

Watershed MANAGEMENT



Drought Information Center

October 25, 1999

During the past week there was an average of one to three-tenths inches of rainfall over the entire Commonwealth with somewhat heavier amounts in the northwest and southeast. Thus far for the month of October, there are 11 counties with total rainfall amounts between 26 and 50% below normal; these counties are located mostly in north and north central Pennsylvania. For this month there are five counties with total rainfall amounts between 26 and 50% above normal, with the remaining 51 counties having total rainfall amounts for this month between 25% below and 25% above normal.

Stream gauges in the Delaware River Basin have taken a general downturn since last Monday. The exceptions to this rule are slight flow enhancements on the mainstem Delaware River above Belvidere, and flow increases in the Bush Kill Basin, Tohickon Creek Basin, Lower Neshaminy Creek Basin and Chester Creek Basin. The mainstem Delaware River at Trenton is down from 8,500 to 7,290 cfs. The Lackawaxen River at Hawley is down from 183 to 166 cfs. The Lehigh River at Bethlehem is down from 2,650 to 1,670 cfs. The Schuylkill River at Philadelphia is down from 2,770 to 1,830 cfs. and Brandywine Creek at Chadds Ford is down slightly from 279 to 265 cfs. About 80% of the stream gauges in the Delaware River Basin are at above normal flow for October 25.

Essentially all the gauges in the Susquehanna River Basin show a recession since October 18. The mainstem Susquehanna River is down from 3,650 to 2,510 cfs. at Towanda, down from 5,970 to 4,030 cfs. at Wilkes-Barre and down from 13,700 to 10,300 cfs. at Harrisburg. The West Branch Susquehanna River is down from 1,310 to 761 cfs. at Lock Haven, down from 2,690 to 1,670 cfs. at Williamsport and down from 3,830 to 2,490 cfs. at Lewisburg. The Juniata River at Newport is down from 1,830 to 1,250 cfs. and the Conestoga River at Conestoga is down from 523 to 438 cfs. About 55% of the stream gauges in the Susquehanna River Basin are at below normal flow for today's date.

The Ohio River Basin shows an assortment of stream gauge changes and nearly even readings when compared to seven days ago. The flow enhancement category includes the middle reaches of the Allegheny River, the Conewango Creek Basin, Brokenstraw Creek Basin, Oil Creek Basin, French Creek Basin, upper Clarion River Basin, middle reaches of the Kiskiminetas River Basin, Beaver River Basin and the Buffalo Creek Basin. Flow recessions are seen on the mainstem Ohio River, Redbank Creek Basin, Mahoning Creek Basin, lower Kiskiminetas River Basin and the Monongahela River Basin. Other streams are holding mostly even. The Allegheny River at Natrona is down from 5,170 to 3,140 cfs. The mainstem Ohio River at Sewickley is down from 8,320 to 5,360 cfs. The Kiskiminetas River at Vandergrift is down from 967 to 653 cfs. The Monongahela River at Braddock is down from 2,570 to 1,960 cfs. and the Beaver River at Beaver Falls is up from 656 to 827 cfs. About 70 % of the streams in the Ohio River Basin are at below normal flow for this date.

Since October 18, 26 counties with monitoring wells show a water level rise for five counties and a drop for 21. Water level rises range from 0.03 to 0.83 ft. with an average increase of 0.36 ft. Decreases range from 0.04 to 3.83 ft. with an average drop of 0.77 ft.

The total expected precipitation total through October 29 is under 0.25 inches for the western half of the state. Essentially no precipitation is expected for eastern Pennsylvania for this period. For the period October 29 through November 3, 0.3 to 0.5 inches total precipitation is expected for the entire state with somewhat lighter amounts expected in the south. Temperatures for the next ten days are expected to be close to normal.