

Watershed MANAGEMENT



Drought Information Center

April 12, 1999

The past week brought substantial precipitation across the entire Commonwealth. The majority of it occurred during the weekend and is continuing this morning. The heaviest amounts occurred in the southwestern area from Mercer to Bedford Counties, where totals were generally in the 2.0-3.0 inch range. Most of the lower Susquehanna basin received 1.5-2.0 inches, and the lower Delaware basin received about 1.25-1.5 inches. The western half of the northern tier received about 1.0-1.5 inches and the eastern half received about .75-1.0 inches. With the exception of the northeastern few counties, we have a precipitation surplus so far in April; although, 3- and 6-months deficits remain in most of the state.

In the Delaware River basin, stream flows on the main stem Delaware River have receded somewhat from last Monday. The flows at Trenton are down from 13,900 cubic feet per second (cfs) to 12,500 cfs. Flows in the Lehigh River watershed are up, as is the river at Bethlehem, from 2420 to 2860 cfs. The Schuylkill River watershed is similar, with flows in the Schuylkill River at Philadelphia up from 1900 to 3900 cfs. Flows in the Christina River watershed have risen noticeably, with Brandywine Creek at Chadds Ford up from 369 to 993 cfs this morning. In the upper basin, including the upper Schuylkill, most gages remain below normal, while most lower basin gages are reading above normal.

In the Susquehanna River basin, flows in the upper main stem Susquehanna River are decreased while flows in the lower main stem have increased. Flows at Harrisburg have increased from 64,300 to 78,900 cfs. The Lackawanna River at Old Forge is about even at 622 cfs, compared to 600 last Monday. In the West Branch watershed, tributary flows are mixed, although generally up, while main stem flows are all increased. Flows at Lewisburg are up from 23,200 to 28,200 cfs. Juniata watershed flows are all increased considerably, with flows in the main stem at Newport up from 4660 to 21,500 cfs. Flows in the lower basin are all up as well, as indicated by the Conestoga River at Conestoga, up from 501 to 917 cfs. Nearly all gages in the basin are reading above normal this morning.

In the Ohio River basin, where the week's heaviest precipitation occurred, the Allegheny River is up at all gages below Warren, with flows at Natrona up from 28,600 to 50,700 cfs. The Kiskiminetas River at Vandergrift is up from 3730 to 7300 cfs, and the Monongahela River at Braddock is up from 9060 to 33,500 cfs this morning. The Beaver River at Beaver Falls rose from 2070 to 11,100 cfs, while the Ohio River at Sewickley increased from 39,100 to 86,900 cfs. The increased flows throughout the basin have brought nearly all gages above normal, at least during the peak of the runoff.

Ground water levels rose in all Ohio and Susquehanna basin daily monitoring wells during the week, while in the Delaware basin, five of eight wells declined.

The forecast for the next five days indicates the likelihood of 0.5-1.0 inch of precipitation in most of the state, excepting the lower Delaware basin and southern tier as far west as Fulton County, where 0.25-0.50 inch is forecast. The 5-10 day forecast adds about 1.0-1.5 inches statewide, with temperatures to be below normal in the 45-55 degree range.