

Watershed MANAGEMENT



Drought Information Center

July 9, 1999

Since Tuesday, precipitation has been limited to the northwestern counties and across the northern tier. Totals were generally a half inch or less except in Warren, McKean, Elk and Cameron Counties where 0.75-1.5 inches fell.

Stream flows continued downward in the Delaware River basin. Flows on the main stem at Trenton declined from 2740 to 2630 cubic feet per second (cfs), continuing below the 3000-cfs trigger level below which the Delaware River Basin Commission calls for reservoir releases to control salinity in the lower river. The Lackawaxen River at Hawley decreased from 55 to 42 cfs, nearing its record low of 35. The Lehigh River at Bethlehem shows no change, at 632 cfs, and at Glendon it is again below its record low of 760, flowing at 607. The Schuylkill River at Philadelphia declined from 362 to 255 cfs. In the Christina River watershed, Brandywine Creek at Chadds Ford is down to 89 cfs, very near its record low of 84 cfs for the day.

In the Susquehanna River basin, main stem flows have receded in the lower basin, but have increased in the upper basin as a result of recent rains in our northern tier and in New York. At Harrisburg, flows are at 4830 cfs, down from 6230 on Tuesday. The Lackawanna River at Old Forge decreased from 84 to 71 cfs. The West Branch at Lewisburg decreased from 2250 to 1430, and the Juniata River at Newport declined from 897 to 739 cfs. In the lower basin, Swatara Creek at Hershey decreased from 172 to 81 cfs, below its record low of 97 cfs for today.

In the Ohio River basin, the Allegheny River is up at most gages, as a result of the recent rains in the upper watershed. At Natrona, flows increased from 3520 to 4930 cfs, but are already receding from the yesterday's peak. The Kiskiminetas River at Vandergrift is down from 653 to 518 cfs. The Monongahela River at Braddock declined from 1980 to 1500 cfs, under its record low flow of 1530 cfs for the day. The Beaver River at Beaver Falls is down to 953 cfs, not significantly above its low of 744. The Ohio River at Sewickley is up marginally, from 5630 to 5720 cfs.

Ground water showed some minor reaction to the recent rains in Cameron and Warren Counties, and once again the Pike County well reacted noticeably with an increase of about 8 feet. Other daily monitoring wells continued their declines.

The forecast for today and tomorrow indicates the possibility of about 0.2-0.5 inch of rain in the form of showers and thundershowers across most of the state. The five-day outlook indicates a total of 0.1-0.25 inch in the Delaware basin, increasing to about 0.1-0.5 inch in the Susquehanna basin and 0.5-1.0 inch in the Ohio. The 5-10 day outlook adds about 0.1-0.25 in the extreme southwest increasing

northeastward to 0.5-1.0 inch in the northeast. Temperatures are to be normal, with above normal temperatures in the Delaware basin.

As we enter another weekend, we remind you again of the precarious condition of ground water in most areas of the state. The Drought Coordinator's office is receiving many calls from people on private wells complaining about their neighbors who are continuing to water lawns. If you are a neighbor who is watering, please consider that you should be conserving that water for later in the summer. While it may appear as though your grass needs the water now, you may need it later. A well driller may not be available when you need one. Grass, on the other hand, will go dormant, turn brown, and survive the drought to recover later.