 5, 2009, meeting was called to order by Chairman William Simpson at 1:05 p.m. In compliance with the provisions of Section 30-4-80(e) (Freedom of Information Act), notification of this meeting was given to all persons, organizations, local news media, and other news media that requested such notification. Mr. Simpson reported that Mr. Murray, Mr. Stevens, and Mr. Kinard were absent.

Approval of October 9, 2008, Minutes: Motion was made by Mr. Marvin Davant to approve the October 9, 2008, minutes and seconded by Dr. Webb Smathers. The motion passed.

Presentation of Certificate of Appreciation: Mr. Simpson presented a Certificate of Appreciation to Mr. Von Snelgrove for his 34 years of outstanding and dedicated service to the S.C. Land Resources Conservation Commission, S.C. Department of Natural Resources, and the State's 46 Soil and Water Conservation Districts. *Mr. Bob Long, Dorchester County Commissioner, and Ms. Diane Edwins, Berkeley County Commissioner and Mr. Bill Simpson, Charleston County Commissioner presented Von with a painting as a gift of appreciation for his years of service.* Steve de Kozlowski again expressed his appreciation to Von for his contributions over the years and his assistance to the division in the past two years.

SCACD Update: Mr. Greg Henderson, President of the S.C. Association of Conservation Districts gave an update from the 2009 Annual Conference in Myrtle Beach. Greg stated that Senator Verdin and the new Acting Chief of the NRCS David White made a brief appearance at

the conference. The SCACD canceled their legislative reception for this year. In place of the reception, they are planning a capital visit in conjunction with the leadership conference.

Since August 2008, the conservation districts have increased their support of DNR Conservation Districts staff in attending SCACD training and functions. Greg reported that SCACD is planning the Southeast Region NACD meeting in Charleston in August and this meeting will be tied in with the fall meeting of commissioners.

Mr. Henderson introduced a policy position that was adopted by SCACD regarding qualifications for district commissioners considered for appointment. Greg requested that the committee provide conservation districts with a list of what qualifications and specific training requirements an applicant should complete to be appointed as district commissioner. Mr. Youmans stated that he had no problem with training, and suggested that training be available on computer. Mr. Henderson said that web based training had been discussed previously by the Association.

S. C. Waste Pesticide Program Update: Larry Boyleston, Assistant Commissioner, SCDA, gave an update on the waste pesticide recovery program. Mr. Boyleston reviewed how the program was started, the source of funding, how funds for the program would be handled, and the recovery process. SCDA was able to get \$75,000 in its budget and Clemson University through the pesticide program added another \$75,000 and applied for EPA grant. The program has an advisory council, which included, Von Snelgrove, Greg Henderson, forestry personnel, DHEC, Farm Bureau. A survey was taken in 2007 and it confirmed that most of the waste chemicals were located where most crops are grown, particularly tobacco and cotton. This program is collecting waste pesticides that have been discarded for many years; some areas had waste pesticides that contained DDT. The program started collecting pesticides in November 2008 in the coastal plain area with the assistance of a private company based in Sumter and DHEC. In the first 4 weeks of the program, almost 200,000 pounds of waste pesticides were collected. The pesticides are collected, packed, sealed, and then transported to Ohio for incineration. The long-term plan for the program is to divide the state into 4 regions and clean one region per year. Expansion of the program to non-farm chemicals has been considered.

Drought/Climate Update: Hope Mizzell, State Climatologist, reviewed the current drought status. On February 19, the Drought Response Committee will meet in Columbia to review the current drought status across the state. Hope provided a presentation that included information on monthly departures from normal for precipitation during the December – January period. Stating that in December, the state was receiving normal rainfall for that period but rainfall for January was far below normal. Hope noted that since 1878 Columbia had the eighth driest January on record, January is usually one of the wettest winter months. Dr. Mizzell concluded her presentation with a February – April forecast for warmer than normal temperatures and below normal precipitation.

Draft 2009 Aquatic Plant Management Plan: Chris Page of the Aquatic Nuisance Species Program provided the committee with some program spending facts showing the progress of the Aquatic Nuisance Species Program. Chris pointed out that since 1981, \$24 million has been spent in SC with a high of 2.8 million in 1994 in controlling invasive aquatic plant species, most

of that in hydrilla control. From 1991-1996, the peak of hydrilla in the Santee Cooper lakes, about \$12.7 million (avg 2.1 million per year) was spent on statewide control projects. In the past 12 years, only \$6.4 million dollars have been spent on controlling invasives in the state with an average of \$530,000 per year.

Chris reviewed the purpose and background of the aquatic nuisance species program and how it was established by law. The purpose was to prevent, identify, manage, and monitor problematic nuisance aquatic plant species. The program is administrated by DNR in coordination with the Aquatic Plant Management Council. Chris informed the advisory committee that Water Recreational Resource Funds (gas tax funds) have recently been used to provide more stable funding for the program.

Chris gave an overview of the Draft 2009 Aquatic Plant Management Plan that is available on the agency website and provided the committee with the public news release. An important part of the annual planning process is public review and input. Chris explained that after 30 days of review by the public and interested organizations, the comments are compiled and presented to the Aquatic Plant Management Council for review and consideration the final plan.

Chris reviewed some of the problem areas that require continuous treatment and areas that have had increased invasive species and planned treatment for 2009. Those areas include increased hydrilla coverage in the Santee Cooper Lakes, Goose Creek Reservoir, Lake Greenwood, and Lake Thicketty. He provided the committee with a handout summarizing the planned management operations and expenditures for 2009.

Interim Deputy Director's Report: Steve de Kozlowski introduced the new deputy director, Ken Rentiers, to the committee with a brief outline of experience Ken brings to the division. Steve updated the committee on additional budget cuts the agency has to make. He reminded the committee that LWC was very dependent on state appropriated money, so the budget cuts will have a greater impact on this division. Operational funds have been reduced by 60% and personnel funds by 27%, Steve outlined some of the plans for dealing with the budget cuts, such as not filling vacant and recently retired positions, increasing outside support, cutting back on travel, and pooling resources. He informed the committee that Barry Beasley would head the new section that combines Habitat Protection and Environmental Conservation as a cost saving measure.

Steve informed the committee of the three bills pending; two are comprehensive water planning bills; one in the house and one in the senate. Both bills essentially set up a water planning committee and the bills would make the committee responsible for establishing a comprehensive water plan. Steve also informed the committee about bill S 275, Surface Water Withdrawal Permitting Bill. The bill was introduced a few weeks ago from Senator Hayes and the bill includes minimum flows that are in line with DNR past recommendations. The state water assessment from 1983 is being updated and should be completed by June 09. The hydrology staff is working with DHEC and USGS to better coordinate groundwater monitoring by sharing wells, sharing data, and sharing equipment.

Committee Comments: Mr. Simpson addressed the committee regarding the current budget situation and reimbursement for traveling to advisory meetings. Mr. Youmans and Mr. Simpson chose not to seek travel reimbursement and they encouraged other committee members to do the same.

The committee continued lengthy discussions on the surface water withdrawal bill and the need for support by the members of the advisory committee and the conservation districts for bill's approval.

Executive Session: At 3:40 p.m., Mr. Youmans motioned to go into executive session for the purpose of discussing personnel issues with second by Mr. Moss. All were in favor.

At 3:45 p.m., motion to return to open session, seconded and all were in favor.

Mr. McLeod motioned that reappointments be approved and seconded by Mr. Moss, all were in favor. The Conservation District commissioner re-appointments were approved and are as follows: Ms. Elizabeth Johnston, Berkeley; Mr. James C. Lynch, Florence; Mr. Farris Michael Seymour, Laurens; Mr. C. Wayne Satterwhite, Newberry; Mr. George Ulmer, Orangeburg; and Mr. Jack L. Davis, Sumter.

Mr. McLeod made a motion to approve Ms. Smith and her appointment be pushed forward to the DNR Board for approval, seconded by Mr. Youmans, all were in favor. The new appointment was approved and is as follows: Ms. Patsy Smith, Pickens County.

There was a request from the Charleston District for an emeritus commissioner appointment for Mr. William C. Kennerty. Mr. McLeod made a motion to approve and seconded by Mr. Davant. All were in favor.

Next Meeting Date: April 9, 2009

Adjournment: Motion to adjourn was made by Mr. McLeod seconded by Mr. Davant. The meeting was adjourned at 3:50 p.m. All were in favor to adjourn.

Dorothy Phillips
Recording Secretary