

Watershed MANAGEMENT



Drought Information Center

February 5, 1999

NOTICE TO DELAWARE RIVER BASIN RESIDENTS: While the Delaware River Basin Commission (DRBC) lifted its drought warning on Tuesday, February 2, all counties in the basin remain under a state-declared drought warning. DRBC's decision was based solely upon the level of storage in the New York City Delaware basin reservoirs. That storage has recovered to normal conditions. Pennsylvania continues to have a drought warning in effect in all counties in the basin, based upon stream flow, ground water and long-term precipitation conditions. Precipitation and ground water conditions have not fully recovered at this time in many areas of the basin.

Precipitation during the past 24 hours was limited to primarily the Ohio basin, with scattered pockets of shower activity in the middle Susquehanna basin and across the northern tier. Up to 0.3 inch fell in the Ohio basin; other areas were limited to 0.1 inch or less.

In the Delaware River basin, the effects of the Monday-Tuesday precipitation are still evident in the main stem as all gages are up slightly from yesterday, with Trenton reading 22,600 cubic feet per second (cfs) this morning, up from 21,600 cfs yesterday. Every tributary gage in the basin is down from yesterday, as the peak flows have moved on to the river. The Lackawaxen River at Hawley is down from 1210 to 967 cfs; the Lehigh River at Bethlehem is down from 5610 to 5140 cfs; and the Schuylkill River at Philadelphia is down from 5580 to 4740 cfs. Generally, the basin flows remain above normal; although a few of the lower basin headwater tributary gages and nine of the eleven Christina watershed gages are below normal this morning.

The Susquehanna River basin is similar, with the peaks having reached the main stem river and the lower reaches of the West Branch. All main stem gages on the Susquehanna below Towanda are up this morning, with Sunbury up from 40,000 to 47,500 cfs and Harrisburg up from 47,200 to 50,800 cfs. The West Branch is receding above Lock Haven and the flows at Lewisburg are up from 17,100 to 18,300 cfs. Flows in the upper Juniata watershed have increased this morning, while flows in the lower watershed have decreased, with the flow at Newport down from 5240 to 4660 cfs. The Conestoga River at Conestoga, down from 844 to 614 cfs, is indicative of lower basin tributary streams. Flows throughout the basin generally remain above normal, with scattered exceptions in headwater tributaries.

In the Ohio River basin, flows in the Allegheny main stem gages are mixed, depending upon the timing of remaining runoff from the Monday-Tuesday precipitation combined with the Wednesday-Thursday precipitation. Tributary gages in the upper Allegheny are generally showing decreased flows this morning, while the Kiskiminetas watershed is holding about even. Monongahela and Beaver watershed

gages are generally showing decreases, as well. The Ohio River at Sewickley is down from 67,500 to 63,000. Flows in the basin generally remain well above normal with exceptions continuing throughout the Monongahela watershed.

Ground water information is not available this morning.

The three-day forecast indicates less than 0.1 inch of precipitation statewide, in the form of showers or flurries. The five-day outlook indicates less than 0.5 inch across the northern tier and 0.5-1.0 inch in the southern three-quarters of the state. The ten-day forecast adds about 0.25 inch southeast of the Ridge and Valley, 0.25-0.5 inch in the Appalachian Plateau and 1.0-1.5 inch in the northwest.

At week's end, fourteen counties (Bedford, Blair, Cambria, Cameron, Clarion, Clearfield, Clinton, Crawford, Elk, Erie, Jefferson, Lycoming, Somerset, and Snyder) remain under a drought emergency declaration. All other counties remain in drought warning, except Beaver, Washington and Westmoreland, which remain in drought watch.