

September 26, 2007

The last 7 days have brought well below average precipitation (about 1 inch below normal precipitation) across the state. The monthly trend indicates well below normal for central and eastern/southeastern portions of the state with deficits in the range of 3 inches plus. The western half of the state is also well below normal with deficits of the magnitude of 2 inches plus. Some of the northern tier counties and a few other isolated counties are faring a little better with deficits in the range of about 1.5 inches.

The 90-day precipitation drought indicator changes, drought 'watch' status continues for 10 counties in the northern/central and several southeastern counties. Philadelphia County is still registering a 'warning' status. The remainder of the state is indicated as 'normal' status.

Stream flow indicators have dropped in the past week due to the lack of rainfall over the past two weeks. This trend will most likely continue, as the potential for any significant rainfall over the next two weeks is very low, with some forecasts indicating no more than 0.25 inches. The average 30-day streamflow values are returning to drought conditions across the state, of which there are now 15 counties in drought "watch" status, two in "warning" and one in "emergency" status. The Pennsylvania Daily Streamflow Map indicates that flows are below normal across the state with four gages recording instantaneous flows at record lows. These gages are Young Woman's Creek near Renovo and Beech Creek at Monument in Clinton County, Swatara Creek at Hershey in Dauphin County and Poquessing Creek at Grant Avenue in Philadelphia County. The southeastern portion of the state and the north central region of Pennsylvania have the lowest instantaneous streamflow readings.

Groundwater levels continue to show stress with indicators moving from "normal" to "watch" in four counties (Dauphin, Lebanon, McKean and Potter) and "watch" to "warning" status in Schuylkill county.

Forecasts for the next 7-days indicate the northcentral area may receive up to 1-1.5 inches; a large portion of the state at 0.5-1.0 inches with southern tier predicted at a meager 0.5 inches or less. This is actually normal for most of the state except for the southern tier; which would be well below normal expectations. The 8-14 day forecast indicates three precipitation zones of equal area moving northwesterly to southeasterly start at 0.5-1.0 at the northwestern corner and decrease to 0.25-0.50 at the middle to less than 0.25 in the southeastern corner.

Conditions will continue to be monitored closely. A drought watch remains in effect for 32 counties.