

Given North Carolina's Continuing Growth and the Potential for Recurring Droughts, How Can We Assure Our Future Water Supply?

John N. Morris

Former Director

NCDENR Division of Water Resources



Goals for Managing NC's Water Supply

- Assure a secure water supply for future needs
- Control water use to avoid depleting aquatic habitat
- Allocate water supplies in a way that is fair and practical to administer
- Be prepared to manage droughts



NC's Drought Management System

- Quantify and publicize drought conditions
- Identify the most vulnerable communities
- Target assistance: financing, expedited permits, technical help
- Coordinate river basin management



Keep in Mind

- No clear signal on how climate change will affect water supply in North Carolina
- We are not all on the same page in North Carolina



Factors in Success

- Good technical information and analysis
- A convenor to provide structure, schedules, technical analysis, and statutory authority
- Stakeholders who engage, understand the issues, and contribute ideas toward a solution



Drought Recommendations

- Continue to build on an excellent drought response strategy
- Develop plans for effective water rationing when it becomes necessary
- Keep working to reduce risks in the most vulnerable communities
- Connect more water systems to reduce risks



Long Range Water Supply Recommendations

- Continue to improve data on water use and availability
- Use the river basin plans and models to guide sustainable water use
- Develop a water use permit that fits North Carolina
- Provide incentives and standards to improve water use efficiency
- Develop growth management policies to support good water management



Questions?

