

August 15, 2007

The past week has brought much needed rainfall to almost every county bringing precipitation for the week to well above average, except for 3 extreme southeast counties that are somewhat below average. The monthly trend for the counties in the western half of the state is slightly above normal and the southcentral and central counties are in the normal range. The southeast region is now beginning to lag with these counties below normal.

For the 90 day precipitation drought indication changes, many counties moved from watch to normal status or from warning to watch status. There are only five counties remaining in the central part of the state that register a warning status.

Stream flow indicators are reflecting the results of the rainfall, which occurred late last week. Streamflow conditions have improved at least temporarily for most of the state, in particular the western portion. For the most part, these improvements in streamflow may be short lived as a review of the streamflow gages indicate that flows are already dropping and are approaching or have moved below median flows with some instantaneous flows reaching 20th percentile flows. The Ridge and Valley and Appalachian Plateau area gages now reflect mostly watch status with the exception of Lycoming County. Daily flows for Berks County are low and the 30-day average flows for Berks are nearing Watch status.

Groundwater wells in the Ridge and Valley Province and scattered in the Appalachian Plateau Province continue to show stress, although improvement was seen with the change from emergency to warning status for Bradford and Carbon counties and from warning to normal status for Forest and Jefferson counties. The only wells showing a decline in the indicator status were Bedford and Fulton counties that went from warning to emergency status this past week.

Precipitation forecasts for the next 7 days indicate 0.5 to 1.0 inches for most of the state with less anticipated in the southcentral at 0.25 – 0.5 inches precipitation. The 14-day forecast indicates 1.0 – 2.5 inches increasing moving easterly

While the recent rainfall has improved conditions statewide, the commonwealth remains in a drought watch for the 58 counties.