

APPENDIX 10
(SOUTH CAROLINA DROUGHT PLAN)
TO THE SOUTH CAROLINA EMERGENCY OPERATIONS PLAN

I. INTRODUCTION

- A. As required by state and federal law, South Carolina’s policy is to be prepared for any emergency or disaster, including drought. A drought is a slowly developing disaster that may occur over several months or years. Impacts from drought may occur quickly for some sectors while for others it may take years to have an impact.
- B. South Carolina State Regulations 58-1 and 58-101 require contingency plans and implementing procedures for major hazards, such as long-term power outage, coordinated by the State with counties that have a potential of being impacted.
- C. A drought event can have a major impact on the State economy and will affect everything from agriculture to industry to individuals.

II. PURPOSE

- A. Establish procedures for the State and Counties when responding to a drought situation.
- B. Identify roles and responsibilities of local and state agencies when responding to severe or extreme drought conditions that warrants a state coordinated response.
- C. Provides statewide planning and response strategies that allow State and County Emergency Management officials to effectively and efficiently plan and coordinate the application of local, State, and Federal resources in response to a severe or extreme drought event to prevent loss of life, minimize damage, lessen the economic impact, and protect the environment.

III. SCOPE

- A. The South Carolina Drought Response Plan addresses operations to be conducted in coordination and mutual support with the South Carolina Emergency Operations Plan (SCEOP).
- B. This plan complements the SCEOP and addresses responsibilities, processes, and actions specific to drought events.

IV. FACTS AND ASSUMPTIONS

- A. Facts
 - 1. There will be notice before the Drought Response Plan is activated due to the slow development of drought situations.
 - 2. Wildfire risk increases as drought continues.

3. Most response measures will require a Declaration of a State of Emergency by the Governor and may include Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) support.
4. The South Carolina Drought Response Act of 2000 describes four levels of drought conditions:
 - a. Incipient drought - There is a threat of a drought as demonstrated by drought indices.
 - b. Moderate drought - There is an increasing threat of a drought as demonstrated by drought indices.
 - c. Severe drought - A drought that has increased to severe levels as demonstrated by drought indices. This phase must be verified utilizing data, forecasts, and outlooks from various agencies. A drought of this severity normally requires an official declaration by the Drought Response Committee, and water withdrawals and use restrictions.
 - d. Extreme drought - A drought that has increased to extreme levels as demonstrated by drought indices. This phase must be verified utilizing data, forecasts, and outlooks from various agencies. A drought of this severity normally requires an official declaration by the Drought Response Committee, and water withdrawals and use restrictions.
5. The Drought Response Act requires all public water suppliers to develop and implement local drought plans and ordinances.

B. Assumptions

1. Not all areas of the State will be affected the same way at the same time during a drought. Therefore, different types of drought response operations may be occurring simultaneously in the State. State actions in response to “Severe” or “Extreme” drought conditions may be identical as individual communities may be in both conditions in varying degrees.
2. The State Drought Response Plan may be in effect at the same time other measures are being implemented by the Drought Response Committee and local water systems.
3. Legislative action may be required to approve coordination and negotiations with surrounding States to coordinate response measures.
4. A severe or extreme drought condition could trigger implementation of the South Carolina Emergency Operations Plan (SCEOP) and this appendix.

- a. Activation for a drought response could be a long-term activation lasting for months or longer.
- b. The response may expand or contract depending on the drought conditions and/or county needs.

V. SITUATION

- A. For the purposes of this plan “Drought” means a period of diminished precipitation which results in negative impacts upon the hydrology, agriculture, biota, energy, and economy of the State.
- B. Droughts are naturally recurring events in South Carolina. The length and severity have varied greatly over the last 25 years. The worst recorded drought, from 1999 to 2002, was one of the longest and most severe in more than 100 years. The 2007-2008 drought was shorter in duration than the 1999-2002 drought, but it had a stronger intensity, especially for the Upstate region. Parts of the State experienced severe drought again in 2011-2012 and 2016-2017.
- C. Drought conditions are determined by using established means of measuring precipitation, stream flow, soil moisture and well levels. These combined measurements form indices from which the degrees of drought are categorized.

For information on how the SC Drought Response Committee determines the drought status, reference <http://www.scdrought.com/current.html>

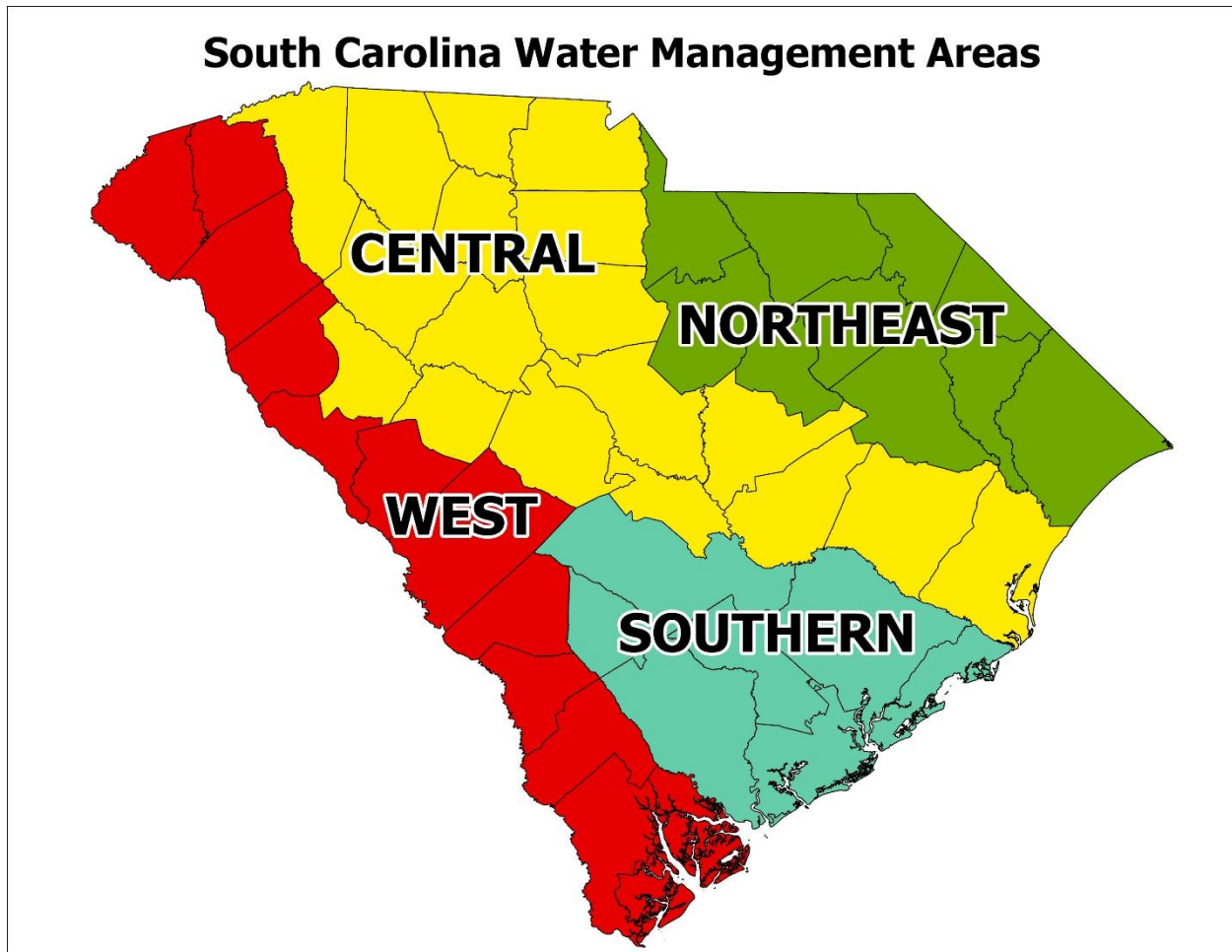
VI. CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS

- A. The South Carolina Drought Response Committee
 1. The South Carolina Drought Response Committee is composed of representatives from the SC Department of Natural Resources (SCDNR), SC Department of Environmental Control (SCDES), SC Forestry Commission (SCFC), SC Department of Agriculture (SCDA), South Carolina Emergency Management (SCEMD), and others as required.
 2. The Drought Response Committee is responsible for monitoring the drought conditions in the State, setting the drought level within the State, making recommendations to assist with managing the drought, and recommending the implementation of this plan.
 3. The Drought Response Committee shall evaluate drought conditions within Drought Management Areas to determine if a need exists for action beyond the scope of local government. The committee shall consider:
 - Effectiveness of local drought ordinances and plans in protecting and ensuring adequate water supplies.

- Regional impacts of water use on water sources and water users.
- Short term and extended climatological forecasts.

4. For this plan, the State will use four Drought Management Areas:

DROUGHT MANAGEMENT AREA	COUNTIES		
West	Oconee Pickens Anderson Abbeville	McCormick Edgefield Aiken Barnwell Allendale	Hampton Jasper Beaufort
Central	Greenville Spartanburg Cherokee York Laurens Union	Chester Greenwood Newberry Fairfield Saluda Lexington	Richland Sumter Calhoun Clarendon Williamsburg Georgetown
Northeast	Chesterfield Marlboro Darlington Florence	Dillon Marion Horry	Lancaster Kershaw Lee
Southern	Orangeburg Bamberg	Colleton Dorchester	Charleston Berkeley



5. The Drought Response Committee will consult with representatives of municipalities, counties, commissions of public works, public and private water suppliers, public service districts, power generation facilities, industries, special purpose districts, emergency management agencies, and any other water users in the affected Drought Management Area while evaluating drought conditions and preparing recommended actions.
6. The Committee is also responsible for evaluating and identifying priorities to support water conservation and mitigation measures for the Drought Management Areas.

B. Drought Response Committee Recommendations

1. Upon determination that action in addition to local measures is necessary to ensure adequate supplies of water in Drought Management Areas, the Drought Response Committee shall prepare recommendations to reduce or alleviate drought impacts and submit the recommendations to the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources for implementation.

2. If the recommendations involve the curtailment of water use, the committee shall determine which categories of non-essential water use must be curtailed in accordance with South Carolina Code of Regulations, Chapter 121, Section 11, Paragraph 10 (Curtailment of Water Use during Droughts).
3. Upon confirmation of an Extreme Drought Alert Phase, the Drought Response Committee may recommend the Governor issue a public statement that an extreme drought situation exists, and appropriate water-use and withdrawal restrictions be imposed.
4. Should the drought situation continue to deteriorate to the point that the safety, health, or welfare of people or infrastructure within a Drought Management Area is seriously threatened or impacted, the Drought Response Committee will immediately notify the Governor per the South Carolina Code of Regulations, Chapter 121, Section 11, and provide a priority list of recommended actions to alleviate the effects of drought conditions in the affected drought management areas.
5. Once the Drought Response Committee categorizes counties in the State in a “Severe” or “Extreme” drought condition, the Committee may request that the ESF-15 (Public Information), in conjunction with the DNR Public Information Officer, initiate a statewide Public Information media campaign.

C. Plan Activation

1. This plan could be activated when the following conditions are present:
 - a. Local resources are unable to provide for the safety of its citizens due to low water or lack of water. Examples include
 - (1) Initiation of water restrictions or rationing.
 - (2) Water supplies are being depleted to the level of exhaustion.
 - (3) Local utility companies are expected to shut down hydroelectric power generation plants.
 - b. The requirement of firefighting resources beyond the capabilities of the SC State Forestry Commission and implementing the Fire Fighter Mobilization plans or the Southeastern Forest Fire Compact.
 - c. At the direction of the SCEMD Director or his/her designee based on Drought Response Committee recommendations and/or the level of requested county support.
2. The Drought Response Committee will notify SCEMD that drought conditions have progressed to a level that may exceed local capacity and

require the activation of this plan. This is not likely to occur until the Extreme Drought phase.

3. Upon notification from the Drought Response Committee, The SCEMD Director or his/her designee will activate this plan, if appropriate.
4. The activation of this plan may require the activation of the State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC) and State Emergency Response Team (SERT). The SEOC may initially activate at OPCON 2 (partial activation), staffed by SCEMD personnel, and select Emergency Support Functions (ESF) as required.
 - a. Upon activation, SCEMD will develop a Drought Emergency Executive Order for the Governor's signature [See Attachment A (Draft Governor Executive Order)].
 - b. The SERT, in coordination with the Drought Response Committee, will work with local Emergency Management Directors and local water suppliers to develop appropriate response and recovery measures.
 - c. The measures could include but are not limited to:
 - (1) Activation of Community Points of Distribution (CPOD) to assist with the distribution of donated or purchased water.
 - (2) Coordination with DES, FEMA, and the USACE to assist with drilling of new water wells, desalinization, purification, or other related projects.
 - (3) Providing relief assistance to communities and individuals affected by the drought [See Attachment B Programs Available to Support Drought Response].

D. Actions available to the State to assist communities under this plan may apply under either severe or extreme drought conditions.

E. Actions by Phase

1. Ongoing/Year-round

Water systems, power generating facilities, and industries should implement drought management plans.

2. Incipient Drought







The Drought Response Committee increases monitoring activities.



3. Moderate Drought
 - a. DNR begins to release public information statements.
 - b. Appropriate agencies begin to accelerate monitoring activities.
4. Severe Drought

DNR may restrict water use in affected areas if recommended by the Drought Response Committee.
5. Extreme Drought
 - a. When directed by the Governor, each State agency will develop a list of actions to conserve internal water usage.
 - b. All State agencies will develop and refine drought response measures that they can implement. This would include, for example, relief support, and tracking impacts.
 - c. The SERT will develop response plans based upon the situation. Some of the remediation could include hauling water, drilling new wells, providing temporary hook ups to other water systems, and coordinating rationing operations.

VII. DISASTER INTELLIGENCE AND COMMUNICATIONS

- A. See Section VIII (Disaster Intelligence and Communications) of the SCEOP Base Plan.
- B. Lifeline Sector Analysis
 1. The table below lists possible impacts to the state's lifeline sectors associated with a drought. While not all-inclusive, this list assists the SERT's ability to respond effectively by proactively identifying possible areas of concern before impacts occur.
 2. Food, Hydration, Shelter is the lifeline most likely to have significant impacts.

Lifeline	Scope of Possible Impacts
 <p>Safety and Security</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water utilities may not be able to provide proper water pressure for fire suppression. • Dry conditions increase the risk of wildfires.
 <p>Food, Hydration, Shelter</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disruption in agribusiness is likely and includes production, harvest, manufacturing, and retail. This will have cascading impacts on employment, tax revenues, and commerce. • Disruptions in agribusiness may cause loss of availability to human food, animal feed, and non-food agricultural products (including forestry and timber products).
 <p>Health and Medical</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loss of clean water will lead to degradation of critical medical functions. Health Care Facilities may need to evacuate if clean water is not accessible. Acute care facilities may need to reduce census or stop elective procedures. Outpatient procedures like Dialysis may need to be rescheduled or relocated. EMS response capacity may be reduced. • Increased rates of illness due to the lack of potable water, clean water for hygiene and sanitation, wastewater sanitation, sanitary food preparation tools (cooking), and other related mechanisms of mitigating ingestion and exposure to pathogens.
 <p>Energy (Power & Fuel)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hydroelectric generation plant operations may decrease or cease.
 <p>Communications</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No major impacts expected.
 <p>Transportation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lower water levels may impact operations at ports. • Drier soils may increase the risk of sinkholes and flash flooding which may impact roadways.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any facility requiring cooling may lose access to water supply.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drinking water production may be impacted due to lower reservoir levels. • Wastewater utilities will be hindered as many have limited backup power, leading to discharges of partially treated or untreated sewage. • Any disruption to potable water sources for human and animal consumption, and access to clean water to use for appropriate sanitation and hygiene is a critical issue for public health, animal health, and food supply chains. • Impacts to private and public wells not part of a public utility are also expected.

VIII. RESPONSIBILITIES

A. General

1. See Section IX (Organization and Assignment of Responsibilities) of the SCEOP Base Plan for the general roles and responsibilities of county, state, and federal agencies in preparation, response, and recovery from a disaster impacting the State.
2. Agencies represented on the Drought Response Committee will provide members to the SEOC as requested.

B. Emergency Support Functions

1. ESF 3 (Public Works and Engineering)
 - SC National Guard (Coordinating Agency)
 - a. Maintain awareness of water and wastewater facility impacts and provide assessments to the SEOC.
 - b. In conjunction with other ESF-3 partners, assist with identifying areas on well water that may need bottled water/ other forms of hydration delivered.
2. ESF 4 (Firefighting)
 - South Carolina Forestry Commission (Coordinating Agency)

- a. Upon activation of this plan, be prepared to deploy one or more Incident Management Teams to support drought response activities.
- b. Coordinate alternate water resource availability for wildfires.

SC Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation

Coordinate alternate water resource availability for structural fires.

3. ESF 5 (Emergency Management)

SC Emergency Management Division (Coordinating Agency)

- a. Establish the Executive Group to provide executive oversight, to include prioritization of limited resources.
- b. Assist in drafting the Governor’s Executive Order.
- c. Establish a working group to develop response, recovery, and mitigation plans in response to severe or extreme drought conditions within the State.

4. ESF 6 (Mass Care)

SC Department of Social Services (Coordinating Agency)

- a. In conjunction with other ESF-6 partners, assist in distributing bottled water in areas impacted by a loss of drinking water.

5. ESF 10 (Environmental and Hazardous Material Operations)

SC Department of Environmental Services (Coordinating Agency)

- a. Work with the Drought Response Committee to ease or waive well drilling permit restrictions, as necessary, to support mitigation plans.
- b. Maintain a statewide groundwater well monitoring system.
- c. Maintain records including locations of public water supply facilities.

6. ESF 11 (Food Services)

SC Department of Social Services (Coordinating Agency)

- a. Evaluate whether the drought conditions and related impacts meet the eligibility criteria for implementation for a Disaster Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (DSNAP).

7. ESF 12 (Energy)

SC Office of Regulatory Staff (Coordinating Agency)

- a. Monitor the nuclear power production and hydro-electric facilities power production and report any loss of capability due to lack of water.
- a. Assist in gathering economic loss information from the energy producing sector in the State.

8. ESF 14 (Initial Recovery and Mitigation)

SC Emergency Management Division (Coordinating Agency)

- a. Compile damage and cost information.
- b. Coordinate and direct restoration and recovery operations when local government resources are exhausted.
- c. Provide impacted populations access to State and Federal assistance programs in dealing with a drought emergency.
- d. Provide information on relief programs available from both the State and Federal level.

9. ESF 15 (Public Information)

SC Emergency Management Division (Coordinating Agency)

- a. Develop and initiate a statewide public information campaign as requested by the Drought Response Committee.
- b. In coordination with Drought Response Committee, issue press releases as needed providing updates on the drought status and actions being taken.
- c. Issue weekly press releases providing updates on the drought status and actions being taken.

10. ESF 17 (Agriculture and Animals)

Clemson University Livestock Poultry Health (Coordinating Agency)

- a. Compile agricultural loss data from impacted areas of the State by either sector or region submitted by all primary and support agencies.

- b. Develop and maintain contact lists of stakeholders to address impacts to livestock/poultry and meat industries.

11. ESF 19 (Military Support)

SC National Guard (Coordinating Agency)

- a. Support water hauling operations to include providing security.
- b. Upon activation of the SERT, provide an equipment list of water transport equipment and water purification equipment available within the state.

12. ESF 24 (Business and Industry)

SC Department of Commerce (Coordinating Agency)

- a. Compile economic impact data from affected areas of the State by either sector or region.
- b. Where possible, compile the economic impact data, increase in unemployment, and decreases in tourism levels or lodging receipts to aid in Federal Disaster Declaration determinations.
- c. Identify major commercial and industrial problem areas.

C. State Agency Offices

1. SC Department of Natural Resources, State Climatology Office

- a. Provide the Drought Response Committee notification of the onset of each Drought Alert Phase in Drought Management Areas.
- b. Continue to evaluate information from various sources and provide updates on the State drought assessment.
- c. In coordination with DES, maintain and expand the state-wide groundwater well monitoring system to assess well water levels.
- d. Evaluate climate outlooks and forecasts to provide information regarding future conditions for the State.
- e. Continue to work with the Drought Response Committee to develop and promote conservation and mitigation programs at the local level across the State.
- f. Under any drought phase, offer mediation services to any dispute arising from competing demands for water.

IX. FEDERAL

- A. Federal Emergency Management Agency. FEMA's drought response capability is limited to actions under the authority of a Stafford Act Presidential Disaster Declaration.
- B. US Army Corps of Engineers
1. Upon a request from the Governor, USACE may provide the following programs to assist with drought relief:
 - a. The Emergency Well Construction and Water Transport Program
 - (1) Provides for the construction of wells and/or the transport of water to farmers, ranchers, and political subdivisions that are drought distressed.
 - (2) USACE will transport the water at no cost; however, the cost of the water is the responsibility of the requesting organization.
 - (3) USACE will also contract drilling of new wells, but the requesting jurisdiction must pay for the services.
 - b. Other programs available include selling of USACE's reservoirs of surplus water and planning assistance in the development of a state drought contingency plan. The planning assistance is a 50-50 cost share program.
 2. USACE cannot provide water for livestock, irrigation, or commercial/industrial processing.
 3. Additional USACE assistance is outlined in Attachment B (Programs Available to Support Drought Response)
- C. Small Business Administration (SBA) and the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)

Upon declaration of an agriculture disaster by the Secretary of Agriculture, both agencies can provide drought assistance in the form of disaster relief loans for farmers and small business owners [See Attachment B (Programs Available to Support Drought Response)].

X. ADMINISTRATION, LOGISTICS, AND FINANCE

- A. Administration and Finance. See Annex 7 (Finance and Administration) to the SCEOP.

- B. Logistics. See Attachment A (SC Logistics Plan) to the SCEOP.

XI. CONTINUITY OF GOVERNMENT (COG)

See Section VII (Concept of Operations), Paragraph L (Continuity of Government) of the SCEOP Base Plan.

XII. CONTINUITY OF OPERATIONS (COOP)

See Section VII (Concept of Operations), Paragraph M (Continuity of Operations) of the SCEOP Base Plan.

XIII. PLAN DEVELOPMENT AND MAINTENANCE

- A. SCDNR is the lead agency for the development, coordination, review, and update of this plan. SCEMD will provide support and coordination with the SERT. At a minimum, this plan will be updated every 5 years.
- B. The review will incorporate any updates from the National Response Framework (NRF), the National Incident Management System (NIMS), the Power Outage Incident Annex to the Response and Recovery Federal Interagency Operational Plans, and other relevant state and federal guidance.

XIV. AUTHORITIES AND REFERENCES

- A. Authorities. See Attachment C of the South Carolina Emergency Operations Plan.

XV. ATTACHMENTS

- A Draft Governor Executive Order
- B Programs Available to Support Drought Response
- C Sample Press Releases

ATTACHMENT A TO DROUGHT PLAN

DRAFT EXECUTIVE ORDER

STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA

EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

EXECUTIVE ORDER No. ____

EXECUTIVE ORDER No. 20XX-XX

WHEREAS, South Carolina’s rainfall has been well-below average and much of the State is experiencing extreme drought conditions that are not expected to abate in the immediate future; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to the South Carolina Drought Response Act, drought management areas have implemented water restrictions, and despite such restrictions, water supplies in drought management areas throughout the State of South Carolina are being depleted to the level of exhaustion; and

WHEREAS, local utility companies in the drought management areas have advised the undersigned through the Drought Response Committee that the shutdown of power generation plants is imminent without water to generate electricity and cool equipment; and

WHEREAS, the extreme, ongoing drought presents additional urgent challenges, including greatly increased wildfire risk and activity, diminished water for agricultural production, degraded habitat for many fish and wildlife species, and the threat of saltwater contamination of large fresh water supplies; and

WHEREAS, the SC State Forestry Commission has indicated that it lacks sufficient resources to fight wildfires in the drought management areas without implementing firefighter mobilization plans or the Southeastern Forest Fire Compact; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to section 49-23-80 of the South Carolina Code of Laws, the South Carolina Drought Response Committee has determined and advised the undersigned that the severity of the drought conditions have progressed to the extent that these conditions represent a significant threat to the health, safety, and welfare of the people of the State of South Carolina, which requires the undersigned activate the South Carolina Emergency Operations Plan to enable the State to proactively prepare for worsening conditions and take timely precautions to protect

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and preserve property, critical infrastructure, communities, and the general safety and welfare of the people of this State; and

WHEREAS, the most consequential, immediate action South Carolinians can take to extend available water supplies is to voluntarily continue to eliminate wasteful water practices and conserve water; and

WHEREAS, delivery by water by bottle or truck is necessary to protect human safety and public health in those places where water supplies are disrupted; and

WHEREAS, as the elected Chief Executive of the State, the undersigned is authorized pursuant to section 25-1-440 of the South Carolina Code of Laws, as amended, to “declare a state of emergency for all or part of the State if he finds a disaster . . . has occurred, or that the threat thereof is imminent and extraordinary measures are considered necessary to cope with the existing or anticipated situation”; and

WHEREAS, in accordance with section 25-1-440 of the South Carolina Code of Laws, when an emergency has been declared, the undersigned is “responsible for the safety, security, and welfare of the State and is empowered with [certain] additional authority to adequately discharge this responsibility,” to include issuing, amending, and rescinding “emergency proclamations and regulations,” which shall “have the force and effect of law as long as the emergency exists”; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to section 25-1-440 of the South Carolina Code of Laws, when an emergency has been declared, the undersigned is further authorized to “suspend provisions of existing regulations prescribing procedures for conduct of state business if strict compliance with the provisions thereof would in any way prevent, hinder, or delay necessary action in coping with the emergency”; and

WHEREAS, in addition to the foregoing, section 25-1-440 of the South Carolina Code of Laws authorizes the undersigned, during a declared emergency, to “transfer the direction, personnel, or functions of state departments, agencies, and commissions, or units thereof, for purposes of facilitating or performing emergency services as necessary or desirable,” and to “compel performance by elected and appointed state, county, and municipal officials and employees of the emergency duties and functions assigned them in the State Emergency Plan or by Executive Order”; and

WHEREAS, in accordance with section 56-5-70(A) of the South Carolina Code of Laws, as amended, during a declared emergency and in the course of responding to the emergency, requirements relating to registration, permitting, length, width, weight, and load are suspended for commercial and utility vehicles traveling on non-interstate routes for up to one hundred twenty (120) days, provided that such vehicles do not exceed a gross weight of ninety thousand (90,000) pounds and do not exceed a width of twelve (12) feet, and requirements relating to time of service suspensions for commercial and utility vehicles traveling on interstate and non-interstate routes are suspended for up to thirty (30) days, unless extended for additional periods pursuant to the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations; and

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WHEREAS, the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations limit, *inter alia*, the hours of service for operators of commercial vehicles, 49 C.F.R. §§ 390 *et seq.*; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to 49 C.F.R. § 390.23, the governor of a State may suspend federal hours of service regulations for commercial vehicles responding to an emergency if the governor determines that an emergency condition exists; and

WHEREAS, recognizing that the maintenance and prompt restoration of utility services and the uninterrupted transportation of essential goods, equipment, and products to or from the impacted areas are critical to the safety and welfare of the people of South Carolina and neighboring States, the undersigned has determined that it is necessary and appropriate for the State of South Carolina to expedite ongoing preparations and support further emergency management, response, recovery, and relief efforts by providing additional regulatory flexibility to facilitate the operation of critical transportation services; and

WHEREAS, for the aforementioned and other reasons, and in recognition and furtherance of the undersigned's responsibility to provide for and ensure the health, safety, security, and welfare of the people of the State of South Carolina, after conferring with the relevant state and federal agencies, officials, and experts, the undersigned has determined that the drought and dangerous conditions described herein and the anticipated impacts associated therewith constitute an actual or imminent emergency for portions of the State of South Carolina and that extraordinary measures are necessary to cope with the existing or anticipated situation.

NOW, THEREFORE, by virtue of the authority vested in me as Governor of the State of South Carolina and pursuant to the Constitution and Laws of this State and of these United States and the powers conferred upon me therein, I hereby declare that a State of Emergency exists in South Carolina. Accordingly, for the foregoing reasons and in accordance with the cited authorities and other applicable law, I further order and direct as follows:

Section 1. Emergency Measures to Address Drought Conditions

A. I hereby activate the South Carolina Emergency Operations Plan ("Plan"), as approved by Executive Order No. 2023-11, and direct that the Plan be further placed into effect and that all prudent preparations be taken at the individual, local, and state levels to prepare for and respond to the extreme drought conditions described herein and the potential impacts associated with the same. I further direct the utilization of all available resources of state government as reasonably necessary to address the current State of Emergency. In accordance with Section 1(E) of Executive Order No. 2023-11, "[a]ll departments or agencies of the State shall execute, without delay, the emergency functions so designated in the Plan, or as further ordered or otherwise directed by the undersigned, during any emergency or disaster through the initial use of existing department or agency appropriations and all necessary department or agency personnel, regardless of normal duty assignment."

B. I hereby place specified units or personnel, or both, of the South Carolina National Guard on State Active Duty, pursuant to section 25-1-1840 of the South Carolina Code of Laws, as amended, and direct the Adjutant General to issue any supplemental orders he deems necessary and appropriate. I further order the activation of South Carolina National Guard personnel and the SC Drought Plan

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utilization of appropriate equipment, in the discretion of the Adjutant General and in coordination with the Director of the South Carolina Emergency Management Division (“EMD”), to take necessary and prudent actions to assist the people of this State. I authorize Dual Status Command, as necessary, to allow the Adjutant General or his designee to serve as commander over both federal (Title 10) and state forces (National Guard in Title 32 status or State Active Duty status, or both).

C. I hereby order that all licensing and registration requirements regarding private security personnel or companies contracting with South Carolina security companies in protecting property and restoring essential services in South Carolina shall be suspended, and I direct the South Carolina Law Enforcement Division (“SLED”) to initiate an emergency registration process for those personnel or companies for a period specified, and in a manner deemed appropriate, by the Chief of SLED.

D. I hereby authorize and direct any agency within the undersigned’s Cabinet, as defined by Executive Order No. 2025-23, or any other department within the Executive Branch through its respective director or secretary, to waive or “suspend provisions of existing regulations prescribing procedures for conduct of state business if strict compliance with the provisions thereof would in any way prevent, hinder, or delay necessary action in coping with the emergency,” in accordance with section 25-1-440 of the South Carolina Code of Laws and other applicable law.

E. I hereby authorize and direct state agencies and departments to utilize the emergency procurement procedures set forth in section 11-35-1570 of the South Carolina Code of Laws, as amended, and any regulations issued pursuant thereto, as necessary and appropriate, to facilitate and expedite the acquisition of any critical materials, resources, or services during the State of Emergency.

F. I hereby declare that the prohibitions against price gouging pursuant to section 39-5-145 of the South Carolina Code of Laws, as amended, are in effect and shall remain in effect for the duration of the State of Emergency.

G. I hereby waive the requirement of a written mutual aid agreement for law enforcement services authorized by the Law Enforcement Assistance and Support Act, codified as amended in Title 23, Chapter 20 of the South Carolina Code of Laws, during the State of Emergency in accordance with section 23-20-60 of the South Carolina Code of Laws, as amended.

H. I hereby urge all individuals in the State of South Carolina to limit water use and use water more efficiently. I encourage individuals to understand and track the amount of water they use and measure their progress toward their conservation goals.

Section 2. Transportation Waivers to Facilitate Emergency Management

A. I hereby determine and declare that the existing and anticipated threats, circumstances, or conditions associated with the extreme drought and dangerous conditions described herein and the potential impacts related to the same constitute an emergency pursuant to 49 C.F.R. § 390.23 for purposes of suspending certain rules and regulations, as set forth below, for SC Drought Plan

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commercial vehicles and operators of commercial vehicles in accordance with 49 C.F.R. § 390.23 and section 56-5-70 of the South Carolina Code of Laws.

B. I hereby authorize and direct the South Carolina Department of Transportation (“DOT”) and the South Carolina Department of Public Safety (“DPS”), including the State Transport Police, as needed, to waive or suspend application and enforcement of the requisite state and federal rules and regulations pertaining to hours of service for operators of commercial vehicles operating in accordance with the provisions of any emergency declaration issued by the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (“FMCSA”); responding or providing direct assistance, as defined by 49 C.F.R. § 390.5, to any emergency conditions in this State or any declared emergencies in the State of North Carolina or the State of Georgia or in other States in connection with drought conditions or the anticipated impacts thereof; providing direct assistance to supplement state and local efforts and capabilities related to the same; or otherwise assisting with the existing or anticipated threats and circumstances associated with this event, to include commercial vehicles and operators of commercial vehicles transporting essential goods and products, such as food, water, medicine, medical supplies and equipment, fuels and petroleum products (to include fuel oil, diesel oil, gasoline, kerosene, propane, liquid petroleum, and other refined petroleum products and related equipment or assets), livestock, poultry, feed for livestock and poultry, and crops and other agricultural products ready to be harvested (to include timber and wood chips).

C. I hereby authorize DOT and DPS, as applicable, to apply for or request any additional federal regulatory relief, waivers, permits, or other appropriate flexibility deemed necessary, whether pertaining to the transportation of overweight loads on interstate highways or otherwise, on behalf of the State of South Carolina and to promptly implement the same without the need for further Orders.

D. This Section shall not be construed to require or allow an ill or fatigued driver to operate a commercial motor vehicle. In accordance with 49 C.F.R. § 390.23, “a driver who informs the motor carrier that he or she needs immediate rest must be permitted at least ten (10) consecutive hours off duty before the driver is required to return to such terminal or location.” Likewise, this Section shall not be construed as an exemption from the applicable controlled substances and alcohol use and testing requirements in 49 C.F.R. § 382, the commercial driver’s license requirements in 49 C.F.R. § 383, or the financial responsibility requirements in 49 C.F.R. § 387, and it shall not be interpreted to relieve compliance with any other state or federal statute, rule, order, regulation, restriction, or other legal requirement not specifically waived, suspended, or addressed herein or addressed in any additional or supplemental guidance, rules, regulations, restrictions, or clarifications issued, provided, or promulgated by DOT or DPS.

E. Subject to any guidance, rules, regulations, restrictions, or clarification issued, provided, or promulgated, or which may be issued, provided, or promulgated, by DOT or DPS, as authorized herein or as otherwise provided by law, and notwithstanding the waiver or suspension of certain rules and regulations as set forth above, drivers in South Carolina are still subject to the following state requirements to ensure public safety:

ATTACHMENT A TO DROUGHT PLAN

DRAFT EXECUTIVE ORDER

1. Weight, height, length, and width for any such vehicle with a minimum of five (5) weight bearing axles on highways or roadways maintained by the State of South Carolina shall not exceed, for continuous travel on all non-interstates, United States, and South Carolina designated routes, maximum dimensions of twelve (12) feet in width (except as provided in Paragraph 5 below), thirteen (13) feet six (6) inches in height, and ninety thousand (90,000) pounds in gross weight.
2. Posted bridges may not be crossed.
3. All vehicles shall be operated in a safe manner, shall not damage the highways nor unduly interfere with highway traffic, shall maintain the required limits of insurance, and shall be clearly identified as a utility vehicle or shall provide appropriate documentation indicating they are responding to the emergency.
4. Except as provided below, any vehicles that exceed the above dimensions, weights, or both, must obtain a permit with defined routes from DOT's Oversize/Overweight Permit ("OSOW") Office. To order a permit, please call (803) 737-6769 during normal business hours, 8:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m., or (803) 206-9566 after normal business hours.
5. In accordance with federal law, vehicles traveling on non-interstate routes within the National Network may not exceed a width of 102 inches or 8.6 feet without a special permit. A special permit for width on the National Network is available on DOT's OSOW website, and a list of routes on the National Network is set forth in Appendix A to 23 C.F.R. Part 658.
6. Transporters are responsible for ensuring they have oversize signs, markings, flags, and escorts as required by the South Carolina Code of Laws and OSOW guidelines relating to oversize/overweight loads operating on South Carolina roadways.

F. I hereby authorize DOT and DPS to issue, provide, or promulgate any necessary and appropriate additional or supplemental guidance, rules, regulations, or restrictions regarding the application, implementation, or enforcement of this Section, or to otherwise provide clarification regarding the same, without the need for further Orders.

G. This Section is effective immediately and shall remain in effect for fourteen (14) days or the duration of the emergency, whichever is less, in accordance with 49 C.F.R. § 390.23 and section 56-5-70(D) of the South Carolina Code of Laws, except that requirements relating to registration, permitting, length, width, weight, and load are suspended for commercial and utility vehicles traveling on non-interstate routes for up to one hundred twenty (120) days, pursuant to the provisions of section 56-5-70 of the South Carolina Code of Laws, unless otherwise modified, amended, or rescinded by subsequent Order.

Section 3. General Provisions

A. This Order is not intended to create, and does not create, any individual right, privilege, or benefit, whether substantive or procedural, enforceable at law or in equity by any party against the State of South Carolina, its agencies, departments, political subdivisions, or other entities, or any officers, employees, or agents thereof, or any other person.

ATTACHMENT A TO DROUGHT PLAN

DRAFT EXECUTIVE ORDER

B. If any section, subsection, paragraph, subparagraph, sentence, clause, phrase, or word of this Order is for any reason held to be unconstitutional or invalid, such holding shall not affect the constitutionality or validity of the remaining portions of this Order, as the undersigned would have issued this Order, and each and every section, subsection, paragraph, subparagraph, sentence, clause, phrase, and word thereof, irrespective of the fact that any one or more other sections, subsections, paragraphs, subparagraphs, sentences, clauses, phrases, or words hereof may be declared to be unconstitutional, invalid, or otherwise ineffective.

C. This Order shall be implemented consistent with and to the maximum extent provided by applicable law and shall be subject to the availability of appropriations. This Order shall not be interpreted, applied, implemented, or construed in a manner so as to impair, impede, or otherwise affect the authority granted by law to an executive agency or department, or the officials or head thereof, including the undersigned.

D. I hereby expressly authorize the Office of the Governor to provide or issue any necessary and appropriate additional or supplemental guidance, rules, regulations, or restrictions regarding the application of this Order or to otherwise provide clarification regarding the same, through appropriate means, without the need for further Orders.

E. This Order is effective immediately and shall remain in effect for a period of fifteen (15) days unless otherwise expressly stated herein or modified, amended, or rescinded by subsequent Order. Further proclamations, orders, and directives deemed necessary to ensure the fullest possible protection of life and property during this State of Emergency shall be issued orally by the undersigned and thereafter reduced to writing and published for dissemination within the succeeding 24-hour period.

**GIVEN UNDER MY HAND AND THE
GREAT SEAL OF THE STATE OF
SOUTH CAROLINA, THIS XX DAY OF
XXXXX, 20XX.**

Governor

ATTEST:

MARK HAMMOND
Secretary of State

ATTACHMENT B TO DROUGHT PLAN
PROGRAMS AVAILABLE TO SUPPORT DROUGHT RESPONSE

- I. The United States Department Agriculture (USDA)
- A. Farm Service Resources:
1. [South Carolina Farm Service Agency \(FSA\) Office](#)
 2. [County FSA Offices](#)
 3. [Disaster Assistance Programs](#)- The FSA provides assistance for natural disaster losses resulting from drought, flood, fire, freeze, tornadoes, pest infestation, and other calamities.
- B. Conservation and Livestock Assistance:
1. [FSA Emergency Conservation Program \(ECP\)](#)- The Emergency Conservation Program (ECP) provides funding and technical assistance for farmers and ranchers to restore farmland damaged by natural disasters and for emergency water conservation measures in severe droughts.
 2. [FSA Livestock Forage Disaster Program \(LFP\)](#)- Provides compensation to eligible livestock producers who have suffered grazing losses for covered livestock on land that is native or improved pastureland with permanent vegetative cover or is planted specifically for grazing. The grazing losses must be due to a qualifying drought condition during the normal grazing period.
 3. [FSA Livestock Indemnity Program \(LIP\)](#)- LIP provides benefits to livestock producers for livestock deaths in excess of normal mortality caused by adverse weather or by attacks by animals reintroduced into the wild by the Federal Government. LIP payments are equal to 75 percent of the average fair market value of the livestock.
 4. [NRCS Drought Assistance](#)- NRCS has the science-based solutions and technical experts on the ground today to help farmers and ranchers through this drought and to prepare our country for weather events in the future. NRCS offers technical and financial assistance to farmers and ranchers to cope with drought across the nation.
 5. [Rural Development \(RD\): Emergency Community Water Assistance Grants \(ECWAG\)](#)- Helps eligible rural communities recover from or prepare for emergencies that result in a decline in capacity to provide safe, reliable drinking water for households and businesses.
- C. Crop Insurance Assistance:

ATTACHMENT B TO DROUGHT PLAN
PROGRAMS AVAILABLE TO SUPPORT DROUGHT RESPONSE

1. [FSA Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program \(NAP\)](#)- NAP provides financial assistance to producers of non-insurable crops when low yields, loss of inventory, or prevented planting occur due to natural disasters.
 2. [Risk Management Agency \(RMA\) Crop Insurance Basics](#)
 3. [RMA Frequently Asked Questions](#)
- D. Credit Assistance:
1. [FSA Emergency Farm Loans](#)- USDA designated natural disaster areas qualify for low-interest emergency loans.
 2. [FSA Guaranteed Farm Loan Program](#)- Guaranteed farm loans may be used to construct or repair buildings and fixtures, purchase farmland, livestock, equipment, feed, seed, fuel, insurance, and refinance debt.
- II.** Department of Commerce (DOC)
- A. The Small Business Administration (SBA) Economic Injury Disaster Loan program provides small-interest loans to businesses and small agricultural cooperatives suffering uninsured economic injury due to a disaster, including drought. Loan maximum limit is \$1,500,000 and either a Presidential, SBA or USDA disaster declaration must be made.
 - B. The Economic Development Administration provides 75-25% cost-sharing grants to the State and local governments, certain Private Non-Profit (PNP) organizations, and Indian tribes to assist development and implementation strategies that address adjustment problems resulting from sudden and severe economic dislocation.
- III.** United States Corps of Engineers (USACE)
- A. [Emergency Water Assistance Due to Drought](#)
 1. Overview:
 - a. USACE may provide temporary emergency water assistance for human consumption/usage to a drought distressed area to meet minimum public health and welfare requirements.

ATTACHMENT B TO DROUGHT PLAN
PROGRAMS AVAILABLE TO SUPPORT DROUGHT RESPONSE

- b. USACE assistance is supplemental to state and local efforts. Long term solutions to water supply problems are the responsibility of state and local interests.
2. Types of Assistance:
 - a. Transport of water to local water points
 - b. Distribution of bottled water
 - c. Temporary connection of a new supply to the existing distribution system
 - d. Installation of temporary filtration
 - e. Use of military units with water purification/storage/ distribution capability
3. USACE assistance for the measures listed above will be at 100 percent Federal cost. Wells constructed by USACE will be paid for by the applicant.
4. Criteria and Conditions:
 - a. Governor's Request. A written request for assistance is required from the Governor or his/her authorized representative.
 - b. An applicant submitting a request directly to USACE will be referred to SCEMD.
 - c. Drought Distressed Area. A drought distressed area is one that the Director of Civil Works or the Assistant Secretary of the Army (Civil Works) determines to have an inadequate water supply that is causing, or is likely to cause, a substantial threat to the health and welfare of the inhabitants of the area, including the threat of damage or loss of property.
 - d. There must be a definable need in the immediate future that cannot be met totally by state and local actions underway or planned.
 - e. Where reasonable conservation measures will ensure adequate supplies to meet the need for public health and welfare, there should be no need for a detailed evaluation or assistance by USACE.
 - f. A credible plan for providing a long-term solution must be developed by the local and state governments and executed expeditiously. If a long-term solution is not expeditiously pursued, USACE assistance is not permitted.

ATTACHMENT B TO DROUGHT PLAN
PROGRAMS AVAILABLE TO SUPPORT DROUGHT RESPONSE

5. Evaluating Potential Drought Distressed Areas:
 - a. In evaluating a potential "drought distressed" area, consideration must be given to both the measurements used to define the drought and the magnitude of the impacts of the drought on the area under investigation.
 - b. Therefore, the investigation must indicate that a shortage of water exists, and that the shortage is severely affecting the health and welfare of a major segment of the population in the area proposed for designation as "drought distressed."
6. Limitations of Provision of Water:
 - a. Water for livestock, irrigation, recreation, or commercial/industrial processing will not be provided under this authority.
 - b. Non-USACE Expenses. The purchase or acquisition of the water and the storage facility at the terminal point are non-USACE expenses.
 - c. Permanent Facility. Where the recommended option for transporting water includes a permanent facility, there must be clear justification for such an action. Costs for such a permanent facility will be borne by the public sponsor.
7. Availability of Surplus Water in USACE Reservoirs:
 - a. Section 6 of the 1944 Flood Control Act (PL 78-534) provides authority to make agreements with states, municipalities, private concerns, or individuals for surplus water that may be available at any reservoir under the control of the Department of the Army.
 - b. When appropriate, this authority should be considered in providing emergency water assistance.
8. Contaminated Source Assistance:
 - a. Under certain conditions, USACE can also provide water emergency assistance to any locality confronted with source of contaminated water causing or likely to cause substantial threat to public health.

ATTACHMENT B TO DROUGHT PLAN
PROGRAMS AVAILABLE TO SUPPORT DROUGHT RESPONSE

IV. Federal Emergency Management Administration (FEMA)

- A. With a Presidential Disaster Declaration, under the authority of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, Section 403, Essential Assistance, Direct Federal Assistance (DFA) may be authorized to provide assistance in order to:
 - 1. Save lives and preserves property.
 - 2. Provide for the public health and safety, including provision of food, water, medicine, and other essential needs, including movement of supplies or persons.
- B. Public Assistance (PA) assistance may be authorized to reimburse the State and local applicants and Indian tribes for water resources they have contracted for and acquired for mass care purposes. These missions would be cost-shared at not less than 75% Federal share.

V. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)

- A. EPA may be issued a technical assistance mission assignment to conduct environmental assessments of potable water situation, and provide guidance to the State, local governments, and Indian tribes for meeting safe water drinking standards.
- B. Technical assistance provided through the EPA is at no cost to the State.

VI. Health and Human Services/Public Health Service (HHS/PHS)

- A. HHS/PHS may be issued a technical assistance mission assignment to assess the public health situation at risk and make appropriate recommendations to the State, local governments, and Indian tribes to preserve public health and safety standards. Technical assistance provided through the HHS/PHS is at no cost to the State.
- B. HHS/PHS may be issued a DFA mission assignment to provide the necessary public health and medical assistance and commodities needed such as Disaster Medical Assistance Teams (DMATs) or medical supplies if the State and local governments cannot provide them. Assistance provided during Presidential Disaster Declarations is subject to 75% federal cost sharing. Costs for assistance provided without of a Presidential Disaster Declaration are absorbed by the State.

VII. Fire Suppression Grants

- A. May be provided from the President's Disaster Relief Fund for use in a designed fire complex at the request of a Governor and concurrence from the USFS Principal Advisor to FEMA which threatens life and property and constitutes a threat of a major disaster.

ATTACHMENT B TO DROUGHT PLAN
PROGRAMS AVAILABLE TO SUPPORT DROUGHT RESPONSE

- B. This is a reimbursement grant for the State's wildfire fighting costs. The State must first meet annual floor cost (5% of the State's average annual expenditures for firefighting) on a single declared fire. Then FEMA will pay 70% of costs for that declared fire and all subsequent declared wildfires.
- C. After the State's costs exceed annual average, FEMA will pay 70% of all costs for declared fire with no deduction for floor costs. After the State's costs exceed twice the annual average, then FEMA will reimburse 100% of the State's eligible costs.

VIII. American Red Cross (ARC)

- A. Under its own authorities, ARC may provide the following:
 - 1. Technical consultation and guidance to State and local governments when planning for water distribution to residents.
 - 2. Establishing and staffing designated water distribution sites.
 - 3. Coordinating voluntary agency activities designed to support local community response efforts.
 - 4. Providing voluntary personnel to assist local government response actions, including providing limited potable water quantities.
- B. ARC does not provide assistance to commercial, industrial or agricultural corporations with drought or water-shortage caused losses.

ATTACHMENT C TO DROUGHT RESONSE PLAN

DRAFT PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

South Carolina Emergency Management Division
2779 Fish Hatchery Road, West Columbia, SC 29172

SCEMD, GOVERNOR CALL ON CITIZENS TO CUT WATER CONSUMPTION

COLUMBIA – The South Carolina Emergency Management Division, in concert with Governor _____, is calling on citizens across South Carolina to cut water consumption.

The Governor also is asking each of the state’s public water systems to report to the State the amount of water used daily. The consumption totals will be made available to the public to help communities and the public monitor the success of water-saving measures.

“I am calling on South Carolinians to cut our water use,” the Governor said. “Whenever you use water, cut the amount by half, whether it is taking a shower or washing the dishes.”

The Governor also expressed appreciation for cooperation from all of the State’s public water systems, local officials and citizens.

South Carolina is suffering from a (severe/exceptional) drought, and water resources are critically low. “Water consumption must be reduced now and for the foreseeable future if we are to avoid a water supply emergency,” the Governor said.

Here are some tips for water conservation that can be used now to start saving right away:

1. Stop watering lawns and shrubbery at homes and businesses; do not wash home exteriors, driveways or sidewalks; do not wash cars; and restaurants should ONLY serve water when patrons ask.
2. Check plumbing for leaks. If found, repair them. In a typical home, leaks amount to about 15 percent of all household indoor water use.
3. Use indoor water wisely. Turn off water while shampooing, shaving and brushing your teeth to reduce the time water is running.
4. Take time to locate your main water shut-off valve and the water meter in your yard. Knowing where the main shut-off is can potentially prevent the loss of thousands of gallons of water.
5. Use dry cleanup methods, such as brooms and vacuum cleaners, to reduce both indoor and outdoor water use.
6. Take advantage of free water. Catch rainwater from your gutters and use it to water your flowers and vegetables. Collect water from the bath/shower while waiting for it to heat up; use for watering plants.
7. Use appliances wisely. Run washing machines and dishwashers only with full loads to maximize efficiency.
8. Avoid using sink disposals for food scraps.

For more ideas and water conservation information, click on the SCEMD web site at WWW.SCEMD.ORG.