

**Land, Water & Conservation Division: Advisory Committee Minutes  
Wampee Plantation, Berkeley County, SC  
Tuesday, August 17, 2021**

**Present:** Bill Simpson Patricia Hartung  
Webb Smathers (call-in) James McLeod  
Marvin Davant William Glenn  
Diane Edwins Ken Rentiers  
SCDNR Director Robert Boyles

**Staff:** Lorianne Riffin; Brooke Myres; Deanne Myrick; Tyler Brown (call-in)

**Guests:** Scott Lynch of Berkeley Blueways; Berkeley Conservation District  
Commissioners: Barry Jurs, Thomas Gourdin, Troy Diel, and Lynn Curtis

**Call to Order/Welcome:** The **August 17, 2021** meeting was called to order by Chairman Simpson at 10:20am. In compliance with provisions of Section 30-4-80(e) (Freedom of Information Act), notification of this meeting was posted in public places. **Chairman Simpson** welcomed and thanked all for attending.

- **Diane Edwins** delivered invocation.
- **Chairman** introduced guests and speakers and Ms. Edwins introduced Berkeley Conservation District Commissioners
- **Chairman recognized DNR Director Boyles and asked for an update on any relevant information to include specifics on recent land acquisition near Fort Johnson in Charleston.**

**Director Boyles' update:** SCDNR has acquired 23 acres on the Charleston Harbor thanks to our legislative leadership in conjunction with partner agreements including SCPRT. DNR will manage conservation and other aspects of the land while SCPRT will manage the facilities.

**Chairman:** *Thank you and moving to item #4 on agenda, please refer to the copy of the typed minutes from the May 18, 2021 meeting for consideration. Any comments or questions/further/additional discussion? Hearing none, motion was made by Mr. McLeod to approve the May 18, 2021 minutes as typed and seconded by Mr. Glenn. With all in favor and none opposed, motion passed.*

**Deputy Director's Report; Ken Rentiers:** highlights for all LWC sections are shared in our divisional monthly report; few things here additionally:

**Climate Office** - Marc Malsick retired and Frank Straight was hired – he is very experienced; doing a great job; working to upgrade current database. Additionally, Elliott Wickham joined us primarily handling drought issues; he represents us on the US Drought Monitor; benefits us in this impactful position. Robert Clark is GIS Manager/ FEMA/ Flood mitigation/ Lidar reviews and updates and has updated, continues to update the hurricane database; modeling I-73

corridor/models where road goes near scenic rivers. Also, Ashley River Watershed work and providing information for proper planning.

**River Conservation Programs** - Sept. is “Beach Sweep/ River Sweep” month; Bill Marshall has multiple projects, including great work on Black River; also organized and recognized the Environmental Awareness Award winner, Jane Hiller, at a ceremony with the governor and other officials which was nice event and well attended.

**Botany** – Keith Bradley just hired a new assistant botanist and they are making new discoveries and conserving rare plants throughout the state; making progress updating database there also.

**Cultural Preserves** – Archaeology group has another project scheduled at Pocky Island to re-visit site before the shoreline / area is lost to the ocean; Archaeology hosted 19 interns this summer and just released the monthly newsletter which is a good resource to keep up with their work.

**Aquatic Nuisance** – 281 acres of control areas surveyed and reported/SC lakes and waterways & habitat issues.

**Conservation Districts** – National Envirothon Competition was held and our SC winning team from Spartanburg placed 3<sup>rd</sup> overall

**Geological Survey** – 3 measurable earthquakes in July

**Water Planning** – strong partnership making progress with updating the State Water Plan; Edisto Basin Council has had 14 meeting; stakeholder-driven plan coming to fruition and looking ahead to Pee Dee and Broad Basin work; coming together; updating surface water information.

**Senate Bill #2** (Sen. Peeler sponsored it) - involves reorganization of SC DHEC; Ken R. appointed as task force member of “Shape SC” re: what’s broken at DHEC/ how to fix.

**Chairman: Thank you & on to “Reports” agenda items / Lorianne Riggin.**

**Lorianne – DNR Office of Environmental Programs Director – presentation highlights include:**

- We review proposed environmental impacts as published in the regulatory arena to make recommendations for the benefit of natural resources
- Why? Because DNR is charged by state law to manage, protect, and enhance wildlife, fisheries and marine resources.
- We provide science-based expertise to benefit our natural resources and our citizens
- Examples of Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) projects: Catawba Wateree Project, encompasses a 300-mile stretch of the Catawba River; Parr-Fairfield Project, located on the Broad River in Fairfield and Newberry Counties
- Also handle process to mitigate/minimize impacts to wildlife/ to restore damages done; examples include: Exxon-Mobile 1900-1950 hazardous waste released/ restoration process/actions being implemented now; Koppers 1942; also restoration projects ongoing; MV Everreach 2012: oil spill Cooper River – ongoing restoration projects
- Permits required when an affected action potentially causing environmental impacts

- Types of Environmental Reviews: Water Quality/Navigable Waters/Mining/FERC/Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC)/National Environmental Policy Act triggered projects/ Natural Resource Damage Assessments related to oil spills and hazardous waste sites
- General permit-related activities include: work on DNR-managed tribal impoundments/ oyster reef restoration & living shoreline research/ DNR work including: fisheries habitat/bank stabilization/docks, piers, boat lift installations/ramp construction/wetland & stream restoration enhancements and more.

*Chairman: Thank you next is Berkeley Blueways –*

**Mr. Scott Lynch, Berkeley Blueways**, works for blazethatrail.com - highlights of presentation:

- Berkeley County has 23 kayak trails > 175 miles to paddle; 25 paddling trails; walking trails; biking trails; which are all included on this interactive directory and map system integrated gps and compatible with your handheld device through the downloadable application on your smartphone.
- Future plans to establish additional details to include: Berkeley Blueways/Berkeley Walkways/Berkeley Bikeways/Berkeley Gameways
- Free camping in Berkeley County along the trails and all information is available with details on trip planning

\*\*\* Break for Lunch \*\*\* Reconvened at 1:05pm \*\*\*

*Chairman: next on agenda is Envirothon and Conservation Districts update*

**Brooke Myres, Conservation Districts** gave her report to include:

- Envirothon SC was successful/virtual and Spartanburg HS took 1<sup>st</sup> place then went on to compete in National/International Envirothon and won 3<sup>rd</sup> place overall and 1<sup>st</sup> place on the soils portion of the exam.
- Planning February roll-out for Conservation Districts Strategic Plan which will result from a planning session scheduled in October in Columbia.
- Other plans include Conservation Districts standard template for each to provide individual annual reports which we will compile
- Palmetto Leadership on the Environment, Ag and Forestry (PLEAF) – As participant who has benefitted, encourage you to spread the word that the next class applications are due Sept. 15<sup>th</sup>, please contact me if you know of someone or would like to know more

Mr. Mcleod responded that Conservation Districts need to have their employees attend the upcoming employees association meeting and commented that getting teachers involved/aware with Envirothon is key to getting participation.

**Tyler Brown, Conservation Districts** gave report (by phone) to include:

- Changed application forms for District funding to better understand what funding is coming into each district and it's a good update
- Staff has been out in the field gathering signatures on the Memorandum of Understanding/agreement and we've got 31/46 signed.
- Encourage all to attend the SCACD annual business meeting later this month; see flyer in your folder; at the Phillips Market Center/ SC Farmers Market
- Also, Annual Partnership Conference will be Feb. 21-23 in person in Charleston again, more details to come
- Sterling Sadler inducted into NACD SE "Hall of Fame" at ceremony at the recent conference in Gulf Shores, AL; represented us well and will continue to do so

***Chairman: moving to business of Conservation District Commissioner Appointments: Any questions/further/additional discussion before we move to business on the agenda?***

***Motion made by Glenn and seconded by Mcleod to go into Executive Session for discussion; with return to regular session at 1:35pm.***

***Any further discussion by anyone before we consider the slate of applicants on the chart in the folders?***

***Hearing none, please review the list provided of Commissioner appointments and re-appointments before we consider them; Chairman called on staff and members for any comments; hearing none, is there a motion to approve the new appointees?***

***Motion made by McLeod to approve new appointees as listed and seconded by Edwins; all voted in favor and none opposed; thereby approved.***

***Now to review the list of re-appointments, any questions/comments? Hearing none, a motion was made by Davant to approve re-appointees as listed and seconded by Edwins; all voted in favor and none opposed; thereby approved.***

Chairman read aloud the names of each new appointee & re-appointee;

Chairman asked staff to forward the approved list to the DNR Board for their consideration at the next meeting.

***Chairman: This concludes the meeting unless anyone has additional comments or discussion? Are there any other comments or concerns for discussion? Hearing none, the Chairman thanked all for being at the meeting then adjourned the meeting at 1:40pm***