

Weekly Drought Report January 20, 2009

Since the drought watch was declared on 11/7/08, the Commonwealth continued to experience deteriorating conditions through the month of November and into the early part of December. By late November, precipitation deficits over a 90-day period had reached 7-8 inches in the northwest corner of the state. Above normal precipitation for the month of December began the recovery. Precipitation for the month of December was 2 to 5 inches above average for most of the state although the northwest received slightly below average. Precipitation deficits have now returned to within normal ranges for the entire state except for Crawford county.

A review of the county monitoring gages indicates that the 30-day average streamflow values have risen to above normal conditions across the state. The 30-day average flows have risen significantly after the above normal rainfall which occurred in December. It is noted that most gages have begun to drop; however, some of this is due to lack of liquid precipitation and the current below normal temperature which may be affecting the accuracy of the gages.

The county groundwater well levels have improved and almost all wells are within normal range, although several wells are still recovering.

The forecast for the next 7 days is 0.5 to 1.5 inches of precipitation. The forecast for the next 7-14 days is 1.0 to 2.5 inches of precipitation.

Drought indicators are back in normal conditions for the entire state for the most part. At this time, a recommendation will be made to the Drought Task Force to lift the drought watch for the 29 counties in the northcentral and western part of the state. This would bring the Commonwealth back to normal conditions for the entire state.