

Watershed MANAGEMENT



Drought Information Center

July 6, 1999

The early part of the weekend produced some shower activity in the southeastern half of the state. Localized precipitation totals in the southwestern counties ranged from about 0.25 to 0.75 inches. In the lower and central Susquehanna basin, totals were much smaller, in the 0.02-0.25 inch range. In the lower and middle Delaware basin, the numbers ranged from 0.0 to 0.5 inch, and in the upper Delaware basin, totals were mostly near 0, except in the extreme northeast, where 0.5-1.20 inches fell.

Stream flows in the Delaware River basin have declined since last Monday. The main stem is down from 3010 cubic feet per second (cfs) to 2740 cfs. The Lackawaxen River at Hawley decreased from 59 to 55 cfs. The Lehigh River at Bethlehem is down from 866 to 632 cfs, and at Glendon the flow of 631 cfs is well below the record low of 730. The Schuylkill River at Philadelphia declined from 487 to 362 cfs; at Berne, its flow of 104 is below the record low of 115. In the Christina River watershed, Brandywine Creek at Chadds Ford continues its gradual slide downward from last week's reading of 133 cfs, to 124 cfs this morning.

In the Susquehanna River basin, stream flows generally continue to reflect positive results of last week's shower and thunderstorm activity in the upper and western areas of the basin. The main stem gages are all recording higher numbers than last Monday. At Harrisburg, flows have increased from 4330 to 6230 cfs; although, the peak of about 7000 cfs occurred on Independence Day. The Lackawanna River at Old Forge is up from 79 to 84 cfs, but also receding from a weekend peak. The West Branch at Lewisburg is up from 1090 to 2250 cfs, and the Juniata River at Newport is also showing an increase, from 829 to 897 cfs; both are receding from weekend peaks. In the lower basin, conditions are mixed, with Conodoquinet Creek at Hogestown up from 115 to 119 cfs, Swatara Creek at Harper Tavern down from 68 to 52 cfs, and the Conestoga River at Conestoga down from 150 to 128 cfs, well below its record low of 176.

In the Ohio River basin, flows on the Allegheny main stem are mixed at various gages, and flows at Natrona are up slightly from 3460 cfs last Monday to 3520 today, but generally trending downward from a weekend peak. The Kiskiminetas River at Vandergrift is up significantly from 271 to 653 cfs, while the Monongahela River at Braddock is down from 2150 to 1980 cfs; both are also receding from weekend peaks. The Beaver River at Beaver Falls is recording a flow of 15,200 cfs this morning, after an unexplainable jump from about 1500 to nearly 18,000 cfs on Saturday. The Ohio River at Sewickley declined from 6670 to 5630 cfs.

Ground water evidenced some minor improvement since last Monday in 8 of the 27 daily monitoring wells. Bradford, Cameron, Franklin, Huntingdon, Lycoming, Potter, Sullivan and Susquehanna County

monitoring wells recorded slight increases, reflecting the week's storm activity in most of those areas. Other sites continued their downward trend.

The short-term forecast offers little help, with extremely hot conditions continuing today, and some relief from the heat tomorrow, but continued much drier air for a few days. The five-day forecast indicates the possibility of about 0.25-1.0 inch of rain, and the 6-10 day outlook adds another 1-2 inches.

Month-end ground water data is in, and it was bleak. In the Ohio basin, wells in Elk, Somerset and Washington Counties recorded all-time June lows. In the Susquehanna basin, Bradford, Lycoming, Potter, Snyder, Sullivan and Susquehanna County wells followed suit, while most basin wells recorded emergency or warning levels. In the Delaware basin, records were upset in Berks, Bucks, Delaware, Lebanon, Monroe, Pike, Schuylkill and Wayne Counties; only 3 basin wells were in non-emergency status for June.