Catawba RIVERKEEPER®

Drought Update

April 21, 2006

NCAA TOURNAMENT 2006 WOMEN'S FINAL

TERPS WIN IN OT

GAME COVERAGE IN SPORTS

Diet drinks: Are they safe?

NEW ASPARTAME STUDY | 11A

The Charlotte Observer

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 5, 2006 +

www.charlotte.com

C D E F | Price varies by county | 50¢

INSIDE

CHARLOTTE WATER | Praying for Rain

Drought fears grow after parched winter

Water flowing to lakes seen dropping quickly

By Dánica Coto
dcoto@charlotteobserver.com

A moderate drought creeping across the Charlotte region could worsen by this summer, and concerned local officials already are monitoring water levels.

Heavy thunderstorms Monday brought little relief.

"We expect January, February, March and April to fill up all the lakes," said Donna Lisenby, Catawba Riverkeeper. "That's our rainy season."

It's been anything but.

From January to March, it was supposed to rain almost 12 inches. So far, it's rained almost 6 inches. And it won't get better, said meteorologist Scott Krentz with the National Weather Service in Greer, S.C.

In the next three months, it'll rain 33 percent to 40 percent below normal, he said.

"There's a bull's-eye in the Southeast," regarding the drought, Krentz said.

About a week ago, officials with the U.S. Drought Monitor of North Carolina placed Mecklenburg and surrounding counties on a moderate drought advisory. Northeastern counties are under a severe drought advisory.

The dry winter was likely caused by La Niña condition in the eastern Pacific Ocean, mete-

SEE RAIN | 13A

L.MUELLER – lmueller@charlotteobserver.com

A Lake Norman dock near Mooresville crosses about 30 feet of sand before reaching water. At full pond the sand is covered.

NEWS YOU CAN USE

13A | Ways to conserve water.

STREAM FLOW

1 LINVILLE RIVER
March Average
230 cubic feet per second

Mother said she's to blame for fire

Blaze at home killed her 2 kids

Midland woman admitted responsibility, search warrants say

By Victoria Cherrie
vcherrie@charlotteobserver.com

A Midland mother has admitted responsibility for the Jan. 10 fire that killed her two children, according to search warrants obtained by the Observer.

In an interview with investigators, one warrant says, Lisa Louise Greene "admitted responsibility for the fire and made no attempts to either extinguish the fire or to remove the fire, the warrant says.

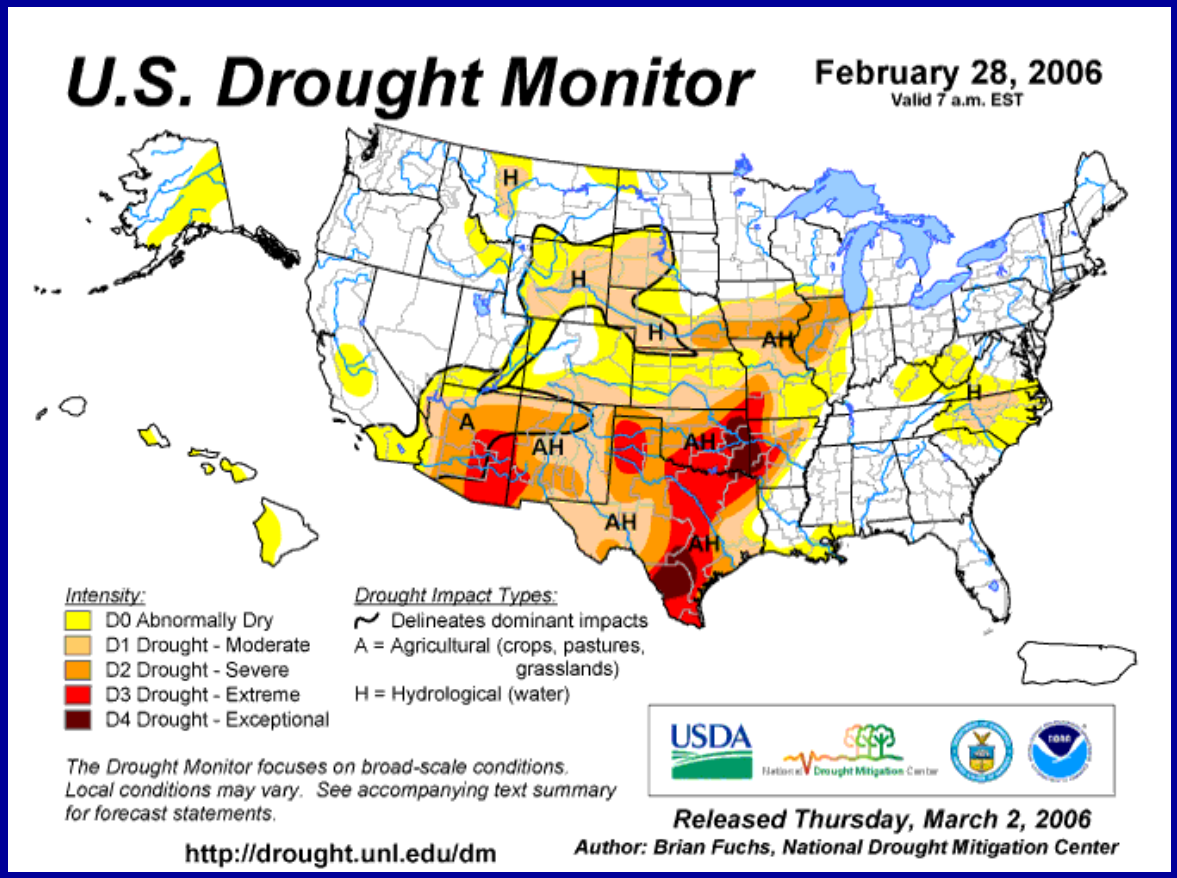
Daniel Macemore, 10, and his sister, Addison, 8, died from carbon monoxide poisoning and smoke inhalation, according to autopsy reports released Monday. Both had trace amounts of diphenhydramine, often sold as Benadryl, in their blood.

Greene

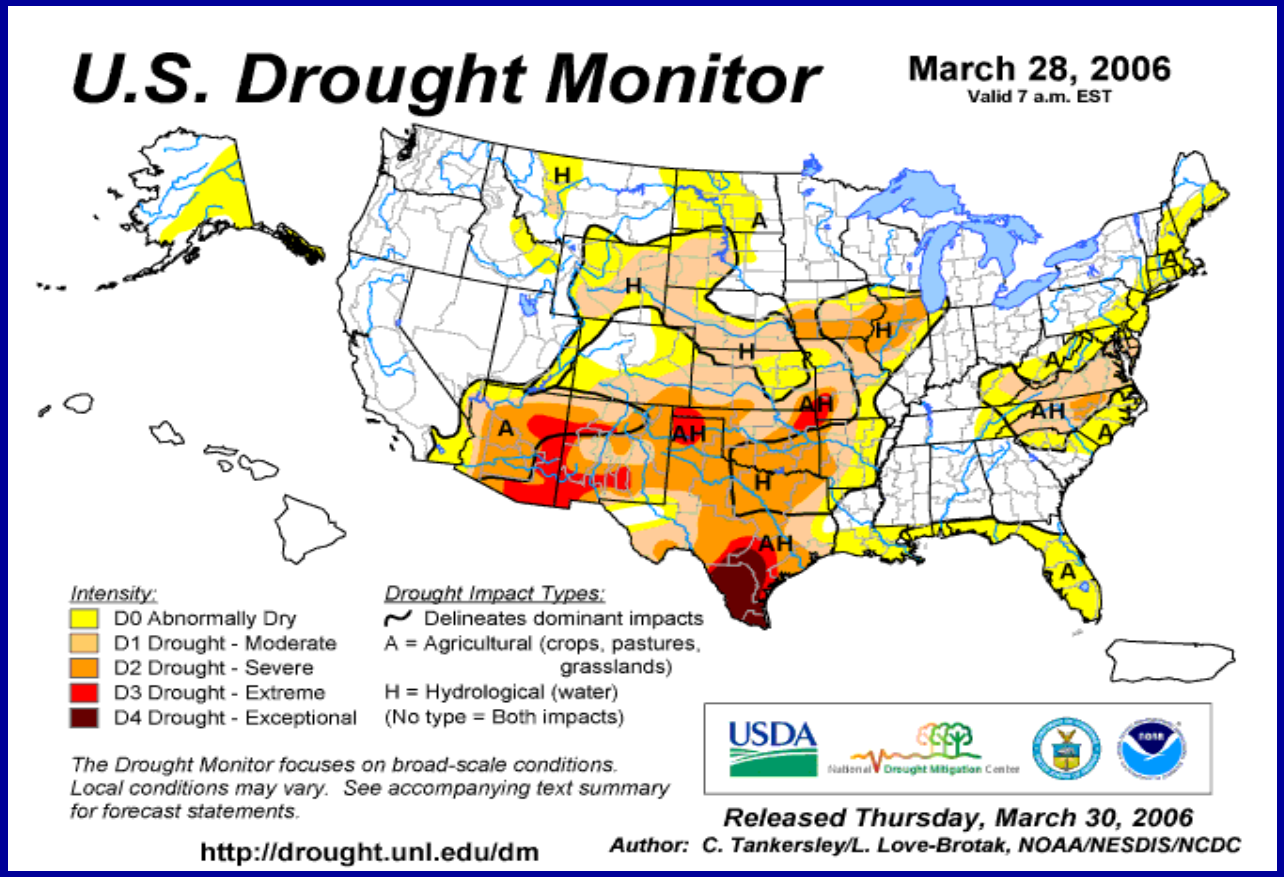
The autopsies also revealed further details about the crime scene.

According to the search warrants, investigators since January seized Greene's computer in search of any information

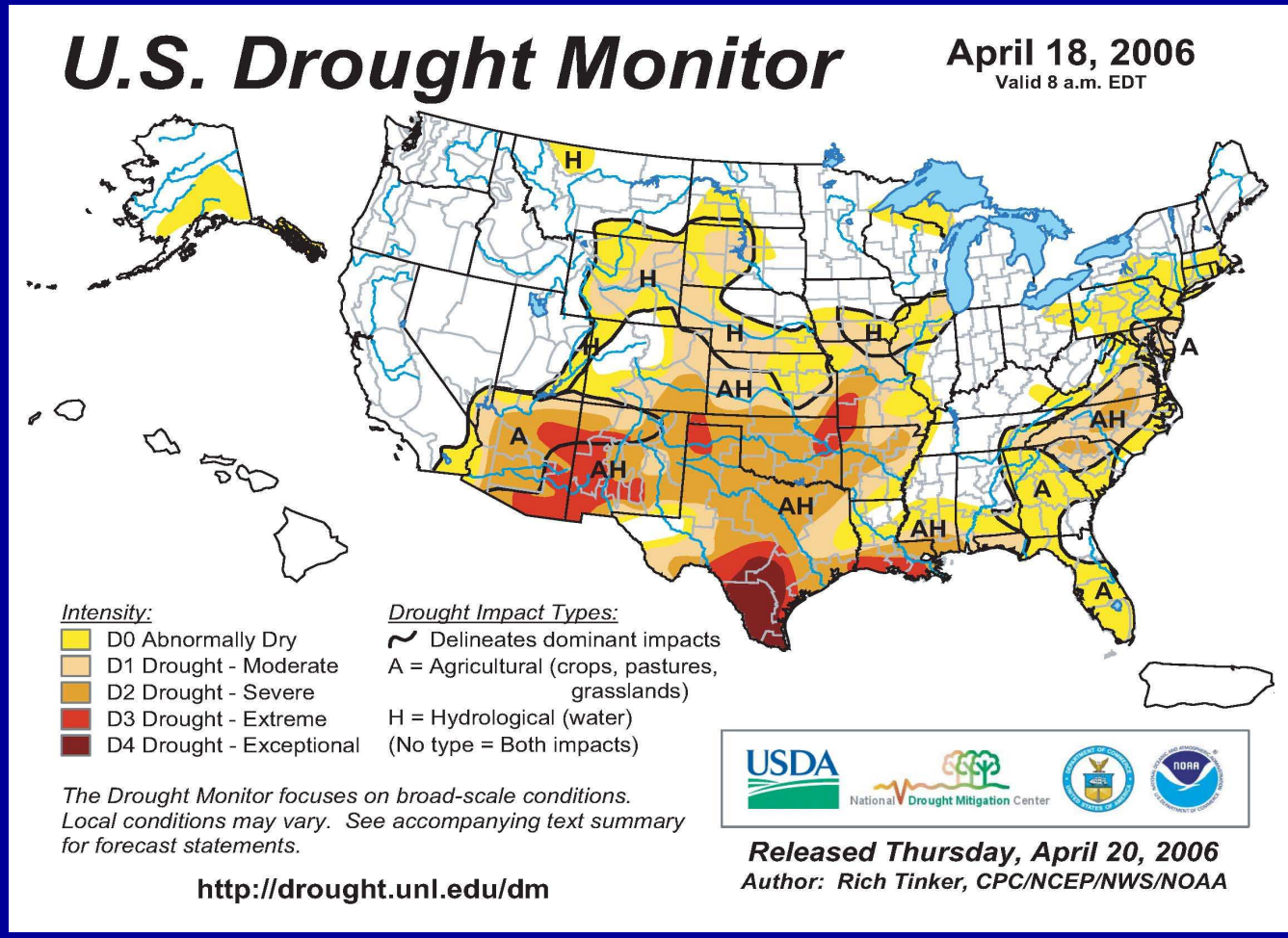
National Conditions-February



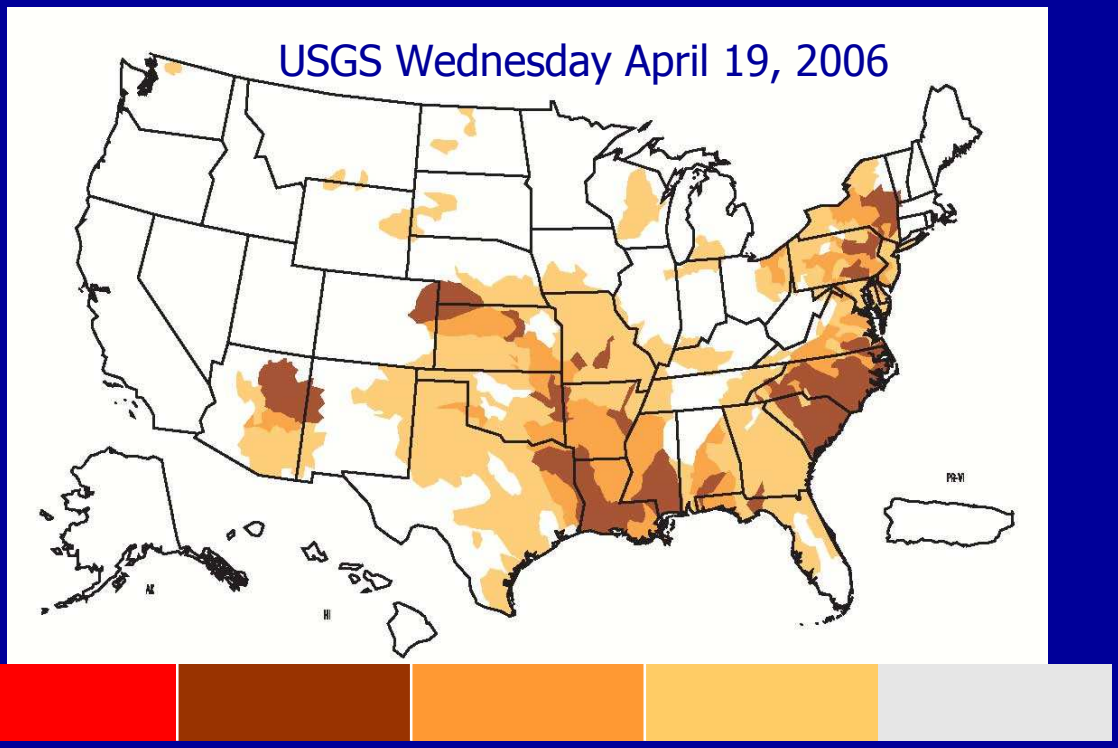
National Conditions-March



National Conditions April



7-day average streamflow compared to historical streamflow for the day of the year

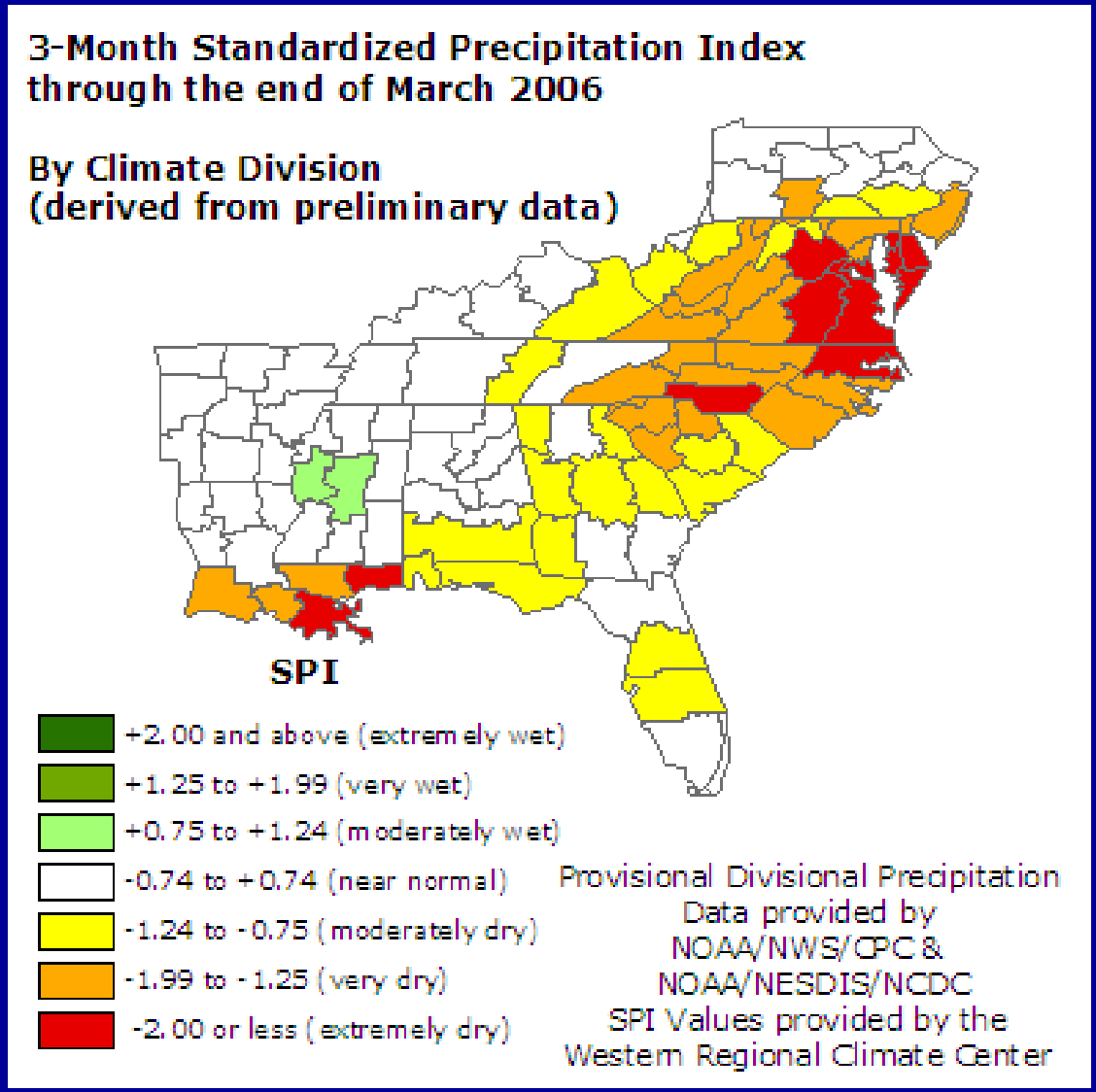


USGS:

"Mid-Atlantic and Northeast US Rivers running at record lows"

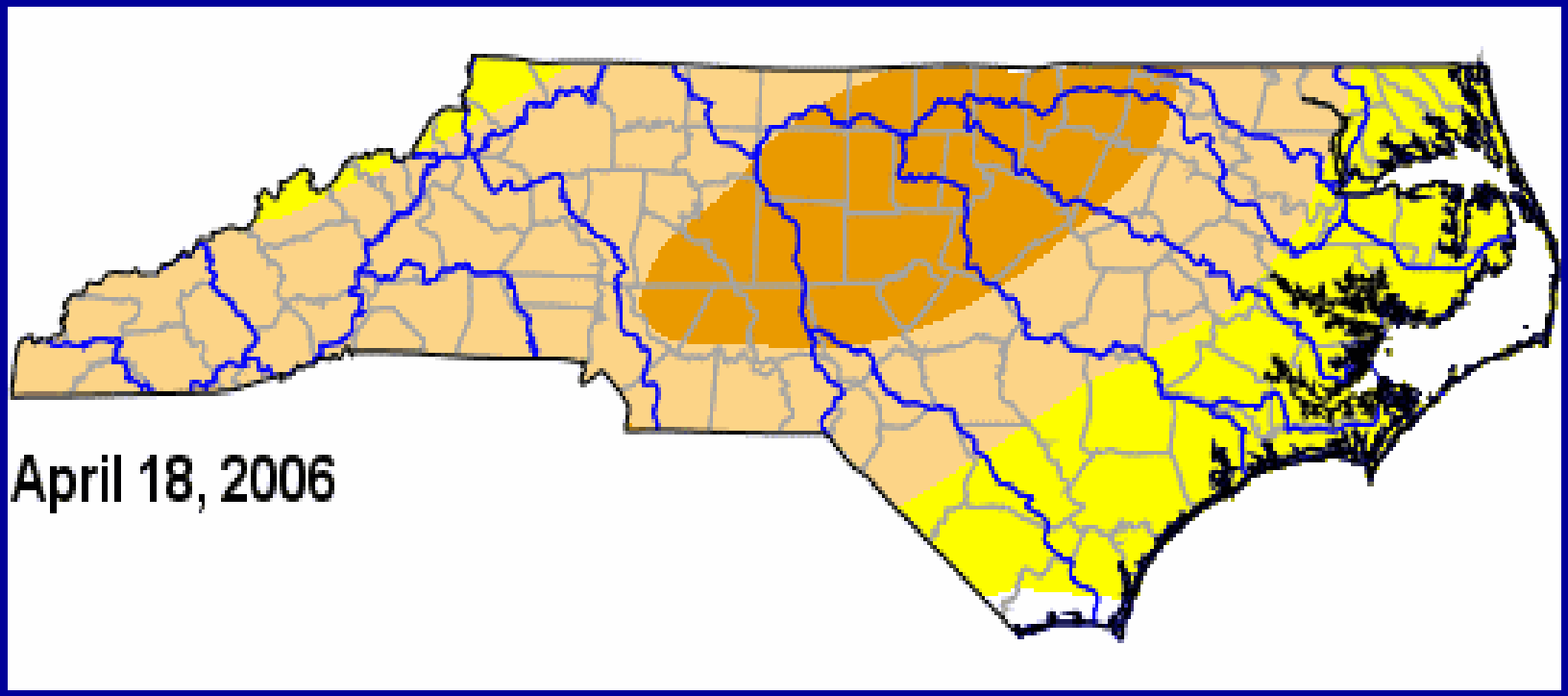
New low	≤ 5	6 - 9	10 - 24	
Extreme Hydrologic Drought	Severe Hydrologic Drought	Moderate Hydrologic Drought	Below Normal	Insufficient data for a hydrologic region

Jan, Feb, March 2006 Rain Index



NC Drought Management Advisory Council

- **Update issued on March 28, 2006**
- **Catawba Basin Classified as D1- "Moderate Drought"**



D1 Moderate Drought Actions

- The NCDMAC advises all water users in the counties that are indicated on the US Drought Monitor Map as suffering from Moderate Drought (D1) conditions to enact the following precautions until further notice:
- Adhere to local water use restrictions.
- Participate, as appropriate, in regional and local coordination for the management of water resources.
- Stay informed on drought conditions and advisories (www.ncdrought.org).
- Project water needs and available water supply for a ninety day period from the issuance of this advisory.
- Assess your vulnerability to the drought conditions and adjust water usage to prolong available supply.
- Inspect water delivery system components (e.g. irrigation lines, fixtures, processing equipment, water system lines, etc.), repair leaks and ensure that existing equipment is operating as efficiently as possible.
- Minimize nonessential uses of water.
- Implement available public awareness and educational outreach programs emphasizing the need to conserve water.

SC Drought Response Committee

- Convened by SC DNR under the SC Drought Response Act
- Meeting Thursday April 27, 2006
- 3 Drought Stages
  - Incipient
  - Moderate
  - Severe
- SC DRC could place SC under an "Incipient Drought Alert" next Friday
  - Depends on rainfall in the next 6 days
  - Incipient drought alert phase, Palmer Drought Index of -0.50 to -1.49; Crop Moisture Index of 0.00 to -1.49; Standard Precipitation Index of 0.00 to -0.99; Keetch Byram Drought Index of 300 to 399; U.S. Drought Monitor of D0; Average daily streamflow is 111%-120% of the minimum flow for two consecutive weeks; Static water level in an aquifer is between 11 feet and 20 feet above trigger level for two consecutive months;

Catawba-Wateree Project
Low Inflow Protocol Update

Provided by Duke Energy April 13, 2006

If the U.S. Drought Monitor has a reading of D0-D4 as of the last day of the previous month for any part of the Catawba-Wateree River Basin that drains to Lake Wateree, the Basin will be assigned a numeric value for the current month. The numeric value will equal the highest Drought Monitor designation (e.g., D0 = 0, D4 = 4) as of the last day of the previous month that existed for any part of the Catawba-Wateree River Basin that drains to Lake Wateree. A normal condition in the Basin, defined as the absence of a Drought designation, would be assigned a numeric value of negative one (-1). A running average numeric value of the current month and the previous two months will be monitored and designated as the U.S. Drought Monitor Three-Month Numeric Average.

Catawba-Wateree Project
Low Inflow Protocol Update

Provided by Duke Energy April 13, 2006

U.S. Drought Monitor Three-Month Numeric Average

January DM Reading- -1
February DM Reading- +1
March DM Reading- +1
US Drought Monitor = +.333

This trigger supports a Stage 0, Low Inflow Watch

Catawba-Wateree Project
Low Inflow Protocol Update

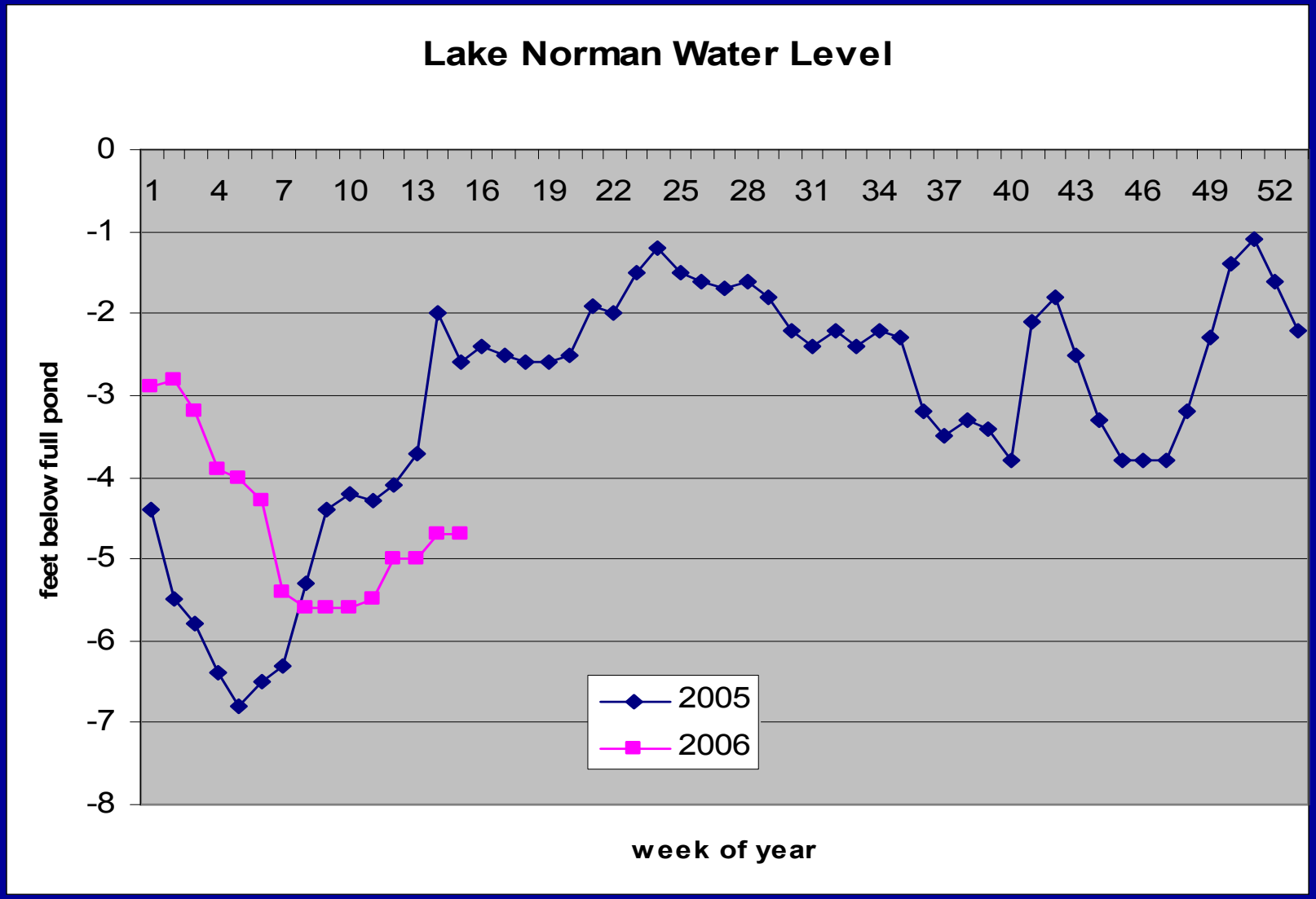
Provided by Duke Energy April 13, 2006

Monitored USGS Streamflow Gages:

Ratio (Sep through Feb)	=	95.6%
Ratio (Oct through Mar)	=	85.4%
Ratio through April 10	=	77.3%

This ratio would support a Stage 1 Condition.

Lake Norman-2005 vs 2006



Conclusion: The Catawba is in Drought Watch Mode

- Get updated drought conditions and advisories from the NC DMAC and SC DRC
- Prepare to Implement Regional Cooperation Protocols if conditions get worse
- Make drought response plans
  - Water Conservation Education Initiatives
  - Minimize Water Use
  - Conserve Available Water Supply
  - Summer = high water use, get prepared
- Hope for an increase in rain!