

Watershed MANAGEMENT



Drought Information Center

August 26, 1999

There was considerable rain in Pennsylvania since Monday, most of which occurred in the past 24 hours. From August 23 to 25, there were scattered gauge readings of under an inch of precipitation that occurred in the southwest and northwest corners of the state. Central and south central counties had precipitation amounts of up to 0.5 inches during this period. Within the past 24 hours, about half of Pennsylvania had an average of possibly 0.3 inches of rain in a triangular area with corners in approximately York, McKean and Bradford Counties. The rest of Pennsylvania had average rainfall amounts averaging an inch or more, with several gauges recording 2.0 inches or just under that mark.

Many streams in the Delaware River Basin have increased flows due to the latest rain. Although the mainstem Delaware River and Lackawaxen River Basin streams are holding fairly even, other major watercourses have much improved discharges since Monday. The storm runoff in several streams has swelled discharges above normal for this date. The mainstem Delaware River at Riegelsville is down slightly from 3,250 to 3,160 cfs. The Lackawaxen River is holding essentially even from 38 to 40 cfs. The Lehigh River at Bethlehem is up from 437 to 950 cfs. The Schuylkill River at Philadelphia is up from 443 to 3,240 cfs., and the Brandywine Creek at Chadds Ford is up from 70 to 135 cfs.

Improved discharges are not as evident in the Susquehanna River Basin. Except for increased flow for several gauges on the upper Juniata River, there were no major overall changes since August 23. With few exceptions, streamflows are below normal for the date. The main stem Susquehanna River at Towanda is down from 746 to 704 cfs. It is down at Wilkes-Barre from 1,480 to 1,380 cfs., and down from 7,510 to 4,570 cfs. at Harrisburg. The West Branch Susquehanna River is down from 499 to 378 cfs. at Renovo, up from 230 to 383 cfs. at Lock Haven, and down from 896 to 835 cfs. at Williamsport. The Juniata River is down from 1,350 to 1,220 cfs. at Newport, and the Conestoga River at Conestoga is up from 81 to 100 cfs.

The Ohio River Basin likewise does not show significant flow increases except for the mainstem Ohio River, the upper Kiskiminetas River Basin, and scattered gauges in the Beaver River Basin and on the Monongahela River. The Allegheny River at Natrona is down from 3,980 to 3,410 cfs. The mainstem Ohio River at Sewickley is up from 5,450 to 8,110 cfs. The Kiskiminetas River at Vandergrift is down from 488 to 287 cfs. The Monongahela River at Braddock is up from 1,530 to 1,910 cfs., and the Beaver River at Beaver Falls is up from 898 to 1,010 cfs.

Since August 23, the 27 counties with monitoring wells show a water level rise for four counties and a drop for 19. Four counties are unchanged. Water level rises range from 0.08 to 0.30 ft. with an average increase of 0.18 ft. Decreases range from 0.02 to 3.73 ft. with an average drop of 0.36 ft.

During the period August 26 to 31, rain is predicted for at least the next 48 hours. During this 48-hour period, rainfall amounts should average up to 1.5 inches for the eastern quarter of the Commonwealth, and about 0.25 to 0.75 inches of rain is expected as an average for the rest of the state. For the period September 1 to 5, little or no rain is predicted for Pennsylvania at this time. Temperatures for the next ten days are expected to remain near normal.