

Watershed MANAGEMENT



Drought Information Center

June 16, 1999

Precipitation yesterday, generally less than 0.25 inch falling during the night hours of the morning, was limited to a few concentrated areas, primarily in Cambria, Clearfield, Mifflin, Monroe and the Lehigh-Northampton-Bucks County area. The Monroe data indicates rainfall in excess of 9 inches, which is likely in error or otherwise indicates extremely concentrated precipitation in the vicinity of the rain gage.

In the Delaware River basin, stream flows are showing some temporary improvement, resulting from the past few days' rainfall. The Delaware main stem is flowing slightly higher, with the Trenton gage reading 3410 cubic feet per second (cfs), compared to 3310 on Monday. The Lackawaxen River at Hawley is up from 83 to 89 cfs. The Lehigh River continued its decline, decreasing from 1140 to 866 cfs at Bethlehem. Flows in the Schuylkill River watershed are generally increased, with the river at Philadelphia up from 705 to 894 cfs. In the Christina River watershed, flows are mixed but generally down, as Brandywine Creek at Chadds Ford decreased from 198 to 175 cfs. Flows throughout the basin remain well below normal and at a number of gages are declining steadily toward record lows. The Lehigh River at Glendon is only 11 cfs above its record low for the day.

In the Susquehanna River basin, the main stem flows are all decreased from Monday; flows at Harrisburg decreased from 6440 to 5550, well under the record low of 6610 for today. The Lackawanna River at Old Forge rose somewhat, from 105 to 116 cfs. The West Branch at Lewisburg continued its slide, from 1510 to 1450, also well below its record low of 1830 cfs. The Juniata River at Newport is up slightly, from 925 to 982, but is already on a rapid decline. In the lower watershed, the Conestoga River also showed some improvement from 160 to 207 cfs, which equals its record low for the day.

In the Ohio River basin, the weekend's precipitation is reflected in Allegheny River stream flows at Natrona, up from 3460 to 4520 cfs, while flows in the river above Franklin are declining. The Clarion and Kiskiminetas Rivers are both down somewhat, with flows on the Kiskiminetas at Vandergrift down from 548 to 518 cfs. The Monongahela River at Braddock held its own at 2080 cfs. The Beaver River watershed shows general improvement, and the river at Beaver Falls is up from 690 to 1080 cfs. The Ohio River at Sewickley increased from 5720 to 6970 cfs. Basinwide, flows remain well below normal, but generally not as near to record lows as evidenced in the Delaware and Susquehanna basins.

Ground water levels declined at every daily monitoring site, since Monday. Ground water levels continue to be cause for concern statewide. Ground water is the reservoir upon which all sources of water, both ground and surface, rely in late summer and early fall. The current low ground water levels are a warning of potential problems early in the summer this year.

The forecast indicates that rain is likely in most of the state tomorrow, with the higher concentrations totaling about 0.5 inch in the southwest and totals declining to about 0.01 inch in the northeast. The five-day outlook continues with about the same totals, showing slightly higher numbers of up to 0.1 inch toward the northeast. The 6-10 day picture shows an additional 2.5-3.0 inches in the southwest, declining to about 1.5-2.0 inches in the northeast. Temperatures are to remain cool over the next few days, but increase to above normal in the 70-75 degree range during the 6-10 day period.