

Drought Report February 28, 2017

Preface

This report summarizes the various indicators utilized in drought monitoring. Each parameter (groundwater, surface water, precipitation, and palmer index) has their own individual indicator for each county. When readings hit a pre-determined trigger level, the indicator is coded as “Normal”, “Watch”, “Warning”, or “Emergency” for that county. These indicators are used to evaluate the drought status of a particular county; they are not, themselves drought declarations. Drought declarations are determined by the Commonwealth Drought Coordinator, with support of the Drought Task Force, and given final approval by the Governor.

Drought Report

Summary: February 22 – February 28, 2017

Over the last 7 days, the western two-thirds of the state remains in normal conditions without any changes in individual trigger status. Overall the rainfall from the last 7 days has not changed any of the state for precipitation and the Palmer Drought Index. The southcentral and southeastern part of the state is showing lower 90-day average streamflows. The 90-day average groundwater levels have not changed significantly during the last 7 days.

DRBC: The Delaware River Basin Commission is not imposing at drought condition at this time. The salt front is at RM 74, which is 3 miles upstream of the normal location for February.

Commonwealth Drought Task Force: The Commonwealth Drought Task Force is scheduled to meet at 11 a.m. on March 16, 2017, at PEMA Headquarters

Drought Report Details

Precipitation – Over the last 7 days, county rainfall ranged from 0.1 inches in the southcentral part of the state to 2.2 in the west. The 90-day precipitation deficit shows counties ranging from 25% below normal to 75% above normal.

The precipitation indicators based on a 90-day departure are all in normal status for this date.

Surface Water- Instantaneous flows ranged from below normal to above normal in the west; normal to much below normal across the eastern part of the state. For this date there were 25 gages reporting instantaneous flow at less than the 10th percentile and 1 gage was reporting a record low instantaneous flow.

The 30-day running average streamflow indicators are showing 16 counties in drought “Watch” (Adams, Bucks, Carbon, Cumberland, Dauphin, Franklin, Juniata, Lancaster, Lebanon, Mifflin, Northumberland,

Perry, Schuylkill, Snyder, Union and York) and 5 counties in “Warning” (Chester, Delaware, Lehigh, Montgomery and Northampton) and 2 counties in “Emergency” (Berks and Philadelphia).

Groundwater – The 30-day moving average indicators for groundwater levels are showing 8 counties in drought “Watch” (Adams, Berks, Bucks, Lehigh, Montgomery, Northampton, Northumberland and York); 7 counties in “Warning” (Centre, Chester, Cumberland, Franklin, Lancaster, Montour and Union) and 5 counties in “Emergency” (Dauphin, Delaware, Lebanon, Mifflin and Philadelphia).

Palmer Drought Severity Index – The Palmer soil moisture indicator is showing all counties in “Normal” drought trigger status for this reporting period.

Public Water Supply Agencies (PWSA 's) – – Public water suppliers are requested to continue to follow the county-wide declarations unless there is a need for more stringent restrictions at which point water suppliers many initiate their own voluntary or mandatory water use restrictions. The following public water suppliers continue to implement voluntary restrictions:

- Bloomfield Boro Water Authority, Perry County
- Mahanoy Township Authority, Schuylkill County
- Mary D Community Assn, Schuylkill County
- Richfield Area Joint Auth, Juniata County
- Schuylkill County Muni Auth, Schuylkill County
- Schuylkill Haven Boro, Schuylkill County

Forecast – The 7-day forecast projects precipitation for the next 7 days to range from 0.5 to 1.5 inches in the southeast, 1.0 to 1.5 inches in the remainder of the Delaware River Basin and the Susquehanna River Basin and from 1.5 to 2.5 inches in the Ohio River Basin.

Current Drought Status

